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Special Libraries

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The Missing Link between Science and the Public

DR. EDWIN E. SLOSSON,
Editor, Science Service, Washington, D. C.

Editors Note:—In this issue of SPECIAL LIBRARIES, taking the place of the usual September and October numbers, is published as complete a record as possible of the papers presented at the Twelfth Annual Convention at Swampscott, Mass., in June. The usual departmental arrangement of the magazine has been abandoned in favor of natural divisions of the subject-matter, emphasizing important aspects of the ground covered by the convention addresses. Dr. Slosson's paper is the first in the section dealing with the topic, "How Business and Technical Executives Obtain Information."

A quick turn-over is just as important in the realm of ideas as in the field of business. The sooner you get your idea invested in the minds of the million, the greater the profit to the human race. If we can shorten up the process of the incubation and propagation of scientific knowledge, the progress of civilization will be greatly accelerated. The mechanician should tread on the heel of the scientist.

At present investigators and inventors are working too much in the dark. They are groping for information that should be ready at hand. They are wasting time in duplicating one author's labors and in trying to find out what has already been found out. There is need of a scientific central, a clearing house of the exchange of ideas both for the scientist and the layman.

There is a gap between the scientific journals and the reading public that is only imperfectly filled by the popular science periodicals, attractive and interesting as they are. Look around a reading room and you will see a minority, mostly men and boys, many of them mechanics, reading to rags certain of the scientific and technical periodicals, while the great majority never touch even the lightest and most lavishly illustrated of them.

Some means must be found to increase the quantity and improve the quality of the science articles in the ordinary newspapers and magazines unless the American

people are to remain in comparative ignorance of the most important intellectual and industrial movements of the age. The dailies of France, Germany and even darkest Russia run a regular feuilleton of science news at the bottom of a page, but science does not easily gain entrance into American dailies except in the mask of a sensation. And when so disguised it is hard to distinguish true science from the fake.

The American newspaper is a marvel in mirroring the manifold phases of modern life. In the speed, variety, amount and interest of its news it is unprecedented and unparalleled. But it has one undesirable deficiency and curiously enough that is just where we should expect it to be strongest. We are living in the age of science. There are more persons engaged in extending human knowledge and applying it to human problems than ever before in the history of the world. The wealth and power of nations are recognized as involved in the progress of science. The health and life of the people are dependent upon it. The community is vitally and financially interested in it. Yet, we must confess that the average newspaper inadequately reflects the important part that science plays in the modern world.

If a file of American newspapers were the material from which the archaeologist of five thousand years hence were to judge of our civilization he would get much the

same idea of it as we get of the civilization of the ancient Assyrians from their wedge stamped bricks. He would come to the conclusion that in America of the twentieth century astrology had more adherents than astronomy, that our medicine was mostly magic, that our wisest men believed in necromancy, that the sciences were but little cultivated and had nothing to do with the raising of sky-scrapers like those of Babylon or New York and with irrigation, engineering in the valleys of the Euphrates or Colorado.

For this deplorable discordance between science and journalism neither party is altogether to blame. The college professor has good reason to be "gun-shy" of the reporter. The journalist often destroys a scientific reputation in the endeavor to make one. On the other hand, the editor is often quite right when he rejects the papers of the scientist as "unfit to print," not because they are immoral, but because they are unintelligible or at least uninteresting. They are written from the standpoint of the author instead of from the standpoint of the reader. It takes two to make a bargain and the reader and the writer have equal rights and must come to terms if they are to meet.

On the one hand, then, we see science becoming more specialized and technical, while on the other hand, we see a common and possibly a growing distaste for science of any sort among a large proportion of the population. But if science is to fulfill its natural mission of relieving humanity of hard labor, disease, discomfort and superstition, it must command the respect and confidence of the whole people.

A few years ago two friends in California, one a journalist and the other a scientist, Mr. E. W. Scripps and Dr. W. E. Ritter, spent many hours talking over the estrangement between their respective professions. Being both practical men they were not content with talking, but determined to do something toward relieving the unfortunate situation. As the outcome of their conversations, Mr. Scripps agreed to supply the funds for an institution to carry out his plan of bringing scientific information to the general reader and Dr. Ritter agreed to secure the support of scientific societies for the movement.

The result of this effort is the establishment of Science Service, a unique institution, which has for its sole aim the popularization of science. It is not an agency of the Government. It serves no commercial or journalistic interest. It carries on no propaganda. It publishes no periodical of its own, but purposes to contribute to all. It is prohibited from making profits yet is not a charitable concern. It charges the market rate for all articles sold to

newspapers and magazines and it pays its authors all it can afford.

Science Service aims to act as a sort of liaison officer between scientific bodies and the outside world. To make sure that it gives satisfaction to both parties the board of trustees is composed of ten scientists and five journalists. The American Association for the Advancement of Science, the National Academy of Sciences and the National Research Council are each represented on the Board of Trustees by three elected members. The headquarters of Science Service is in the building of the National Research Council at 1701 Massachusetts Avenue, Washington, D. C.

Science Service is authorized by its charter to use any agency for the dissemination of scientific information; lectures, conferences, books, periodicals and motion pictures. At present, however, it is concentrating its efforts upon the hardest part of the job, that is, securing articles which are sufficiently accurate to satisfy the scientists and sufficiently interesting to satisfy the editors. It is not easy to find writers who are equally familiar with the language of science and the language of the newspaper so as to be competent to act as interpreters of technicalities to the people. But to those whose vocation requires them to read the scientific and technological journals, such as students, teachers, investigators and reference librarians, here is an opportunity for a useful, interesting and not unprofitable avocation. The Editor of Science Service wants to hear from writers who are in touch with any field of pure or applied science and who have a little leisure time and the knack of putting a point in a clear and attractive way.

In addition to its weekly Science News Bulletin supplied to newspapers, Science Service is planning soon to issue a weekly bulletin of scientific notes of current interest prepared expressly for the libraries, both general and special. This is designed to aid the overworked librarian by supplying answers in advance to such questions as: "Where can I find the new comet?" "How big is the dirigible coming over from England?" "What is the cure for pellagra?" "Where can I get a file of Einstein?" "What is the effect of sunspots?" Each note will explain briefly and clearly the topic under consideration and at the end will be two or three references to books and periodicals in almost every library. This library news service will be supplied at cost if we receive enough requests for it to make it self-supporting. Librarians who are interested should send in their names promptly to Science Service so as to get the first issues which will be sent free.

How Business Men Get Facts and Figures

LEROY D. PEAVEY,

Vice President, Babson Statistical Organization

From the number of failures which statistics show in the business world, it is evident that a *good many men don't "get facts and figures."* An inspection of the business wreckage for the last year is especially disheartening. Thousands of business men, during the awful price decline, could have saved themselves if they had only studied a little.

This is an age when the real business man is looking for facts. Fifty or one hundred years ago, business in the United States came easy. Competition was negligible. Fortunes were made without half trying. Conditions have been gradually changing, and the country is growing from an agricultural nation, to a nation in which industry is playing a more and more important part.

Competition is steadily getting more severe, and only the fittest will survive. As industry comes to the fore, more and better figures are available, so that we may trace the commercial progress and get the trend for a term of years. There is a veritable flood of data available. The ordinary mercantile man does not believe this, but it is the truth. A great deal of it, however, has never been brought to the light of day.

The libraries of the country have immense quantities of information locked up within their walls. State and municipal governments have more, and the archives at Washington are teeming with tons and tons of information, some of which is never given to the public. Much of the remainder is released only very slowly. A study of the situation over a considerable number of years and as reflected by some 50,000 inquiries each year from the clients of our organization, indicates that the demand for figures comes from Sales Departments, Credit Departments, Production Departments, Purchasing Departments, Personnel Departments.

The compiling of research data to meet current business needs involves knowing sources of information, proper analysis and presentation of data, and a broad-minded viewpoint. Existing informational sources, while far from satisfactory from the research standpoint, are much more abundant than realized. It is ludicrous as well as discouraging to see how the ordinary man grabs at anything in sight—gossip, all kinds of newspaper headlines, scattered bits of information, miscellaneous reports from his sales staff, etc.

To realize how inadequate are such processes, just remember, for instance, that the sales staff of a firm has to keep in an

optimistic frame of mind or it cannot sell goods. This is true and right, but consequently salesmen nearly always see everything in a bright light. They send in the most glowing reports when business is declining. When it gets still worse they hope, and believe, and say, that the turn is coming soon, even tho it may be months before the change for the better comes. The same errors creep into the analysis of other bits of information.

Sources of Information

The best informational sources may be classified somewhat as follows:

1. **GOVERNMENT, STATE, MUNICIPAL REPORTS, ETC.:**—Washington Bureaus—Department of Commerce (including Censuses), Labor Department, Department of Agriculture, Geological Survey, Treasury Department, Post Office Department, Department of the Interior, Federal Reserve Board, etc. A working knowledge of the above is absolutely a trade in itself and the possibilities are unlimited.

2. **SPECIAL COMMISSIONS:**—These are mostly Government and State Commissions, of which the Federal Trade Commission, the old Tariff Commission, and the Interstate Commerce Commission are good examples.

3. **SPECIAL LIBRARIES:**—These may perhaps be grouped as those operated by mercantile companies, financial houses, special foundations such as the Rockefeller and Russell Sage Foundations, institutions, museums, and associations.

4. **PUBLIC LIBRARIES:**—These are familiar to all, but many people don't realize what a vast mine of information such libraries possess. Personal visits are generally necessary, altho the more progressive libraries are now getting more and more efficient in the distribution of information.

5. **QUESTIONNAIRES:**—During the war questionnaires became as numerous as the "flies of Egypt," but if not overdone, and made simple and direct, they are often a most valuable means of gathering data.

6. **PERSONAL CORRESPONDENCE:**—This speaks for itself and of course is freely utilized. A letter to a well posted acquaintance, altho not always practicable, is one of the most prolific sources.

7. **TRADE PUBLICATIONS:**—These should be selected with care and their statements should be scrutinized. In them, the wish is often father to the thought and the tendency is necessarily to take too specialized a slant. In certain instances their optimism is somewhat like that of the salesmen who report from the field. Still, my experience

with them is that they are becoming increasingly valuable. I often have requests for information from a man who, if he would but turn to his trade journal, could see the answer to his inquiry!

8. **TRADE ASSOCIATION REPORTS:**—These are sources which have developed within the last few years and are reaching a high state of usefulness. Most sources confine themselves to production statistics, but the association reports go into the matter much more deeply, covering all phases of the industry in question, including some very valuable figures on distribution.

9. **CLIPPING BUREAUS:**—A great deal can be obtained from a clipping system if it is selected with care and if the clippings themselves are scrutinized and analyzed. It is not generally known that some of the biggest and best informed men utilize private clipping bureaus of their own, employing one or more clerks to get exactly what they want.

10. **SURVEYS:**—This source is well known, but can be resorted to only when there is a special fund provided for the purpose.

11. **SPECIAL REPORTERS IN THE FIELD:**—This is a most valuable source. The cost, however, is considerable and must be considered by each firm utilizing it.

12. **INSIDE TRADE INFORMATION:**—I don't mean by this trade gossip, but personal contact or more widely systematized connection between the leading firms in a certain industry. Letters pass to and fro, conferences are held among them, and valuable, but generally confidential, facts and figures are obtained.

Analysis and Presentation

Out of the great mass of information above mentioned, it is comparatively easy to obtain a certain amount of reliable data, but the question is, What are you going to do with it? Thousands of business houses are stalled when they come to this question. In fact, the analysis of these facts and the proper presentation to the working executives of a company is the hardest job of all. Here comes into play the trained statistical man. I do not mean by this that one necessarily has to be graduated from college as a statistician in order to attack these problems, but the best concerns are now employing one and sometimes many such men. It is necessary, however, whoever tackles the job, that he have the proper viewpoint and that he have the true spirit of practical analysis. The point in securing business data is to get something which the *business man can use as a distinct help to him in his business.*

A mass of figures, even the good and true, but not properly analyzed and presented, is a failure. Even when analyzed, figures which don't enable the executive to

increase his business and his profits, are practically useless. Hence, in getting the figures before the president, the general manager, the sales department, or the factory management, definite questions must be considered. What about costs? What about sales? Why are prices at present levels anyway? What is the wholesale situation? the retail situation? Demand and supply, of course, are always fundamentally pertinent. What about my competitors with respect to all my departments and prices? These and many more problems must be studied.

Take for instance the problem of best sales territory. Into my office come every day questions like the following:

"How are people in California today, are they broke or flush?"

"Which state has greatest buying power, Texas or Oklahoma?"

"Under present conditions, which cities offer absorptive capacity?"

"In economic sense, what is the size of Kent County, Michigan?"

Whatever the choice of words, the basic thought is "Purchasing Power," and to solve the problem the following rules must be observed.

1. *The data must be definite and preferably in terms of dollars.* The farmer thinks in dollars, not bushels. The mine operator thinks in dollars, not tons.

2. *The data must be frequent.* New data must be obtained at least every quarter and preferably every month. Business men are interested not in previous history, but present and future.

3. *The data must be available for cities, counties, states, etc.* The sales manager asks you to fit data to his territories.

4. *The data must be obtainable at moderate cost.* The Census Bureau spends millions of dollars on its inquiries. The business man cannot afford research on such a scale.

Suppose last April checks paid by Boston banks were \$987,000,000. (The figure is obtainable from the Federal Reserve Board.) Since nearly all Boston business is transacted by check, this figure is a good measure of Boston's monthly purchasing power. About 150 cities have such check transaction data. For other cities bank clearings may be substituted. Clearings, of course, are not so accurate an index, but will give a very exact trend.

This gives us, say, 200 cities. In order to secure still other towns, we have found co-operation with Chambers of Commerce is often very successful. Again, for smaller towns, quarterly data on bank deposits may be used. This figure is not ideal, but will give a basis for close estimate. The purchasing power of an entire state or county can be obtained by combining the figures on the proper cities and making a careful

estimate. Other problems are attacked in a similar manner.

A close estimate is of great value to business men, even tho the results may not conform to the rigid tests of statistical science. In this connection, the Law of Averages is a wonderful aid. Did you ever stop to think how the outfitters know that only one man in a thousand wears a 6½ hat? Or how the big cigar company can tell from the wind velocity how much a certain city's sales will drop on a windy day? What about the great mail order houses which can tell every morning practically how much money is in the mail by simply weighing it? The weather is fickle. A cloudy day makes poor business for dentists, and good business for the ubiquitous life insurance agent! It is the gloom that does it.

We must analyze to get the trend of all the different factors. Select the data carefully and eliminate thoroughly. Don't forget the waste-basket is one of the most important filing cabinets today available. Double check your figures and facts with great care. *Be sure there is absolutely no chance for error.*

In connection with analysis, comes the very, very important point of proper presentation of the analysis to a business executive. Really this is where most people fall down, thus nullifying some otherwise exceedingly valuable work. The information must be placed before business men in an intelligent, forceful, and conclusive manner. This is the great need of today. This means that superfluous words and ideas must be eliminated. Executives are insisting that they cannot waste their time poring over a mass of miscellaneous material. They contend that one page which contains the meat of the subject is worth a half dozen pages of scattered and beclouded facts. Cut out words, phrases, and even ideas if this will clarify the report. How many times have you and I scanned a long, involved paper only to put it down in disgust. Sometimes the only thing we can do is to read the first and last lines of the paragraphs; the remainder is too cumbersome. Have your notes nicely paragraphed, the important items underscored and arranged with proper headings. The tables must be set up with the greatest of care. Is there anything worse than a mixed up table of figures?

In late years proper diagrams and charts have proved invaluable for clinching the argument. These should be used to give a clearer interpretation of the text. Don't forget that a diagram which has to be explained by a paragraph of words is worse than no diagram at all. Such conveniences have been used for many years by the engineering profession. They can be made of the greatest practical value to the business man. I cannot now take the time to go into detail regarding this method of

presentation but I regard it as a subject of the greatest importance.

A Broad Viewpoint

In closing, I wish to emphasize that the successful business man today is the one who is able to take a broad, thoughtful viewpoint of the entire business situation. Most of the things I have said apply to a man's own particular trade line as well as to the general outlook. Whenever intensive work has been done the executive has too often confined it to the line on which he concentrates. Of course he is bound to specialize, but if he stops there the odds are very much in favor of his eventual bankruptcy! You say, "What! Must he know what is going on all over the world?" Yes. To a certain extent, but if the American business man knows what is going on in his own country he is fairly safe. To keep one's vision centered on the leather situation, the cotton situation, the steel situation, or the building situation, without regard to what the country is headed for—improvement, prosperity, or depression—is the height of folly.

The wise manufacturer or merchant gets a real line on things. To do this he takes the leading indicators of business. These must be selected with care and subjects must be chosen which extend over a considerable number of years so that their action and trend may be fully observed. On our sheet of statistical tables and charts which executives use in their offices we have some thirty or forty subjects tabulated year by year. They include such subjects as New Building, Bank Clearings and other bank figures, Stock Prices, Bond Prices, Money Rates, Commodity Prices, Crop Figures, Railroad Figures, New Security Issues, New Incorporations, etc., etc.

In order to combine all these studies so that a composite idea may be obtained, we employ a graphical device. This device portrays the alternate periods of prosperity and depression since 1903, including the tremendous inflationary area from 1915 to 1920 and the cataclysmic decline of the last year. All of the deductions for our thousands of clients are based on this Composit-plot. All commodities, industries, sales territories, labor movements and securities are thus studied in the light of the general business outlook. Needless to say, every department, whether it be sales, credit, production, purchasing or personnel, must know at all times what stage of the business cycle we are in.

Do you suppose for a moment that the hundreds of firms now in trouble would have done what they did in 1919 if they had carefully studied general fundamental conditions. How often in the last year or two has an executive said, "It may be that business is not going to be very good, but

the automobile business is all right." Or "the oil business is sure to be fine," or "I am sure my special line is all set for a successful year." But they were terribly mistaken just the same. Look at the frozen credits and the cutting and passing of dividends which today overwhelm the country. Everybody is pessimistic, altho the best students know that these conditions will not last forever. When things look the brightest it is time to get cautious and when everybody is blue it is time to take courage.

In 1919 a man came to us and said, "I have made more money in the last year or

two than I have made in the ten years previous." We told him to be careful and get ready for a drop. He did not take our advice and a short time ago he came to us again and said, "I have lost all the money I made and some more of my original principal." *His case is typical of thousands.* Whatever else you forget, remember that the greatest law in the universe propounded by one of the greatest philosophers is, "To every action there is always opposite and equal reaction." Don't forget that this applies to business. It is as inevitable as the tides of the sea—and you can't buck the tides!

How Business and Technical Executives Obtain Information and What it Means to the Special Librarian

DANIEL N. HANDY,

Librarian, Boston Insurance Library Association

Business and technical executives obtain information in many ways. Some of them are exceedingly simple and personal. Some are highly organized and mechanical. The most striking thing about it, however, is the increasing recognition of the fact that business is dependent upon information. A few great industries in the past employed scientists to make investigations, and let them have their way with information and the instrumentalities by which information is made available. This was so in some branches of the textile industries, the electrical industries, the dye industries and a group of industries related to the dye industries, notably those engaged in the manufacture of explosives. A few banking, merchandising, insurance, and transportation groups had organized facilities for getting data. But on the whole the application of information to business was not general or continuous.

Information using cannot become general and continuous without the employment of some adequate method of getting, keeping and applying it. The great War brought many new problems and where problems must be faced and solved, knowledge is needed. One can take chances on the settlement of small and isolated problems; but when problems become large and universal, no one dares attempt to settle them alone. Take for example the greatest problem of all, the problem of international wars * * *. What endless calls for information will be made, and upon how many groups of unrelated men and women, before this problem passes into the background of those that humanity has mastered! Take again the problems of capital

and labor and the larger problem of the equitable division of the product of industry of every kind. How insistently they call for information!

Or, consider the problem of international trade, and how many fields of inquiry are opened, some of them new to American eyes, and all of them demanding information, some of it of a kind that has not yet been assembled! Who knows all that should be known about tariffs, the merchant marine, marine insurance facilities, banking facilities, seamen's laws, foreign markets, the relationship between coal and oil supplies and maritime supremacy, if our country is to translate its paper leadership in world trade into a leadership in fact. Only the other day the bulletin of a shipping organization in New York devoted an entire page of one of its issues to setting forth the imperative need of a library of shipping, in New York.

Take the problems of financing of business; of production of commodities; of distribution of goods; or, of communication and transportation; or, of agriculture and mining. Take the great human problems of increasing skill, loyalty, honesty, that apply to all of them! Can any of them find any even partial and temporary solution, except on the basis of information carefully gathered and wisely used?

In years past it cannot be denied that our American business men relied for splendid successes upon other aids than precise information. The country was new and naturally marvelously rich. Labor was plentiful and cheap. The land even in the older sections, was thinly settled and actions that would now bring a business man

quickly into the courts then were regarded as fair play in the business "game." Capital from abroad came to us in a steady stream.

While usually consistently decrying paternalism in government, the business man was not averse to asking and getting substantial aid from the community in the form of special tariffs, subsidies, land grants, and tax exemptions. Exact information, outside a very narrow range of subjects, was neither necessary nor desirable. It is doubtful if it would have helped him much to have it, and it is quite certain that it would not have paid him to provide it.

The business man of today feels the need of information and he will unquestionably find the way to satisfy it. However, not all business men or all kinds of business feel the need equally. Business based upon scientific knowledge; or extended over wide areas; or involving complicated processes; or conducted under close public supervision probably is just now more keenly alive than others to this need. But all groups are becoming conscious of the possibilities of information applied to their particular problems.

The methods already used to provide this information are numerous!

1. *Through the use of the Library.* This is much commoner than we sometimes suppose. Although the Public Library is everywhere criticised, it is probably deserving of more credit than it gets for helpfulness.

2. *Through departments of scientific research.* Scientific research is still groping in many fields of activity. Yet its achievements are already noteworthy. In the dye, chemical, electrical and steel industries it has made and unmade business. The electric lighting, telephone and rubber industries are examples of industries entirely changed by contributions made thereto by scientific men working in laboratories.

3. *Through cooperation.* Every business and industry has its associations organized to promote good fellowship, mutual information, good practices, harmonious interrelations. Competition of the old "cut-throat" variety that was once supposed to be the life of trade, is seldom permitted. Committees deal with a great variety of common problems making searches, investigations and reports. In annual conferences leading men and women in the business come together and frequently hear or deliver addresses of informational value. Usually, a paid secretary or general manager with a highly organized staff of advisers and many clerical employees, carry on the work of the association during the intervals between annual conferences, preparing and issuing the reports of investigators and committees, etc. Through such cooperative activity the business and technical executive obtains much information.

4. *Through special information bureaus.* A more specialized form of cooperation is the information bureau maintained by groups of business corporations. This is usually created for a specific purpose, and placed under the direction of a competent head, who supervises investigations, inquiries, researches, etc. Much valuable special information is so obtained.

5. *Through information service bureaus,* organized and operated for the profit of their owners. These exist in every considerable field of business and vary greatly in extent and reliability. Some such service, like the older credit reporting corporations, has become indispensable.

6. *Through personal conference.* Business still prefers its information first hand and will doubtless call into conference men and women who are believed to be well informed, no matter how efficient we make our special libraries.

7. *Through the technical press.* The technical press is improving as a medium for the spread of specialized information. As the spirit of investigation and research permeates business and industry, its inevitable corollary, the art of expression, follows close after. Hence almost as soon as inquiry and research have assembled their data, the class journals take up their findings and spread them broadcast.

These are but a few of the ways in which the business and technical executive gets his information. There are others too many to enumerate.

Two methods of getting business information, are of especial interest to the special librarian. One of these is the application of scientific research to problems of business and industry. The other is the application to the same type of problems, of the art of investigation and report. Both promise to add much to technical and business information. And both, as they are successfully advanced, will add to the esteem in which the special library and special librarians are held by business and technical executives, if the special librarian is able to take advantage of his opportunity.

Research is defined as "diligent, protracted investigation especially for the purpose of adding to human knowledge." Business and industry is little concerned with the work of pure research, whose inquiries are of so abstract a character as to promise little that can be exploited commercially. But with research directed to the better understanding of raw materials, manufacturing processes, invention, and the inventive arts, they are much concerned.

Before the War much had been done in this field, and many large industries were entirely dependent upon their research departments for such supremacy as they enjoyed. Mr. Mees in his recent work on Industrial Scientific Research shows how

supremacy in the illuminating industry was retained for a great American corporation by its research laboratory.

The nitrogen lamp, the product of an industrial laboratory, restored to America leadership in the electric lighting field, after the discovery of the Tungsten lamp had threatened to take it to a foreign country. The dyestuffs industry owed its German supremacy to the scientific technical research worker, whose importance to German dye makers was long recognized. The United States Government has long been one of the largest employers of scientific research workers, and agriculture and industry are already reaping very great benefits from their labors. Very few large industries are now possible, without some measure of help from the scientist.

The application to business and industrial problems of the arts of trained investigators is now hardly less important than the application thereto of the wisdom of the scientist. They approach a different set of problems and with different training and preparation for their work, but the two types of investigators are alike in this, that they bring to the problems of the business and technical executive the service of trained minds.

The United States Chamber of Commerce with its comprehensive departments will undoubtedly make much use of the skilled investigator while their studies and reports will, if wisely removed from selfish or political influence, carry considerable weight. Associated groups of business, industrial, and commercial corporations will increasingly employ trained investigators to study their problems as they become insistent for solution.

So much for a few of the methods by which business and technical executives are getting their information; as to the sources of this information, that is a different matter. Research workers and investigators do not create data out of nothing; especially at the outset. They look to those who are familiar with what has already been done to help them formulate plans and devise methods for the future.

A recent writer has said that one of the first duties of a research department is to fully familiarize itself with all the sources which exist for the making of investigations and researches and to be able to coordinate such sources to a particular end. The same duty rests with special investigators.

The recognition of the need of information has been given great impetus by the War and the machinery for using information has undoubtedly developed enormously. Yet it is not so clear that the special librarian has shared as largely in the gain as might be expected. Just as a decade ago the efficiency expert rose in response to the demand for better organization in business and later the personnel director in response to the demand for better personal relationships in industry, so today it is the research worker and the trained investigator who are coming up to take the lead in these new fields of information using.

The special librarian remains largely a collector and custodian of data not a creator and user of it. If new information is desired it is seldom the head of the information department who supervises its collection; it is only when material has already been worked over by others that he is permitted to have a share in its collection, arrangement and distribution. It is only too evident that except in a few instances the special librarian is still regarded as skilled in the collecting and arranging of books but not to be trusted in the appraising of information. With all this enormous enlargement of the use of information, with all this unprecedented expansion of the search for information, the special librarian remains a keeper and not a user of things in print.

These things suggest that the special librarian needs to be told again and again that preferment comes not through his knowledge of library technique but through his knowledge of the subject that his library covers. That it is not by classifications, and guide headings and filing methods that he becomes a partner in the good things of this increasing demand for information, but by mastery of information and its sources.

Marketing Information the Basis for Successful Sales Policy

CHARLES C. PARLIN,

Research Manager, Curtis Publishing Company

Editors Note —The second general division of the Swampscott program was devoted to the topic, "The Practical Value of Special Library Information." Mr. Parlin's paper is the first of the three in this series.

The function of commercial research is to study markets and how to reach them. It involves a study of market opportunities and sales methods.

On markets, considerable statistical material is available. For some industries the census of manufactures shows the quantity, value and localization of production,

and special government reports give additional information. From the census of population and census of agriculture inferences of value may be drawn. Reports of income tax returns and housing statistics, insurance reports, circulation of periodicals and many other statistical tables contribute to a clearer understanding of buying power. But the student of commercial research soon comes keenly to feel the lack of a government merchandising census which leaves one without authoritative statement of the amount or localization of wholesale or retail business in the various lines, or even of the number of wholesale or retail establishments. On merchandising methods, costs and profits, government statistics are lacking.

Various studies into the extent and methods of wholesale and retail operations have been made by universities and private corporations. The studies of the Commercial Research Division of the Advertising Department of The Curtis Publishing Company comprise about 40 volumes covering a wide range of industries. These volumes are in the various branch offices of the Advertising Department of The Curtis Publishing Company.

The field, however, is vast and the material is for the most part in the field.

The manufacture of necessity usually left the secret of his success in his finished product and in his machinery, but selling is less tangible—it is more like teaching, it involves human elements. It is something more than method—it is faith and enthusiasm.

It is not characteristic of men who suc-

ceed in selling to write for publication. Hence, one who would learn method and attempt to assay intangible values must for the most part get his information from personal studies.

Commercial research, however, is more than the gathering of facts, it involves interpreting the significance of data. The purpose of commercial research is to promote more effective merchandising. Hence, to fulfill its functions, commercial research, to be successful must lead to practical conclusions.

The concrete problem is, how can a special librarian assist a manufacturer with his selling problems?

That involves in the first place a thoughtful consideration on the part of the librarian as to just what the manufacturer's sales problems are—then a seeking for material which may be serviceable, analyzing and possibly charting this material, showing its application to the problem in hand. The material must be vital and so presented as to be readily understood. As the work develops, statistical studies will probably need to be supplemented by field interviewing.

The librarian will probably have to win his way with the manufacturer. The manufacturer is not likely quickly to give his confidence on so difficult and so vital a matter as his sales problems.

But he is eager for information that will help, and the librarian who demonstrates insight into sales problems and furnishes information upon which sales judgments can be safely based is likely to win support and appreciation for his activities.

The Organization of Knowledge in its Relation to Insurance

FREDERICK L. HOFFMAN, LL. D.

Third Vice President and Statistician, Prudential Insurance Company of America

Editors Note:—Dr. Hoffman was unable to present his paper in person because of an unexpected trip to South America. The paper was read by Dr. Frederick S. Crum, Assistant Statistician, for 23 years with the Prudential Company. As this issue goes to press we are informed of Dr. Crum's untimely death, September 2, by drowning, while on vacation with his family at Oakland, Maine. Dr. Crum was considered among the best authorities in the country on statistics of infant mortality, as well as a leading authority on automobile accident statistics. He was keenly sympathetic to the best in special library procedure. Special librarians will miss his warm friendliness and his counsel as an expert.

The library of the Statistician's Department of the Prudential Life Insurance Company is more than a mere collection of books, and, while of vast extent, is conducted without a librarian or a catalogue.

The two fundamental questions which therefore require consideration are, first, how so vast an amount of information can be managed with the absolute certainty that all the available knowledge can be utilized

to best advantage, and, second, how in the absence of a subject catalogue immediate reference can be had to any work or article required for practical use. The two questions are interdependent and determined by new principles of organized knowledge, conceived in a much broader sense than the current conceptions of the classification of information. The first question is answered by the fact that every clerk in charge of a specific line of work is, by implication, the librarian of his particular section. The second question is answered by the fact that the library itself is arranged entirely on a subject-index basis, or, in other words, an extension catalogue in the making.

Insurance for our library purposes is conceived as a branch of economics. Since economics and statistics are inseparable, the first departmental division is entitled "*Statistics and Economics.*" Statistics in this sense, however, is construed only in its technical and more general aspects and not as a source of specific information.

The second departmental division concerns the results of economic activity as represented by "*Industry and Occupation.*" Whereas economics has to do with the accumulation and distribution of wealth and its resulting activities, Industry and Occupation represent the dynamics of economics, or the productive energies of the people. Both economics and industry involve the element of risk. The pecuniary consequences of the inherent uncertainties of human life are most effectively discounted or met by insurance. "*Insurance,*" therefore, constitutes the third important division of our departmental organization.

Out of economics, productive industry and insurance, arise the enormously varied activities of mankind measured by Statistics. But Statistics are only a part of the larger field of general information and a multitude of questions are not reducible to a numerical basis. The fourth great division of our organization is, therefore, "*Statistics and Information*" in a practically universal sense. As a matter of convenience, however, this section is divided into "*Statistics and Information—United States*" and "*Statistics and Information—Foreign Countries*." These divisions are intended to comprehend any and every subject which arises out of the economic, social and industrial activities of the people, including insurance. A sub-division of these sections is therefore essential, and for this purpose twenty sub-sections have been adopted, as shown in detail in the Appendix to this paper. The first sub-division of this section is entitled "General Information and Maps," the second "Government and Annual Executive Reports," with a sub-section on "Statistical and Legislative Year Books," a further sub-section on "Public Finance" and a final sub-section on "Banking." 2, 2-a, 2-b, and 2-c are, respec-

tively, the index numbers. Another illustration of the method of sub-division is Number 17 on "Public Works and Engineering." 17-a represents "United States Engineering Reports;" 17-b—"United States Coast Survey;" 17-c—"Rivers, Harbors and Port Terminals;" 17-d—"Canals and Inland Waterways;" 17-e—"Drainage and Flood Control;" 17-f—"Irrigation and Reclamation;" 17-g—"Sanitary Engineering;" 17-h—"Rural Engineering and Highways;" 17-i—"Parks, Reservations and Lands."

Out of the social and economic activities of the people naturally arise all the problems of health and longevity. Number 8 of the section on "General Statistics and Information" represents "Public Health and Vital Statistics." Largely, of course, on account of the importance of collective morbidity and mortality data to insurance interests, this section is of such vast extent that it has a major section of its own, or the sixth division of our departmental organization. All reports, documents and papers which would originally go into subsection 8 of division 4, in so far as they relate to the United States go to division 6 in their appropriate subject order. In the foreign division, however, all medical matters are filed under the respective countries, unless dealing with specific subjects, such as particular diseases, in which case they are transferred to division 9 on "*Medical and General Scientific Subjects.*" This title comprehends, also, science in the more restricted sense, but only as a matter of convenience. Since our interest in scientific questions is rather limited, and most of the more technical questions have to do with medicine or public health, the arrangement adopted is, to us at least, a distinct advantage. Where the scientific question concerns technology the books or papers would find a proper place under "*Industry and Occupation.*" The last, or tenth, division for library purposes is entitled "*Anthropology and Immigration.*"

In life insurance the questions which require special consideration are so very numerous that a technically perfect classification of knowledge would break down by the weight of its complexity. But the foregoing outline, based upon thirty years' practical experience, has never failed to produce the expected results.

It is necessary here to draw attention to a further enlargement of the general conception of a library as a mere collection of books. Conceived as a storehouse of knowledge, it is immaterial whether the information or the facts are accessible through newspaper clippings or in the form of manuscripts, pamphlets, monographs, etc., or merely as books. Conceived as a source of instantaneous reference, books, usually from two to five years out of date, are of only limited value. We therefore maintain a

large filing system of general information, based upon an envelope file arrangement as a preliminary step. These envelopes are arranged in precisely the same manner as the library organization itself. Medical clippings would be filed in the envelopes pertaining to division 9. Insurance clippings would be filed in division 3. There is no difficulty at all, since each envelope bears in plain letters in the right-hand corner the subject-index title of the information filed. We have probably 15,000 such envelopes if not many more. When the information has accumulated to sufficient proportions it is pasted on one side of loose sheets (if in the form of clippings or newspaper cuttings), and subsequently bound in a simple but effective binding, as to which it should be said that a uniform color scheme has been adopted for the different sections to facilitate the return of the volumes to the shelves. When the information is in the form of articles from magazines or pages from medical and technical journals, it is bound in that form, but as a rule a table of contents is provided, arranged, of course, in alphabetical order like a subject-index. When the information is in the form of pamphlets they are bound (if upon the same or related subjects), with the proper title, in an identical manner. By this means—and by this means only—can the enormous amount of knowledge which is now being gathered be made available for instant use. As long as the articles remain in files of periodicals they can not, as a matter of physical possibility, be available for instant use. A volume which can be carried under the arm may contain extracts of pages from half a thousand heavy volumes, the mere physical handling of which would preclude proper use. Under our system we have thousands of volumes representing hundreds of thousands of volumes, all effectively separated by particular subjects and made available in the most effective manner possible.

It is realized that this system requires, first, painstaking attention in reading and examination of papers and periodicals so that all that is really useful is preserved and that nothing that is valuable is destroyed. Naturally the selection is governed largely by the prevailing point of view or the existing necessity. I can not enlarge upon this matter for the present, further than to say that in the light of our actual experience it is very seldom that articles of real importance are destroyed. When the article is on both sides of the paper we have a photograph made of the portion required, or we obtain an extra copy of the paper or the periodical from which the article is derived.

These in very broad outlines are the essential principles which underlie the Prudential library arrangement. For thirty years or more I have not read a paper which has not been marked, cut and filed.

All our cuttings are indicated by a catch-title, so that the filing is merely a matter of efficient routine. Of course there is the permanent necessity of watchful observance in all that is read that may retrospectively, presently, or prospectively bear upon any matter concerning which we collect information. But it would be quite immaterial to us whether the question concerns poor-law reform in Great Britain or the work of the Australian Institute of Tropical Medicine, the technological investigations by the Dutch Government in the East Indies, or the whale fisheries of the Falkland Islands, or some obscure insurance questions—perhaps the method of medical examination in vogue a hundred years ago, or the phraseology of policy forms in use at different periods, or the latest experience data of insurance companies throughout the world. Any and all information under this system is available for instantaneous and practically useful reference.

In conclusion I may say that we view the value of all knowledge as representing human experience historically and prospectively. We conceive the value of experience in the limited and restricted sense as enabling us, in the light of the additional statistical or collective information, to forecast with reasonable certainty the probable future, affecting or as it may affect, our interests. Statistical or actuarial data standing alone can not meet the larger needs of accurate forecasting, in that the experience assumes a static aspect frequently unrelated to reality.

I would fail if I did not, in conclusion, give expression to my sincere appreciation of the enormous benefit rendered in the gathering of sources of knowledge, as represented by books and pamphlets, collected by the antiquarian booksellers, whose catalogues are an indispensable aid to all who desire to fill the gaps of existing knowledge on particular questions. A special librarian is more than a mere gatherer of books, and more than a mere index filer of book-titles. To really serve a practical purpose he must correlate the information available to existing human needs, with the reasonable assurance that the judgments derived from the knowledge available will permit of forecasting with reasonable certainty the course of events in the near future.

List of Sub-titles Used in Prudential Library

DEPARTMENTAL ORGANIZATION

- Div. A —Statistics and Economics
- B —Insurance
- C —Industrial Mortality Analysis
- D —Ordinary Mortality Analysis
- Occupations and Industries
- E (a) —Labor Department Reports
- F —U. S. Statistics and Information

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|------|-------------------------------------|------|-------------------------------------|
| G | —Foreign Statistics and Information | 7a | —Anthropology |
| H | —Public Health and Vital Statistics | 8 | —Public Health and Vital Statistics |
| H(a) | —U. S. Census | 9 | —Agriculture |
| H(b) | —Hospitals and Institutions | 9a | —Markets and Food Control |
| I | —Medical and General Scientific | 10 | —Forestry |
| J | —Anthropology and Immigration | 11 | —Fisheries |
| K | —Expositions and Exhibits | 9-11 | —Conservation of Natural Resources |

LIBRARY SUBJECT INDEX
DIV. F

U. S. STATISTICS AND INFORMATION

- Sec. 1 —General information and Maps
2 —Government and Annual Executive Reports
2a—Statistical and Legislative Year Books
2b—Public Finance
2c—Banking
3 —Law and Legislation
4 —Army
4a—Navy and Marine Corps
5 —Geographical and Geological Surveys
5a—Water Supply
5b—Mining and Mine Inspection
6 —Climate
7 —Census

- 12 —Commerce and Trade
13 —Labor and Factory Inspection
13a—Workmen's Compensation and Industrial Accident Boards
14 —Immigration
15 —Education
16 —Railway Transportation
16a—Water Transportation
17 —Public Works and Engineering
17a—United States Engineering Reports
17b—United States Coast Survey
17c—Rivers, Harbors and Port Terminals
17d—Canals and Inland Waterways
17e—Drainage and Flood Control
17f—Irrigation and Reclamation
17g—Sanitary Engineering
17h—Rural Engineering and Highways
17i—Parks, Reservations and Lands
18 —Judiciary and Crime
19 —Charity and Social Work
20 —Hospitals and Institutions

The Dependence of the Business Executive upon the Special Librarian

HAROLD V. GOES,

Engineer, Ford, Bacon and Davis, New York City

One of the prime factors instrumental in spreading civilization is the printed word. Of late years the devices for multiplying and distributing it have become so perfected that the mass of leaflets, booklets, papers, magazines, letters, etc., reaches enormous proportions. Frankly there is a great part of this which is useless, but the portion that is worth while and useful is still of such dimensions as to render it practically impossible for the business executive to keep in touch with, or even to know of, a fraction of it.

This mass of useful information collects in various parts of the world, in private, public, business, and industrial libraries. The problem then becomes one of co-ordinating these sources of information and providing the most economical means for making it available to the greatest number and for the greatest public good.

The average business house, be it industrial plant, law office or engineering firm, can afford to duplicate only a minute fraction of this available literature, yet it is of the utmost importance that the

executives of these offices know where to turn to secure information on a multitude of subjects. This is where the special librarian fits into modern business life, and if properly backed up and qualified for their work they are exceedingly useful members of society.

More often, however, both the business executive and the special librarian have an inadequate conception of the true purpose and sphere of usefulness of the modern special reference library. It is true that if the business executive lacks foresight and looks upon his library as purely a non-productive department, and as a creator of overhead expense, it is exceedingly difficult for even the most able and conscientious librarian to perform a real service.

There is only one sound way to measure this service, and that is in terms of time of the business executive that is saved by the prompt placing at his disposal of the information desired. Take for example the time of the executive who is worth \$10.00 an hour or \$70.00 a day. If the librarian through his facilities is able to save

the executive three days time in the search for important information, the transaction has saved directly \$210.00. If, as is frequently the case, the information at hand at the time is worth many times what it is worth later, the transaction may be equivalent to a saving of several hundred dollars.

I know from my own experience how important it is to have promptly the desired information on many and varied subjects. It is not important that the specific information be lodged in the archives of our library. It is necessary, however, that our librarians know if the information is in print, where he can get it. It may be in Washington, or Boston, in Ann Arbor or Chicago. The repository is of paramount importance.

You librarians have an excellent opportunity, through your several organizations, to do a really constructive piece of work in:

- (1) The co-ordination of information of value.
- (2) The placing of this information in a readily usable form for the business executive.
- (3) Devising the organization and mechanism for centralizing the knowledge as to where information is to be found.
- (4) Devising the means for distributing this information.

It is an economic waste to have two groups of workers compiling bibliographies on the same subjects. One library may well specialize on the cataloguing and collecting of information on one group of subjects, some other librarian on another set and so on.

When I want to purchase stocks I go to my broker, he in turn deals through a centralized exchange or market called the Stock Exchange. I do not go to some other dealer, but only to a broker—I know where to go, thus the means for bringing supply and demand together have been created.

But the means of bringing supply and demand together in so far as technical and business information is concerned, leaves much to be desired. It is spotty; it is uncoordinated. There is too much overlapping; too much scattered effort, and not enough organized effort.

Perhaps our ideas are too big to carry out privately. Perhaps this is a function that the Federal Government, through one of its departments, can best carry out to serve the greatest number.

It is conceivable that with the information available in:

- (a) The Congressional Library
- (b) The Patent Office
- (c) The Geodetic Survey
- (d) The National Research Council
- (e) The Department of Commerce
- (f) The Department of Labor

not to mention many others, and with the facilities offered by the Government Printing Office, that we would have the basis for furnishing a comprehensive service in searching for, collating, co-ordinating, cataloguing, abstracting, briefing and disseminating information.

We have at the head of one of the great departments in Washington an eminent engineer who undoubtedly has a keen appreciation of this situation and who doubtless would give serious and sympathetic consideration to a constructive programme.

There is another phase of this matter that should not be overlooked; some months ago I had the pleasure of addressing the Special Libraries Association of New York and suggesting that this association present a constructive economic programme for centralizing the knowledge of the information available to the public, in Special Libraries in and about New York. This movement is important. If these organizations are created in various logical points in the country, and these in turn cleared through a central Federal or other similar agency, such as we have just outlined, we would have the agencies and mechanism set up to bring supply and demand together.

I do not wish to minimize the usefulness of the several business information services, the various private agencies and the great special libraries. They have their uses, great uses. But rather am I concerned with the ways and means of making their work more effective, their radius of action larger.

There are about 45,000,000 people in the United States, engaged in the various occupational groups; about one-third of these are engaged in industry, one-third in agriculture and one-third in the professions, in trade or correlated activities. This means that from 30,000 to 50,000 executive heads in industry with about 750,000 subordinates, together with approximately 1,500,000 others engaged in trade and the professions, constitute the demand, the market for special or technical information, a total of about 2,500,000, not taking into account the agricultural group. You are the logical media for serving, for supplying this demand. All we need to do is to organize the various local nuclei into districts, the district seats probably being located in the large cities. The next move is to so perfect the organization and enlarge our viewpoint as to make it national in scope and perhaps, as previously suggested, to elicit the aid of the Federal Government and to the National Clearing House for the Rapid and Efficient Interchange of Information, so needed for the healthy development of our country, is badly outlined.

The next decade is in my judgment, going to usher in a tremendous industrial era, large expansions the substitution of labor saving and material handling devices

to lighten the white man's burden and to make life more worth while.

Do you realize that to do this means the assembly of, the dissemination of and the digesting and utilization of untold volumes of information? Are we ready for the work? We are not. Let us get ready. The need, the demand, the interest is here, and more important, a large portion of the

means is here; it is simply a question of co-ordination and promotion.

You can perform, in my judgment, no greater service to the business executives of the country, who depend on you, and to the country as a whole, than by carefully studying this big problem, and providing the ways and means for its successful solution.

Research in Business

J. GEORGE FREDERICK,

President, The Business Bourse International, Inc.

Editors Note:—Mr. Frederick's paper was delivered at the third general session of the Convention the topic for which was "Business and Technical Information via the Special Library."

We who are in the business of creating a desire for or selling information are in the same class as the salesman for advertising or books, in this respect: we are selling intangible values. You know in the book field the men who can successfully sell books are men very different from those who can sell, let us say, a lamp or a pitcher or a piece of wood. It requires an especial temperament to be able to sell intangible values. Frankly I do not believe we who deal in research have properly sold our idea to the American business man. He does not value our services and our merchandise highly enough. We need to stir ourselves to action to sell the research idea. The effort to get people to appreciate something which is valuable and which is also intangible is always a rather difficult process. In spite of a tremendous effort over many years, it has been a slow process to make business men or any other type of men appreciate the value of information *per se*.

However, in the past ten years we have made a great deal of progress, so much progress that it is almost revolutionary as compared with the years before. Ten years ago information was considered something that you could get free by ringing up some newspaper's information bureau in charge of a twelve-dollar-a-week stenographer or possibly by asking somebody who made a business of something remotely connected with the information, and pestering the magazines or newspapers or other periodicals. In fact, it was a joke among editors that many of their subscribers wanted to get a hundred dollars' worth of free information for a three-dollar-a-year subscription. And that is why many of the magazines, although they ostensibly maintain an information department, have failed to see anything profitable in it and are not even good tempered about requests any more. On the other hand, some of them

have gone the whole length in a thoroughly constructive way and have organized what they call "research departments." For instance, the Curtis Publishing Company, as you know, has one of the very largest research departments of any publishing house in the world.

Of course, you may not consider yourselves at all called upon to sell and distribute your information. You may, perhaps, think you are simply hired to sit in a chair and put things in a file and put pretty labels on things and make out nice three-by-five cards. But I am sure that none of you who are attending this meeting belong to the class of whom that might be said. But your problem is, nevertheless, one of a peculiar difficulty.

I organized my business thirteen years ago, resigning the managing editorship of "Printer's Ink," for just the reason that I mentioned—that requests for information came constantly from advertisers, proving to me that information was a merchandisable commodity. Information was a commodity just as valuable, just as real and as important—in fact, probably more important, than any metal or steel or glass or other merchandise which was offered in the business world. Consequently, with a good deal of trepidation, we organized the Business Bourse, which made a business of selling information only.

What was our experience? In the first place, for five years we had to fight the tendency of the average business man to expect that information is always free. It was sometimes bitter to have concerns capitalized at millions call up or appear in our offices and expect us to give them information which perhaps cost us a substantial sum of money; expect us to give it to them without cost. It was not so hard to teach the younger executives in an organization, to appreciate the value of information; the hard fact was to reach the major exe-

cutives. The librarian or under-executive in a business might follow the usual custom of asking for free information, not having appropriations available for the purchase of information. He often readily granted the value of our organization when shown. But if he entered an order some man higher up would cancel it. I started a campaign, with other public spirited people cooperating, to make men in business appreciate the value of information. In other words, as we put it, (following the line of "Safety First"), "*Information First.*" Why, we argued, hold "post mortems" instead of pre-analyses?

Now, after five years of campaigning along that line, with the assistance of some very big men all over the country, the condition today is a very different one. We find big bankers, we find big manufacturers, we find every type of business man appreciating the value of research and information. As one man recently put it, "a man's a fool today to operate without facts." The climax to this accomplishment came when Herbert Hoover, undertook to make emphatically clear that the first need of business today is *better organized information.*

Now to get back to this close-up of research in operation. Let us take three or four typical examples, each in a different class. Let us take, for instance, the concern with a broad, big problem which it starts to investigate. Let us take the problem of a great fire-arms company, which increased its capacity from \$12,000,000 in pre-war times to \$60,000,000 capacity after the war had closed. In other words, its new factories and its additions and its increased personnel demanded, if it was to continue on that scale, a new and wider development of markets.

Now what was to be done? They could not, of course, sell enough guns to fill that extra capacity. Something had to be done to broaden that manufacturing line. The first job was to make a broad drag-net investigation. We went over with a fine-tooth comb the whole catalog of merchandise and found out what among all the various pieces of merchandise used in the United States, were those which fitted into the manufacturing type and capacity of that firm. The next job, after culling perhaps two or three hundred of those that fitted into the technical requirements, was to pick out the items which had a volume possibly equal to their needs. Then another investigation was made to segregate that group down to three or four, and find out in detail what were the drawbacks and advantages as compared one with the other of these various selective groups of possible merchandise. Finally, after a series of perhaps eight or nine investigations, all getting a little closer to the goal, we came at last to two or three which apparently

fitted their need. And then began a series of concentrated investigations of the distributing situation and the competition in those fields, and of the consuming conditions.

Almost this same process was gone through by Proctor & Gamble before they started out to market Crisco. Examinations and tests were made right in the kitchens of different groups of families in different parts of the United States, so that Crisco when it finally evolved was fool-proof, so to speak; the negro mammy in a shack down in Mississippi, as well as the high-toned cook of an aristocratic establishment on Fifth Avenue, New York, could handle it and get results from it. Five or six different alternative methods of marketing were also examined by experimental tests in different parts of the country, under controlled conditions, so that before you ever heard of Crisco or the new developments by this fire-arms concern all these different researches and investigations were undergone and were developed until perhaps the stack of reports and information reached a foot high in each case. The information was all on paper so that the executives and the counsellors of those firms examined and discussed and digested it all before a real move was made that would place the article before public attention.

This is what I call the broad policy type of research. There are so many other kinds of research that I cannot give time to them. But it is a highly interesting thing and one of the most significant things in American business life—the tendency now on the part of the biggest possible executive to spend a great deal of money—(sometimes researches of that sort reach hundreds of thousands of dollars in costs) in getting at the facts before the actual manufacture is undertaken.

I know, for example, a firm right here in New England that organized a company for \$300,000, built a beautiful factory and started to manufacture a very interesting invention. There was no question about it; it saved a great deal of work. They started to manufacture it; they got a real red-hot sales manager on the job, and the first thing he did was to investigate the market and put the figures before the backers of the enterprise. That factory with its capacity, this man found, could produce enough machines in four months to fill the market for four years! The machine, you see, was valuable only for firms which had a large number of employees, and as there were only just exactly so many in the United States and they could only hope to sell a certain percentage of them at best, they were "up against it." They eventually failed of course; a beautiful illustration of the utter nonsense of going into important matters and putting

forward a great enterprise without preparation.

Here is a singular thing which perhaps you can use some time when you are talking about a matter of this sort. There is a very able executive in New York for whom I have the highest respect, who draws a very big salary from a very big concern. He said to me one day, "I am through, Frederick, with sitting behind a mahogany table, looking wise, telling my associates that we will decide to do thus and so and to spend this and that amount of money purely on my personal opinion and hunch. I know that my judgment is as good as any man's that my firm can get. I know I am worth my salary as far as my experience is concerned. I know that my opinion is as good as the next best man's. But in spite of that I am going to quit spending \$100,000 or \$500,000 of my firm's money simply because I, sitting behind my desk, decide so. I am going to *let the facts decide* hereafter and I shall sleep better at night." Now he has a research department and is developing it and making the facts decide for him, which is a far better thing than to let hunch decide.

Now, as to the second type of information and business research, and that is what I call the managerial or administrative type. That is also a very, very significant development. It is just as true of the various department heads of a business as it is true of this man I just told you about that they must operate their business and their departments upon a consensus of opinion and experience rather than on their own limited experience. The result is that all sorts of administrative problems,—office management, the study of personnel, the study of the handling of even the minutest details of business,—are being analyzed and researched and the research applied, even in a small business. All business is to a large degree alike in function, and the man who is an office manager of a small concern is dealing actually with the same problems in principle as the office manager of a \$25,000,000 or a \$100,000,000 concern out in Akron or Cleveland or Chicago; and if the researches of all of them are brought together and the whole subject is studied and the best methods as devised by one firm are coordinated and adjusted to the problem of the individual smaller manufacturer, a tremendous gain in efficiency is the result. The office manager who tries on his own limited experience in his little business to figure out the best way to stimulate his stenographers or stimulate his executives or work out a method, is highly limiting the possibility of efficiency. Here is a fact of importance to remember in this connection: all of us up to the time we leave school are tremendously at work absorbing the experience of others. The instant, however, we get into business we apparently

reverse or stop that process altogether, and we start moving forward only on our own experience.

Now that is a costly mistake and ought to be corrected, and is to some extent corrected by special libraries, departments of information and research. We must all continue to grow with the experience of others to aid us; not merely while at school, we dare not stop gathering and absorbing the information of others at any time; we must continue as a practical daily affair to coordinate and absorb the best knowledge that others have developed. That is the basis for what we call management research.

Here is the problem, let us say, of paying salesmen. The average man of the old school would say, "Yes, sure, we will give them a commission. That is the best plan; we have done it a long time, that is how we are going to continue to do it." But he does not know that this whole matter of how to pay salesmen—whether to pay them a commission, or salary and bonus, or a combination of all three; or the problem of how to develop a sales contest, or how long such a sales contest ought to be and what type of prizes to offer and how to adjust it and make it interesting; and how to keep the tail-enders from being discouraged—all those problems are daily being worked out by a great many concerns. Research makes available to that man the high power efficiency of many as to the best method of paying salesmen.

In addition to the managerial type of research is what I call the general analytical type of research. For instance, take a banker—and this, by the way, is working out very interestingly—take a banker who is called upon to underwrite an industrial security. In the past, in many cases, his procedure has been to send an accountant to go over the records of the firm as far as its books would show its condition. Then they would send an engineer, and that engineer would analyze or appraise the plant and all that. Then they would get an exact picture of that concern as it was—as it was in a visual sense from its past, or from what its actual status in regard to its material assets was. But they did not have a picture of the relation of that concern to its industry or to its possible market. For every concern a very large part of its value always lies in what its possible sales development may be, and that depends greatly upon what the market conditions in that industry are, what its relation to competition is, etc. So banks and bankers have been getting into business research and getting information on the industry at large.

If for instance, a banking firm is underwriting a hat manufacturer, they want to know all the facts about the hat industry at large. They want to know on a chart

how the entire hat industry is moving, what concerns are selling hats and what the general history of hat manufacture and distribution is. We do a great deal of industry and market analysis. I suppose it constitutes a third or a half of our entire business. We have a library of some three hundred industry reports, each one from one hundred to three hundred typewritten pages. If anyone should wire us today, "We desire a report on the automobile tire industry," we can immediately supply a birdseye view of the entire automobile tire industry.

To give you a curious example, sometime ago a man wired us, "Have you anything on ostrich feathers?" This was an advertising agent. "I am told today that I have a chance to get the advertising of an ostrich feather firm. I don't know a thing about it. If you have anything send it to me at the Hotel at Jacksonville, Florida. It will reach me just about the time I get there."

We happened to have one of these industry reports telling how many ostriches there were in the world, how many farms there were, where the ostrich feather market concentrated, the wholesale feather market, what the volume has been, what the experience in selling ostrich feathers by mail has been and what the tendencies among women are in the use of ostrich feathers, and all those facts which give a birdseye view of an industry. We shipped that to him at Jacksonville. He stayed at Jacksonville over Sunday and read the report, and on Monday morning he walked

into the office of the ostrich feather man, one of the largest concerns in the country, and instead of being a pure ignoramus and thus be put in a disadvantageous position, he was able to talk the matter of ostrich feathers in a way that gave his prospect great confidence in him. As a rule manufacturers do not know the general facts about their industry.

With different concerns engaged in developing information, making a business of it instead of leaving it to the haphazard sources of libraries and other places which are merely repositories of already compiled information, we have in such organizations as the Bourse a creative force at work in the development of information which is actually needed. Such information is not merely something which may possibly serve a need, but something which is actually *built to serve today's business needs*. That is the great problem today, to get information quickly and to the point and build it to fit business needs. Business men are quick to see the value of information drawn from original sources, not as they contemptuously say, "Something culled from the census reports." What they want is information fitted to their practical daily use. And it is that for which they look to us who are engaged in the business of supplying special information. And if we do not succeed in hitching up with their practical purposes we have failed. It is up to us to cooperate to all the extent possible to provide that practical information which will be of increasing daily use in the business world.

Libraries from the Standpoint of the Library User

The Need of More General Training in the Use of Libraries

FRANK E. BARROWS,

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Every lawyer is more or less of a librarian. He has to know how to use law books; it is a part of his business. My own law practice is patent law, and in patent law we have to be not only lawyers, but we have to specialize more or less along technical lines. My own specialty is along chemical and metallurgical lines. In patent law we are dealing with inventions, with patents, coming in contact with inventors and people interested in inventions, and we are dealing with things which are in the forefront of progress in that sense.

In connection with patent law we have to make a great many investigations. An invention, to be an invention, must be new,

and under our patent law an invention is not patentable unless it is new. One question, therefore, is, Is the invention new, or is it merely a reinvention of something that has been invented before? And if a man gets a patent, the question still arises, Is it a good patent? Is the thing which is patented new? If it is not, the patent is not a good patent. If an inventor wants to sell a patent and a company is interested in buying it, the company wants to know whether it is buying a gold brick, something which is not new, or whether it is buying something of value, and that involves an investigation. In fact, patent investigations are often of a very compre-

hensive character, because to find out whether a thing is new means that you must look everywhere in the prior patents and in the literature where that thing might conceivably be described; and I need not tell librarians what that means.

Another thing which we have to do, as a part of our patent law practice, is to make investigations for our clients, to get together for them what we call "the state of the art." A company that is engaged in development work and research work and is planning to extend its manufactures has to know what the patent situation is. It has to know whether it is free to go ahead without infringing somebody else's patent, and, if it is not, it wants to find it out beforehand and not afterwards. Accordingly, the question of finding out the state of the art, of getting together everything that is of interest in a technical way along the lines of research or of further development, is a thing of primary importance. It is a thing which, I am glad to say, companies are more and more appreciating.

Nevertheless we find that nearly half of all the inventions for which patent protection is sought are not inventions at all. I mean this. During the last ten years there were something like 700,000 patent applications filed in the Patent Office, and during that same period there were only about 400,000 patents granted. Some 57 per cent of all the applications filed matured into patents; the rest died in the Patent Office; and 40-odd per cent is a pretty high mortality. One main reason is—for of course there are several—that the things which were invented and which inventors attempted to patent were not new. The inventors had been wasting their time, or at least spending their time and their money and their effort, in doing over again something which some one else had previously done, and something which had been previously described in the patents or in the literature. If they had had available the information which was contained in the patents and in the literature they might have been saved the time and the effort of reinventing the same things.

In our practice we come in contact with that a great deal,—that inventors are doing things over again that have been done before. One of the problems, as I see it, of the inventor and manufacturer is how they can avoid that, how they can know what the state of the art is,—to guide them in their future work, to guide them in their research work, where they do research work,—because research work to be original must avoid doing over again what is old. In other words, it must be rooted in the past, in that it must know what has been done, but it must be looking forward to the future and doing things that are new.

However, I am not going to elaborate on

this aspect of the subject, because what I want to say to you particularly is about libraries, and libraries from the standpoint of the library user. Work of the kind I have mentioned makes it necessary to use the libraries a great deal, and particularly the Patent Office library. If you consider the classified patents as a part of the Patent Office library, then I would say that the Patent Office library is one of the most important special libraries in the country.

I was glad to see that our President this morning had some difficulty in defining what is a special library, because I have had that same difficulty. I shall refer to special libraries in a rather broad sense. Of course they are libraries, and specialized libraries and I shall refer particularly to special libraries, not as distinguished from public libraries, but rather to special libraries which are also public libraries in the sense that they are available for research work of the kind I have mentioned. Take libraries like the government libraries, *i. e.*, the departmental and bureau libraries in Washington, or the public libraries of some of our larger cities,—like the public libraries in Boston and New York, the John Crerar Library in Chicago, the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh, the Franklin Institute Library of Philadelphia, and the Engineering and Chemists' Club Libraries in New York City,—they are all public libraries, but they are all more or less specialized, or at least they have special departments, like the Technology Departments of the public libraries.

From the standpoint of the library user, information, if it is to be collected and organized and distributed, has to have some object for its collection and organization and distribution. The object, as I see it, is in order that it may be used. In other words, special libraries exist for the user, and the libraries are not merely an end in themselves but are a means to an end, the end being the proper use of that information by those who are interested in its use.

I suppose library users can be generally divided into two groups; at least, there are two groups that I would like to refer to. One is the user who gets his information from the special librarian,—who does not know much about libraries, but who knows that somebody else knows where the information is and how to get it. The second group is made up of those who go to libraries and use them themselves—people that are not special librarians but are library users. At the Patent Office in Washington there are a great many trained searchers and patent attorneys who are making technical investigations of a most elaborate and comprehensive character, and yet they are not librarians at all. In all of our public libraries I suppose there are a great

many people who are doing a similar kind of work. In fact, public libraries exist, as I understand it, for the very purpose of having information available so that it can be used.

One of the problems, as I see it, of the special library and of the special librarian is due to the fact that the people who ought to be using the information that libraries have available do not use it, because, it may be, they do not know there is such information available. A great many people, unfortunately, do not know what information there is in libraries that might be of interest to them. They may not even know that there are special librarians who can help them in getting such information and using it. The problem here, as I see it, is largely one of education,—bringing more people to an appreciation of the value of library information and an appreciation of how they can get that information.

From the standpoint of the second kind of library users—I mean those that go to the libraries and make their own investigations—here, too, we find that many of these people are handicapped because they do not know enough about libraries,—enough about how to use libraries, to get the information which they could get if they knew how. In fact, if we consider how people learn to use libraries—I am not speaking now of librarians, but of library users who are not librarians—most of them learn by going to the library and getting the librarian to tell them, or perhaps they dig it out themselves by experience. There is little being done, so far as I know, in the training and educating of people who might profit by library information and library service to a sense of the value of that information and service to them.

Let us suppose that a man of education and intelligence, but who has not been fortunate enough to learn much about libraries, wants to find out what information a library contains along a special line. He can go to a library and get a librarian to help him, but if he looks for books to tell him about libraries, to tell him about the special field that he is interested in and how to find out what information is available in that field, he will find very little to help him. There are quite a number of elementary books on the use of libraries—I mean books intended for public libraries, for normal school teachers, etc., that tell you about library classification and general reference works, and give you a general idea of what a library is; and I understand that courses in the use of libraries are given to a considerable extent in the public schools. In the state of Wisconsin, for

example, the public schools include courses in library use as a part of the regular courses of study. But if we go a step above the high schools, to the colleges, we find very little is being done in teaching college students about libraries—things that they ought to know about libraries to help them in their work after they graduate; and if you go to special college courses, along special lines, such as technical and scientific lines, you find very little indeed is being done along this line.

I took lunch day before yesterday with a man who had just graduated from one of our leading engineering schools, and I asked him to what extent he had used the college library during his college course, and to what extent he had been given any information about its use. He said that he never had used the college library except as a quiet place for study, that he had never used it for reference purposes, until his senior year, when he came to write his thesis; then he went in and saw the librarian and she spent about an hour explaining to him about the library and telling him where to look for information along the lines of his thesis. He went to work and made his investigation and he didn't find much, and he said in order to get the information he wanted he had to go to a consulting engineer who was a friend of his and get it from him. The subject was one concerning which there was a great deal of information available if he had gone deep enough to get it. That man is the honor man in his class and a man with an engineering training, and yet his knowledge of libraries is what I have told you.

Now contrast a man like that with a man who has had, as a part of his college training, a good thorough course in the use of a library from the standpoint of his specialty. Mr. Coes, who has just addressed you, is an excellent example of a man of that kind. The reason Mr. Coes is so much interested in libraries—he told me this at lunch today—is because in his college course at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology he was taught how to use the library, and he said ever since that time he has been interested in libraries.

Unfortunately, there are very few colleges that give courses of that kind, on how to use libraries. I know of four; there may be others. But these courses are not described in any published book or pamphlet that I know of, except in one instance. At the University of Illinois they give a course on chemical literature, and the lecture notes for that course have been published in pamphlet form. It is a most excellent course.* I know something of the history of that course, and I know some of the students who have taken the course

* A brief description of the course may be found in *Science*, for April 19, 1918, at pages 377-381

and something of the value that it is to them. Some of the graduates of that course are special librarians, and they are special librarians in the special fields of their training and they are doing excellent work.

However, I am not thinking of these courses as courses for training librarians so much as I am as courses for giving to the student an appreciation of libraries such that he will know how to use them himself as he needs to, and so that when he comes to a position where he needs library information and cannot get it himself he will do as Mr. Coes has done—get a special librarian, because he knows what special library service means.

At the University of Pittsburgh and the University of Michigan, courses of a similar kind are given on chemical literature. Mr. Cole, of the University of Michigan, who gives the course there, writes me as follows:

"I find that it is the rare exception for a student to know anything about a library, so I have developed a course about as follows:

"The first idea is to acquire a familiarity with a library, what it contains, and its use; so at the beginning we confine our attention to general reference works in the general library of the University, learn the general principles of classification of books, use of the card catalog, and have some practice along these lines.

"We then come to the chemical library and begin a similar process in it. We learn many of the important classifications, and then make a more thorough study of the reference works.

"Toward the end of the course some topic in which the student may be interested is given; he is expected to look through the literature and then report a brief outline of that subject, with references and bibliography.

"Students who have taken it have been enthusiastic about the work, and personally I have thoroughly enjoyed the teaching of it."

Another thing that is very encouraging is that we will soon have available a rather comprehensive work on chemical literature, published by Dr. Crane, editor of *Chemical Abstracts*, and Dr. Patterson, the former editor. The scope of this work is briefly summarized by Dr. Crane as follows:

"Our book is to contain, following a kind of introductory chapter which will discuss the sources of information in a more or less general way, chapters on books, journals, patents, other sources, indexes, libraries, procedure, reports and the obtaining of originals. In addition there will be certain data on journals and books in the form of appendices."

If information of this kind, such as this

book by Dr. Crane and Dr. Patterson will contain, and if information of the kind which is given at the University of Illinois and the University of Michigan, were made a part of the training of every chemist,—in fact, if the same thing were extended so that every technical college student in every technical college course were given some training in the use of technical libraries, just stop and think what it would mean to the individuals themselves and even to the Special Libraries Association. You would not have to go out and convince a man that he needed special library service. He would be thoroughly convinced already.

The surprising thing is that it is possible for a man to go through college and get an education without learning something about a library, and how to use it to help in his work. He learns in his college course the general principles of his specialty, but he can learn only a little of the vast amount of information which there is in the written literature on the subject. Why should he not be taught something about this larger aspect of his specialty, something about the general field of the literature along the line of his specialty?—how to make use of that information, and, if he is not in a position to get it himself, how to ascertain who can help him get it,—in other words, the special librarian?

In this connection, I would like to read a letter that I received from Miss R. B. Rankin, President of our New York Special Libraries Association:

"The facts which you bring out are undoubtedly true and a great many users of libraries are much handicapped on account of this lack of training. I think you have gotten at the root of this trouble when you intimate that even in college and university courses students are not trained to use technical books. Naturally it is rather difficult for the librarians to overcome this lack of training on the part of the university. I have done library work in universities and normal schools and in each place have been much struck by the woeful lack of such training and have made special efforts to overcome it."

The Special Libraries Association should be very much interested in this subject, because these men in college in a few years are going to be out in industry. They are going to be executives and men who are too busy in their specialties to go to the libraries and get this information themselves. They are going to get the library service, and they are going to get it through the special librarian.

It seems to me that the subject is one that the Special Libraries Association might well consider as indirectly affecting the Association itself. It seems to me that by increasing an appreciation, among technical students such as I have referred to,

of the value of library information, you will be indirectly advancing the interest of the Association. I see no reason why every man who is educated should not know something about libraries along the lines in which he is going to specialize, and the time to teach him that is when he is in college.

I would like to suggest, if it is a proper subject for consideration by the Special Libraries Association, that the question of a more general training in the use of libraries is a subject that this association might well investigate, because, in the extension of such work, it is the special librarians who can give the most help. It is only a person who has had some experience in the use of literature who can tell others about the literature. Special librarians are in a

position to teach the people who need that special information something about how to go to work to get it. It may be that there are more technical colleges that give courses of this kind, and I am sure that if there are, the people who give them would have many valuable suggestions. Why should we not investigate and see to what extent such courses are given? Why should we not see to what extent it is feasible to extend courses of this kind, so that more people will have an appreciation of libraries, of the services which libraries can render, of the information which they contain and of how information and service of this kind is going to be of value to them, not as librarians, but as men who ought to be using library service in their later specialized work?

The Special Service of a Banking Library

JEANNE B. FOSTER,

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A private investment bank is something quite distinctive and complete unto itself, and not logically to be compared with the ordinary public bank. It has to be super-conservative for its own sake, and yet can do things which the other cannot attempt. It is a specialist in the closest sense, and yet it is the private bank which time after time turns the investment tide toward confidence by standing sponsor for a security which could hardly otherwise be floated. In comparison with public banks and trust companies it appears as a wholesaler of particular commodities, rather than a retailer of numerous ones. Its interests may reach to far countries, but will consider only certain specific forms of securities. It has no numerous clientele, to be covered by tremendous mailing lists, but a most carefully selected one to whom its wares are offered, and its great pride lies in the superior quality of those wares, that the name shall be indeed a trademark of value.

It has become a habit to speak of the bankers as the "pirates of Wall street," but those of us who work among them and understand their methods cannot fail to acquire a great respect for them. Foreigners are fond of saying that an American can only be hit in the pocket, and if this be so, by the faith he reposes in his banker shall ye know the banker.

It is not the number of transactions, but the worth of those carried through upon which rests the foundation of the international investment bank, hence the extreme conservatism in all dealings. It will make loans to foreign governments or cities—aid in the organization of banks, the up-

building of public institutions—the building or financing of railroads or great public utilities—just as it will for the same things in its own country, following pretty much the same lines in each case.

This, of course, limits the subjects for which demands will be made upon the special library, and this it is, to some extent, which makes it impossible for anyone who persists in being merely a librarian in the routine sense to succeed as a special librarian in a private bank. There one is not only a librarian, but the keeper of the facts used in the transaction of business, and they must be made workable. The practical usability of the library and files are the supreme test—not what is in the librarian's mind, but what can be handled 100% efficiently in the office routine.

The larger banks with foreign branches are able to develop most complete and satisfactory libraries (even turning publisher themselves on occasion) for which we smaller fry often have much cause to bless them, but the private bank handling investment securities only is forced to proceed quite differently. In the first place, it is smaller, often (perhaps usually) undermanned, and the work there is an extremely human, living thing for which one must have a thorough understanding of the individual, not alone the mass, to succeed. When it happens, as in my own case, and I believe in most of the other private banks, that everything keepable, except pure statistics, is under the one care, it is a very real problem to so correlate the information that it is immediately forthcoming in

entirety. The keeper of the facts must produce the facts.

When information is wanted it is in a hurry always, and it is gathered wherever it can be found—the library (with us called the document file)—the files, general or special—all are used interchangeably. When a syndicate or reorganization is functioning, there is used every day its agreements, reports, mortgages, circulars, clippings, etc., as well as correspondence; these are properly a part of the transaction and are kept as such while the thing is alive. So a call for anything concerning that particular matter during that time is found as a part of it, and can be produced immediately from the one spot. Time is a big element of efficiency in this work. When, however, the matter is finished, all documents needed for general information in the future are placed in the reference library and the completed reorganization, syndicate, or what not, is carefully indexed and cross referenced and laid away until such time as it may suddenly be called upon to enter the realms of the living dead, and be interrogated as to its past existence. In this way, everything needed is always linked up so that it can do the most good.

Procedure so greatly varies in the handling of different financial operations that I have tried always to make the need qualify the method—in other words—study the transaction and meet each particular demand with a simple common sense treatment. I don't mean by this that the rules for classification in the reference library change; what goes there follows the rule, but the special transaction may finally cross reference to the library again and again, and vice versa. The library and files of a private bank must be thoroughly elastic, stretch both ways in fact, to be efficient—and that, after all, is the aim of our endeavor. I now hesitate to fasten even a small cart to a fixed theory, much less the fiery chariot of the special library or file.

Right here I should like to say a word about something I feel to be most important to us all—and that is—keep things simple—plan for the minimum of help and effort—don't classify to too fine a point—if a simple alphabetical division will meet the need don't use elaborate numbered ones. I once heard Dr. Cutter speak of the cost of maintaining a card index to a clipping file (which is after all purely ephemeral) and it was so staggering that I have ever since thought twice before unduly elaborating anything which has not lasting and functional value. The strong feeling in many houses that special libraries and files are merely an overhead charge and of no commercial value has been fostered in many cases, I am sure, by the unnecessary wealth of detail and elaborate indexing of things which could have been done without. Some of us, I fear, have been mastered by system

instead of being the master of it. No system should seek to govern the business. Methods differ just as much as the individuals using them, and when we insist upon following a preconceived plan, which may have worked practically and beautifully somewhere else, into a business where the governing mind is entirely alien to that in the former case, we will simply come to grief. "A man convinced against his will is of the same opinion still," and if we cannot make the man at the head see strongly the practical use of an idea, we would better try to improve the functioning of the one already in use than find, as I have known in some sad cases, that the instant the too rapidly progressive librarian has passed on, the work was undone and the office settled back into the old method as into an old coat.

A private bank must necessarily have everything for immediate use—there are no great departmental divisions, each a little world unto itself—it functions as a whole, and the librarian must be adaptable or go under. She must understand the business to a large extent—what information it is likely to require—and to be of the highest efficiency and value, must develop a sort of sixth sense to perceive a hint when it is only a blind one. It is strange how often a chance note in the morning paper will lead a librarian interested in her work to group things which until then have held no meaning. Then, when some time in the future, call without warning comes for everything pertaining to that particular subject (it never having been mentioned even remotely before) she has the "grand and glorious feelin'" of producing the goods.

The particular house with which I am connected has for the last fifty years been closely identified with railroad financing, and the methods through which this can be done have been so painstakingly gone over during this time that the handling has become practically a classic. What can or cannot be done with railroad securities and properly safeguard the investor has been settled so many times that to-day when some new financing is in contemplation, the call upon the library is instant and exact for mortgages,—general, consolidated, re-funding; agreements,—trust, deposit, syndicate; circulars and data covering bonds,—gold, collateral trust, convertible, debenture; secured notes, trust certificates, etc., etc., according to the form of security sought to be issued. Any new financing is directly based upon what has gone before, just as much as a trial before a judge is based upon precedent, and must follow lines well laid down.

In these days of uncertainties and fluctuating values, however, one can hardly keep pace with the various avenues into which the private banker may stray, and

demands for data covering various great industrials and foreign investments are increasingly insistent. Of course, the statistical files cover much of this, with daily reports from foreign stock exchanges, foreign financial publications and pertinent clippings, but once in awhile we are forced to send out S O S calls to the kindly and willing coadjutors in the larger financial libraries, calls which are invariably met with such a generous helpfulness as to earn undying gratitude "on many a hard fought battle field."

The government has put its fingers into so many pies during the last few years that we have had to develop many new lines of research, noticeably the income tax, which has greatly increased requirements for documentary space. It has surely added to our trials, but perhaps enhanced professional value, for who (other than the proverbial Philadelphia lawyer) except a librarian could dig out the latest decision on a contested point in one of the numerous divisions of the law from one of the up to the minute books, beautifully indexed as they are, when December has fallen upon us, or when the collector of the eternal revenue comes around three years after payment and demands to know by what right the bank has compiled the figures on that trust declaration.

A further reason why calls upon the library are more limited than in a public

bank or trust company is that the business seeks the bank. When a foreign proposition, for instance, is presented, we can be called upon for only a small amount of comparative matter—merely a general idea of conditions, or simple resume of what has been done heretofore—as no security would be offered without exact data covering every up-to-the-minute phase of the issue and its safeguards as given authoritatively by a municipality or government; not only its funded debt and tentative budget, but guaranteed legal opinions as to every phase of the matter. These can call for no research on our part, and merely take their places when the thing is finished, to serve for comparison in future issues.

I find myself smiling, because I am considering our library as so much an active part of the business that when its use appears for academic comparison only, I seem to be apologizing for it. It simply serves to point out what I have been trying to show as to the difference between an international private investment bank and the public bank or trust company, whose libraries are far better filled and known than are ours of the smaller institutions, theirs are real reference libraries to sit down and refer in, while ours are hurry up things used while a firm member or lawyer waits and lets you know immediately that he is waiting and waiting hard.

Cooperation Between Public and Special Libraries

Introductory Remarks

DORSEY W. HYDE, Jr.,

President, Special Libraries Association

Editors Note:—A Joint Session of the American Library Association and the Special Libraries Association was held on the morning of June 24th. Miss Alice S. Tyler, President of the American Library Association, explained the object of the meeting and then turned the meeting over to Mr. Hyde who opened the meeting with the following introductory remarks.

The special librarians who are gathered here today to talk over and to think over with you the problems of library work, have appointed me to express to you their best wishes upon this occasion and to give voice to their desire to work with you for the best interests of the library profession as a whole.

Sometimes I like to think of the business

librarian, the technical librarian, as a sort of advance agent of the public library. We are away from home; we have gone into strange and foreign countries, where the people speak a new language, and where different thoughts prevail. You have all heard many criticisms of business as it is conducted today. Last night on this platform, one of the speakers had some

very bitter things to say about American business. We as librarians and you as librarians, are in a sense, the custodians of civilization's store of idealism. Business in the past has not been ideal. It had its faults. The Government of the United States has been forced to erect vast machinery for the study and the correction of business evils. The business library is one of the great institutions today which is working for idealism in business. That is what the Special Libraries Association stands for.

The members of our Association are scattered through the country. The national directory of special libraries now being compiled, shows that there are over 1300 special libraries, covering every type of human endeavor. But these libraries are isolated, by themselves; they have no contact with the sources of library inspiration. A big factory is generally located on the outskirts of a town. The librarian is given a place anywhere, sometimes an adequate budget and sometimes not; he has no regular standing; this is a new work; he has to get things started and show results. And results are the only things that count.

At the annual convention of the Chamber of Commerce of the United States, Herbert Hoover, chosen as the leading speaker of that convention, spoke of the need for information in business, the need of getting away from the old *laissez faire* methods and of trying to find out what the fundamental facts are, the real knowledge which should guide the business executive. He expressed an opinion which the forward-looking business men of America have always stood for.

When I was 18 years old, I took a college course in economics and expressed my newly-acquired wisdom in criticism of the existing industrial order. I came home and went to visit my grandmother, a woman of great character, and I started spouting these new ideas. She said, "Yes, but how about your grandfather? He was a business man." Today all of us have grandfathers and fathers, all of them in business. These men are trying to be honest in their methods, but when they have not the facts, when they have not the statistics, when they have not the book knowledge, it is very difficult for them to make accurate decisions. I have known perfectly honest men in business to make decisions which, it turned out, meant misery for many people, not only misery but a direct violation of the truth.

We, as librarians, can help business. The Special Libraries Association is trying to. Herbert Hoover stands for that ideal now. In a letter from one of his Secretaries, the other day, the Special Libraries Association was asked to cooperate with the Department of Commerce in working out ways whereby business library service—technical information—can be brought to the attention of the executive to help him in the solution of his problems.

In this work which the special librarian is called upon to perform he needs the cooperation of the public librarian. We have felt continuously that we had your sympathy and support. At this meeting we hope to get in touch with you again and to renew our relations with the sources of professional inspiration.

The Public Libraries and the Special Libraries

CHARLES F. D. BELDEN,
Librarian, Public Library of Boston

A not undeserving citizen of Boston, who by no stretch of the imagination could be dubbed "worthy," on seeing the notice of a centennial exhibit at the Public Library in honor of a great poet, enquired "What are keats?" As we approach the subject before us may we be spared so complete and refreshing an ignorance as this, yet it is not so very long ago that the public and even some librarians were not only asking what "Special Libraries" were, but were also seeking knowledge as to their "why and wherefore." The oldtimers quickly become accustomed to the newtimers, and Special Libraries exist today as a matter of course and their present importance in the commercial world is unquestioned.

These libraries arose out of the immediate call of business for certain facts and specific information quite often not readily available in public libraries. The truth of it is that these special libraries are mainly an outgrowth of commercial methods of indexing and filing and the other details of a progressive office, and have little in common with a regular library composed almost wholly of books, pamphlets and periodicals. They may be compared with the private libraries of some college professors, say of history, who collect an immense array of parts of books and pamphlets, newspaper and magazine articles, and everything bearing on their subject and the minute subdivisions of it. An assemblage of material of this nature, which is highly

useful and valuable to one of these professors, has no place on the shelves of a large library, for much of it is of such a nature that the cataloguing of it in accordance with the rules of a large library would be well nigh impossible, and certainly would be undesirable. Such a professor has constant recourse to his college library for the standard books he requires, and he thus finds that his special wants are best filled by his own collections, while his general wants are satisfactorily met elsewhere. A general library has its limitations to observe; it must devote itself to treasuring the records of the past, providing for the wants of the present, and having an eye out for the future. The special library's working ideal is to supply the needs of the present, adequately and quickly. Much that is temporarily gathered for ephemeral use may wisely be dispensed with in a few weeks, months, or years.

So different in fact are the objectives of these special and public libraries that probably the latter have been done great injustice because they cannot and do not provide for highly specialized demands. Their assistants, while trained in regular library routine, seem far from expert in the knowledge and use of the tools required by practical men of affairs, who do not fully understand the limitations of institutions which have far different and much larger functions than their own. And yet perhaps matters are not wholly bad in this respect. One of the most highly developed electrical companies in Boston recently wanted to make a full inventory of its business as a going concern. The man who conducted this inventory was a thoroughly trained accountant. He naturally had recourse to the company's library, but failed to find in it certain books on accounting and allied subjects. In almost every instance the books he could not find in his own company's collection were available at the public library, although on purely detailed and special subjects, and he was as much surprised as delighted to find them ready for use.

The library for business men, the vital collection needed by a live, progressive firm, corporation, or institution, must not only be planned for practical use, but must be in charge of a skilled staff. Business generally secures what it wants, and in its search for facts gathers the necessary printed, typed or written matter. It purchases such material irrespective of cost, because it is the tool necessary at the given moment. Public libraries are beginning to realize that a business house does not employ, as its librarian, a person for the same reason that many public libraries employ persons in charge of special collections or departments. They know that in addition to securing those versed in library training and routine, the business house must find men and women not only

of education, but expert in the business they represent, and keenly alive to ever changing needs. The best librarians of special libraries today are really reference engineers and information experts. The fact that they command salaries equalled only by a score or so of the librarians of the country, measures either the significance of their worth or the utter lack of appreciation of skilled public servants on the part of our municipalities.

The feeling has not infrequently found expression that the desired fraternal relations between the librarians of public libraries and special libraries in professional matters have not come to pass as fully as they ought. Public librarians may once have felt that librarians of special libraries were in a sense usurpers trying out their hands at a profession for which by training and experience they were unqualified. Special librarians may have felt that public librarians, as professional men and women, failed to measure up to their possibilities when their institutions were unable to furnish that specific information which to the special librarian often seemed elementary, and failed to meet the call in matters of interest to the everyday business world. As is usually the case, much could be said by an unprejudiced person on both sides. Public libraries for the most part failed of the opportunity to lead, failed to sense the need for development in new lines, among them the use of properly arranged ephemeral matter, tables and statistics, charts and selected contents of documents, pamphlets and books, available at low cost by the use of a photostat, compiled specialized data, summaries, extracts and bibliographies of business subjects prepared in a business manner. The public libraries for the most part lacked foresight by not gauging the value on their staffs of trained business experts.

Naturally, in answer, it might be claimed that the public library has its limitations—limitations measured principally by the amount of appropriations for buying necessary books and the suitable housing thereof, and for the hire of capable assistants. Admitting this fact, still had the library but pioneered in this comparatively new field of business, it is reasonably certain that funds would have been forthcoming. A few libraries proudly attest to this truth, while they modestly and regretfully admit that even today they are but at the portal of opportunity and usefulness.

The present general situation may perhaps be stated as follows: a public library is not unlike a great department store, although no analogy can be pressed too closely. It keeps in stock something for everybody since all wants must be served, but they can only be served in a measure; all of its departments will be reasonably good, but none of them can be perfect, un-

less the growth of one or more departments is sacrificed for the improvement of one or a few. The special (commercial) library is not unlike a shop where only one kind of ware is sold: lamps, carpets, boots and shoes. The larger establishment, whether library or department store, has an unlimited field and a limited supply of goods apportioned throughout its various divisions. The smaller establishment, whether special library or shop for one sort of goods has a limited field and for this reason can keep a larger and better variety of special wares. To serve all and each with equal success is a contradiction of terms. The world at large, with less money to spend or wits to use, will find that the great establishments suit its purpose; the particular man with a particular call for the use of his money or brain will frequent the smaller and more finely equipped place for better shoes, carpets, lamps, or for information of great value to him and of small importance to the world at large—and he has to pay well for this better equipment, whether in shop or special library. There is no reason then why the larger and less perfect and the smaller and more perfect should not move along harmoniously on parallel but never actually converging lines.

Public and special libraries in large municipalities have exceptional opportunities to work together to their mutual advantage. Collections can be made to supplement each other; a not too technical union list of rare or unusual material on a given industry (the term "material" is used in its most comprehensive sense) will aid in placing the result of business knowledge and experience of successful firms or institutions at the instant command of those ready to profit therefrom. Interested and aggressive effort of specialists—locally known as "sponsors for knowledge"—will place unexpected resources of information at the call of the public.

In smaller centers a group of business men, unconnected officially with the public library, with proper enthusiasm, can direct the business service of a library, and, if results can be even reasonably assured, foot the bills. It is a practical proposition since it would save duplication of effort in both material and service.

For the present and perhaps for some time to come the limitations of the public library must be admitted. They account in large measure for the peculiar feeling on the part of special librarians that public librarians do not measure up to their opportunities. Special librarians forget that public libraries cannot go into the ramifications of all subjects to the extent necessary for the business house, nor do they always remember that there is a budget—in many places a segregated budget—which must be

followed; whereas, as has been stated, a business house secures, irrespective of cost, whatever is needed whenever needed. The skilled special librarian, a specialist in his field, with intimate knowledge of his own shelves, is disappointed when he finds, as he is so apt to find under existing conditions, that the custodians of collections of a public library fail in their detailed knowledge of the material in their charge.

As the matter stands at present it would seem that the best way to proceed is for these two sorts of libraries to get together, not with critical hostility in mind, but with a desire to see what can be done. An impression is abroad that our public libraries have not kept pace with the times and have not met new demands with enthusiasm. Institutions move slowly and have to be shown, but that they might go a little faster and a little further in some directions is probably true, but how far they may go is a question to be determined by cautious as well as by enthusiastic minds. The special librarians on the other hand will do well to recognize that their own functions differ from those of the public librarians, which minister in a more or less effective way to every intellectual want of a complex civil life. The special library is after all an adjunct to business, and has a limited sphere for its activities. It is part of a money producing enterprise and the question arises as to how far an institution supported by the public should be directly committed to such a purpose except by rendering any help as is properly rendered to all branches of our educational and industrial systems. The happiest solution would be to ascertain how far each of these two kinds of libraries may wisely go in helping the other. They cannot coalesce, but they might well draw nearer together not only in spirit but in actual and practical service.

It is an opportune time to offer to public librarians a suggestion that should have general application. Consider every special librarian as a bosom business friend, an assistant to you in your library work, a specialist with particular information available for your use; give to the special librarian from your knowledge, forward such publications as may be of value from your institutions, grant special privileges in the use of books, consult him in reference to items of high cost and rarity, in the knowledge that the special librarian will be of help to you in the procuring of material that you cannot purchase and of information your own employees are unqualified to give. It is not an unfounded expectation that this first joint session of the public and special librarians will strengthen the bonds of a better understanding and give encouragement that may be mutually helpful.

The True Relations of the Public and the Special Library

R. R. BOWKER,

Publisher, The Library Journal, New York City

It is gratifying that special librarians have now a seat in the Cabinet. One of the many facets of Herbert Hoover is that of a business librarian par excellence. In his communications with commercial associations, with editors of trade papers and to the public generally, his first emphasis is on facts—facts as to stocks, conditions, production, distribution, consumption. This is, of course, the field of the business librarian in some relations inter-convertible with the statistician. Mr. Hoover goes so far as to suggest that such information is the best possible preventive for those ups and downs which since the armistice have raised many a business to the crest of the wave only to dash it down upon the rocks.

Akron, Ohio, which in the census decade led all cities in growth, trebling its population to 200,000, is perhaps a case in point, tho I speak only from secondary information and subject to correction. Its inflation was due chiefly to the rubber tire industry. The leading competing concerns employed each a business librarian. It was rumored that the competition was so keen that the librarians scarcely ventured to speak with one another on the street lest the employers should suspect collusion. That may be an exaggeration and I believe that later there was more cordial relationship. But collusion, that is, cooperative information, was the one thing needful. If the competing companies had been willing to give and gain information as to the stock of rubber in sight, the supply of tires and the possible demand after the war, caution might have come to the front and the population not been so cruelly decreased quite as suddenly as it increased as the unemployed by the ten thousand walked the streets and finally walked out of town. The automobile industry, on the contrary, stood pat and when the slump came it reached almost the stagnation point. The more's the pity as Akron was just starting upon a most liberal and far-sighted plan of library development.

Now, business librarians cannot induce employers to be wise; they can only give employers the information on which to get wise. No such testimony has been given to the value of their service when it is rightly utilized as has been given by the one man in the world most competent to give it.

The business employer wants his information when he wants it, that is, right away. He must be served not while he waits, but while he won't wait. He is perhaps dictating a letter and the human pen cannot be stayed. This involves the neces-

sity that each business librarian shall be thoroly and instantly posted on his specialty and not have to wait even for answer by telephone. Yet even within the same industry the different offices can usefully cooperate in obtaining and collating information which each may have ready at hand, thus avoiding at least this much of duplication waste.

There are few industries in these days in which needed information is confined to the immediate specialty. Each business seems to touch every other. In such relations business librarians can be of the larger service to each other and their offices should be models of cooperative community effort. This is the plan which Mr. Lee has pioneered and to so large an extent triumphantly achieved in Boston. As the feeling grows the whole business community is in constructive cooperation instead of destructive competition, the telephone will be more and more a free road which opens out to all knowledge.

This thought indicates the true relations of the public library and the special library. If there is any feeling of rivalry, of jealousy or lack of appreciation between the two, I think it is only in the case of a very few perhaps supersensitive special librarians who have thought that their corner of library work seems small to the public librarian and is therefore unappreciated by him. I do not think this is the case. We have more than once found how the sixth figure in the decimal classification has grown in importance, as in certain developments during the war, until it almost out-classed the other five numbers. No public library can go into such minutiae and the general librarian is therefore more and more dependent upon the special knowledge of the special librarian and upon his good will. On the other hand, a thousand questions come up in every day business which are outside the special or business field, questions of history, of geography, of art, where the public library is properly the source of information. I believe the first question asked of the new "Tek" service for commercial information was "when did the Christian Era really begin?" This was properly a question for the Boston Public new information service and I recall Miss Guerrier's flashing response that she was not sure the Christian Era had yet begun at all.

It is interesting to note, indeed, how the two fields merge one into the other. In my early electrical days there was tremend-

ous rivalry between high tension and low tension systems. It was not long before each side began to see that cooperation was the true outcome and today high tension transmission and low tension distribution are universally accepted. The general library, it must never be forgotten, is primarily a collection of books to be used for reading or reference, while the special library is primarily a collection of up-to-date facts which must be culled from current sources, newspapers, reports and what-not, later than the book of a year or even a month ago. But the general library is more and more developing an information service and the business information service must have its collection of books. The big wheels and the little wheels must gear in together for effective result and the problem before all librarians is to get the most

result with the least effort, practically the least waste by duplication of effort.

In the training for and practice of business librarians there are those methods dealing with books which are also those of the general librarian and others dealing with special sources which are of a special nature. The present joint session of the A. L. A. and the S. L. A. is a happy illustration of the need of studying and comparing methods common to both, while a semi-annual or biennial conference of special librarians as such, may well be given over to the special methods of the special field. It is, however, within the local community that cooperation among business librarians can be made most useful and the growth of local special libraries associations in the centers of industry is certainly one of the most gratifying evidences at once of business and library progress.

Can We Have Library Cooperation?

J. H. FRIEDEL,

National Industrial Conference Board, New York City

Throughout the world there is today a vital interest in teamwork and cooperation. The appeal of Secretary Hoover to manufacturers to aid the country and themselves by publishing statistics of their business and the general favorable response that has been made to this proposal, show that our business men are willing to cooperate with the Government in a plan to stabilize output and prices, so that we shall be spared the peaks in overproduction and underproduction with resultant unemployment on the one hand and unusually high prices on the other. The same spirit prevails in international relations and yet only the other day a leading Japanese Admiral urged publicly that a large army and navy were the surest guarantees of peace.

But it is undoubtedly true that cooperation is the great topic of interest today,—international, national and individual cooperation—and it is altogether fitting that the A. L. A. and the S. L. A. should discuss ways and means of cooperation. Yet I cannot help but feel that in the minds of many there must be this question: "Why should you have to discuss cooperation? Do not librarians cooperate? Do not the associations cooperate?" He who is honest with himself must of necessity be cautious in his answer. Among individual librarians cooperation undoubtedly does exist. Individuals cooperate; if you examine this you will find that they do. Where they do not it is always the fault of the individual. Those of you in public library work who have called on special libraries and those

of you in special libraries who have called upon public libraries for help have invariably gotten it. Where there has been no cooperation it has been the fault of the individual and not the fault of the institution.

Criticisms of failure to cooperate sometimes made against public libraries are too often based on a misunderstanding of the public library's function. The public library exists to serve the community. In it every citizen has equal privileges and equal rights with every other citizen. The special librarian who expects the public librarian to drop everything when he calls—who expects the public library to undertake a special search for him that it would not do for anyone else—has taken a stand that is not defensible.

In the same way the public librarian who criticizes the special librarian because the latter will not help him may sometimes misunderstand, for there are various types of special libraries. Some special libraries are public in character; some semi-public and some private. In the firm with which I am connected there are numerous files of data that are available to the public, but there are also a great many that are not, and that are available even to business men, only on specific approval. Criticisms of failure to cooperate among individual librarians, which you find on both sides, are merely a reflection of a certain blindness in individuals.

As a general rule, cooperation between librarians, whether engaged in the same

or in different lines of library activity, does exist. On every side you will hear that it does exist. It is being developed right along and it is a good thing that it is. It will be developed more as we broaden our ideals. For if you think of library work as a triangle, the individual library is at the top, the special group either according to type or location is in the middle, but all librarianship is at the base, and that *all* librarianship reposes very much in our associations.

If now we turn to the question of cooperation between the associations, it must be admitted that the same degree of team-work has not always existed. The A. L. A. is now in its forty-fifth year. The S. L. A. is in its twelfth. It has been the good fortune of only a few here to witness the growth of the A. L. A. from its beginnings. There is a certain something which those who partake in the development of an association get which those who come later do not. For the development of an association calls for service, for self-sacrifice, for devotion to a cause. It breeds enthusiasm which is quite useful if it does not overleap its bounds. Certainly those who have watched the development of the S. L. A. have seen evidences of that enthusiasm. In the same way when large or important movements are under way a certain amount of enthusiasm is spontaneously generated, which is again good if it does not overleap itself. An example exists in the recent effort to launch the Enlarged Program. There the Special Libraries Association was at first definitely opposed because it was given no representation and consideration by the Committee on Enlarged Program. But when a fair basis for team-work was offered, the S. L. A. assisted in every way toward making that effort a success.

We hear about cooperation between the S. L. A. and the A. L. A. It is a difficult kind of thing for associations to do, for associations are nothing more than masses. Masses do not cooperate; individuals do. The associations cannot cooperate as associations—they cannot develop joint team-work, mutual self-respect and work together, unless their central offices are so organized that they can cooperate. But we have a situation in which neither association has developed a strong central executive control. I believe that this makes for weakness in management and in team-work. We have in both associations what has seemed to me a division of authority. We have the presidents who have more or less executive control. We have in each association an executive board. We have a secretary. The presidents change generally from year to year. The secretaries' offices offer the only line of continuity. They ought to be strengthened and they ought to be the central organs of management. They

ought to be the mainsprings of action in the associations. I believe that we are developing a weakness at heart if we do not develop our secretaries' offices, if we do not give them authority as well as responsibility. As we are at present we have divided responsibility and authority. The secretaries have responsibility, but they do not have much authority. Moreover with changing presidents we have changing attitudes; with the secretaries' offices as the focal point we would have a continuity in policy that is not always present today. What I say applies to both associations.

Both the A. L. A. and the S. L. A. are engaged in a drive for membership. That is a good work, but it is not enough. We ought to make it possible for a person with one fee to enjoy the privilege of membership in any of our national library associations. We are going to fall short if we do not have a professional membership rather than an association membership. In the A. L. A., the S. L. A. and the other library associations, lie very much the hope of American librarianship. The A. L. A. is at present trying to secure in its membership every public librarian. The S. L. A. is doing the same with every special librarian. Both are actively engaged in fostering the development of libraries; both are doing a pioneer work.

Of the 2,964 counties in the United States, not more than 794, or 27%, were reported in 1920 as having one or more libraries of not less than 5,000 volumes. The other 2,170, or 73%; do not possess libraries properly equipped to give adequate service. Of the 48 states in the Union, 30 serve less than half of their population, 6 states through their public libraries reach less than one-tenth of their residents and one less than 2%. The A. L. A. is trying to increase the number of libraries and is helping in the extension of their service. The S. L. A. has been doing a similar work, particularly in the field of business. We are cooperating with the National Research Council and with the American Statistical Association. We are developing plans for cooperation with the numerous employers' associations and Chambers of Commerce. We have in the United States 1,200,000 business establishments, of which about 280,000 are factories. We do not expect each to develop a special library, but when business has learned to be scientific, to be guided by facts and not guesses, we shall have a goodly proportion of that number of special libraries. So the two associations should work together for the good of the cause.

I believe, too, that we have tried to draw the line too sharply between public and special library work. We have come to look on the business libraries and the public libraries as two separate camps with nothing in common except a technique of li-

brary science. But in a larger sense are we not all engaged in business? Business is nothing more than bread and butter. It represents little more than the earning of a livelihood. The 48,000,000 persons in the United States engaged in gainful occupations are all engaged in some form of business. The public official, and the clerk in a municipal bureau, who are making the service of the community their life work, are making municipal, state or federal work their business. The government is their employer. The theologian and the preacher who earn their livelihood by their teachings and their leadership, are making theology their business. So with the teacher, the business man and others. Each individual renders a specific service for which others are willing to remunerate him.

What then is the distinction between the two? It is largely the attitude of the librarian and the institution with which he is connected, and further, the nature of the services that he is called upon to render. In the municipality or state everybody is the librarian's boss. Every citizen has an equal call on the public library which is supported by his taxes. In the strictly business library, the librarian serves a small clientele. He is required in large measure to do their thinking. He is expected to turn information into profits, not for everybody but for the concern with which he is connected. In the same way the public library has as its task to make the community a success. Viewed broadly, therefore, we are all engaged in removing the opportunities for economic loss, and of cutting down the preventable wastes in our social and economic life.

Let us not, however, forget that before we offer to weed out another's garden we had better weed out our own. Anyone who has considered the waste of effort and of money in the simultaneous preparation by different institutions, both public and private, of bibliographies on the same subject where the results are practically the same, cannot help but recognize that in this

is involved a loss of several million dollars annually. Just as the American Economic Association publishes regularly a list of the theses upon which investigations are being made, and just as the National Research Council and other bodies make public announcement regularly of subjects of investigation by different individuals and concerns, so the library associations should cooperate in publishing current bibliographical information.

Let us not be unmindful that American librarianship, both public and special, has today attained a premier place in all library endeavor. Whether we have taken cognizance of it or not, we are leaders among the nations in library work. We have a responsibility, therefore, and we can meet it only by effective team-work.

There are many in library work today who cry out because we do not move forward fast enough. They are not satisfied with any accomplishment unless their entire program is inaugurated at a single effort. There are others who object because we move forward too quickly. There are others still who object to everything; they are forever looking about fearful of finding something that isn't there. We have a sprinkling of these in each association. But the larger part of librarians are fortunately neither reactionary nor radical. They are not extremists either in action or reaction. It is to these that we must look for that cooperation which we recognize as basic to progress.

Progress is the natural law of life. We advance sometimes slowly, sometimes quickly, but we go forward nevertheless. It is inevitable that in our progress we should encounter many things that we do not like. But this is a man-made world. Perfection is too frequently its aim but not always its attainment. Let us, therefore, look forward to a less critical attitude among librarians in general. Cooperation comes only with confidence, and confidence is an air cushion that may be quickly deflated by the mere pricking of a pin.

Library Training for the Special Librarian

JUNE RICHARDSON DONNELLY,
Director, Simmons College Library School

The topic of this session, *Cooperation between public and special libraries*, is a gratifying combination for it gives me a chance to express what has long been my settled conviction; that in reality training, whether in a school or by experience, does not make public librarians nor special librarians primarily, but just librarians, who may have the different environment of a public library or a special library.

Four months ago at Clark University Dr. John Finley said "A certain distinguished university president has defined education as 'adaptation to one's environment.' I do not like the definition. It is not a good definition for human beings. The definition is 'the conquest of one's environment.'"

Now I agree most thoroughly with Dr. Finley. In my conception a good librarian is one who can conquer his environment,

whether that be a public library, a college library, a business library, or any other variety.

Sometimes such a conquest comes by adapting oneself to certain established conditions, again by destroying existing ones that are unfavorable. A wise engineer studies his maps and his ground; he knows the configuration of the land; he judges whether to make a detour to avoid an obstacle or to blast the obstacle from his straight path.

The great modern conqueror is the engineer, and we are bold enough to class librarianship as an engineering project. The librarian's task is to survey the tract he is to administer, to lay out the road systems which will open it up, to decide upon the transportation methods and agents that will be best suited to assemble material at a desired point expeditiously and in prime condition, all with due regard to the kind of produce the tract bears, its destination and intended use.

In the task of organizing and running a library there is room, according to the size of the job, for the head engineer and often for keen assistants developing toward headship, and so down through the various grades of subordinates, any one of whom may be either the big man of the future, or destined always to remain as one of the undistinguished "gang."

What, then, do we require of a would-be conqueror? First, certain personal qualifications and dispositions. Second, native abilities and education. I am not going to try to develop all that is implied in those two divisions. I am going to speak only of the second point, native abilities and education.

Native ability is an indispensable prerequisite. There is no reason whatever for supposing that a naturally stupid individual, a low grade mentality, can by any varnish of technical instruction or length of practical experience ever be a good librarian. One service we owe to the library profession is to discourage such people from trying to become librarians, and to labor to prevent employers from supposing that a library is a fit field for them. We all know how much a person of great native ability can achieve without much formal education and we sincerely honor the self-made man; but, other things being equal, the better the education before technical training begins, the more desirable the candidate who would enter upon library work.

Every branch of knowledge which is opened up to the librarian adds to his value, both because of the special knowledge it adds to his equipment, and because it gives him a broader conception of life and a better basis for comparison. Every librarian should have a good general foundation, plus a certain understanding of what-

ever specialty his work requires, and the wider and deeper that understanding the better.

To my mind every librarian is as much a specialist as the business or science librarian. Only, the specialty the children's librarian needs is of one type and that of the librarian of an industry which produces dyestuffs is of another. The opposing term to public library is not special library, but private library, and the error in classification implied in opposing public and special, I think, is responsible for a confusion of thought that has led to unnecessary friction.

Whatever the content of knowledge that education has left as a residuum is subordinate to whether the educative process has left a person "educable," able to throw away old knowledge, to scrap false theories and worn out methods, and continuously to survey anew each library experience that comes to him, recognizing the problems involved and thinking them through straight. Given this paragon you will probably tell me that he would make a good librarian without any special library training.

Please let me make myself clear. When it comes to a choice between a person of fine native ability, with good education but no library science knowledge, as opposed to a library school graduate of mediocre ability and average education, I should choose the former without a moment's hesitation.

But no such choice is necessary as I have expressly stipulated for the good qualities of ability and prevocational education in a would-be conqueror. The point is, wouldn't he be a better librarian, with less waste of time, if he could start informed of methods of organizing material, cataloging and indexing it, acquainted with existing tools and on the look-out for new ones; able to compare methods, with appreciation of their use for attaining an end desired? Why make him work through all the stages of development through which the librarians of the past have risen, when he might as well begin at the latest stage and take advantage of evolution?

Whatever the kind of library, the successful librarian will be the one who knows his community, his clientele, his stock of resources, whether books or other kinds, and who can use the best of library science methods to make the resources serve the clientele.

I should like to consider special library training from two viewpoints: First, what I should plan if I had a free hand; second, what actually, even now is available in some library schools. I should like, then, a good surmily of educable people, of good native ability and varied in their previous education and tasks. Then, for a year, I should like to have those planning to serve in public, college or other libraries. For the first part of the year, say from September to March, I should give to them all the

same core of library science, including bibliography, cataloging, indexing, reference and research work.

Those are equally necessary to all the students, but should be taught with all types of libraries in mind. Or it would be better to say that classification, for example, should be taught as a science, not as a mere system of assigning numerical symbols. The various special classifications are as necessary to a person whose sole work may later be with a small public library as to one who has to develop a scheme for a highly specialized collection.

The third term I should allow differentiation in the curriculum for the members of the class, allowing each to "major" according to his or her desires, as far as that could be provided for, with the necessarily restricted facilities available. The line in which one would major would doubtless follow his previous education, experience, or interest. He should visit places of the type that would fit his purposes, whether factories, banks, science libraries or museums. All library schools require some field work, and his should be in the kind of library he has in view. He should study more intensively the "literature of his subject," and the reference books and sources of special information, and work out real problems in obtaining information. He should get as wide an acquaintance with periodicals in his special line as possible, and practice digesting articles.

Finally, he should be given the general problem of supposing he was set the task of organizing and running a library of the type desired, and work out his solution. It might not be a correct one, but he would become acquainted with the snags and possibilities, so that when the actual chance came, he would not start in ignorance. Such adaptation of the curriculum is per-

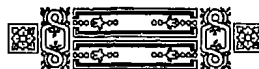
fectly possible, all that stands in the way is lack of funds to finance it, unless there is sufficient demand for it to justify the outlay.

The future will provide for it, but what is there at present? Even now, in all the schools, classification, bibliography and reference courses are valuable to one wishing to be a special librarian, as is the course in public documents and much of the study of library methods. This year, for the first time, Simmons College offered an elective course called "Special Libraries." Eighteen students of the seniors and college graduates elected the course. Between March and June, for ten weeks, the class met twice a week, and were allowed two hours a week after each class hour for study.

The test used was Miss Krause's "Business Libraries," and, I should perhaps add, the periodical "Special Libraries." The course was begun with an address by Mr. Carlos Houghton—"What is a Special Library,"—read by many of you later in the *Library Journal*. It closed with a talk by Mr. George W. Lee on "Information Service." In between, in every alternate class-hour, a librarian of some special library described his particular institution.

Under the surface differences, it was extraordinarily interesting to see the underlying unity in their purposes and methods. Those of us who were public library workers were equally interested to see how fundamentally alike were public and special library ideals, and even methods.

It has been said that the distinctive feature of the special library is service. I should like to emphasize that that is not distinctive of special libraries only, but is the slogan of our profession. We are not two professions, but a united one, as I think this meeting well indicates.



Organizing the Community's Special Library Service

I. The Special Libraries Association of Boston

BERTHA V. HARTZELL,

President, Special Libraries Association of Boston

Editors Note:—One of the outstanding recent accomplishments in the field of special library development has been the remarkable growth of the spirit of organization and cooperation among special librarians in several of our larger cities. In the desire to accord full recognition to this splendid work and in order to get the historical facts into the record, a special meeting was held at which the presidents of the Boston, New York, Philadelphia and Cleveland Associations were asked to give an account of the growth of their respective organizations.

The Special Libraries Association of Boston is just three years old this month. I think it really started a few weeks or months sooner, when about five librarians in Boston used to lunch together at Marston's restaurant. These librarians invited others to join them, began to talk about forming an organization, and finally this was done and the first meeting was called at the Town Room on the 4th of June. There were twenty-six people present. A constitution was voted upon, accepted, officers elected and a definite policy outlined. The librarians agreed to meet monthly at the different libraries so that they could get acquainted with each other. These meetings went on for the first year. There was a membership of twenty paid-up members and many others who were not paid-up. Talk was started about a handbook and directory.

The second year opened a little more auspiciously with a memorable porch supper at Mr. Lee's home. After supper we had an evening meeting by the light of the porch lamp and I think it was then that we became a definite unit with a real interest in each other's welfare.

Through that second year the meetings were held, among other places, at Harvard College, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, the State House and the Boston Public Library. At the Isle of Shoals we united with the Massachusetts Library Club in a meeting which was quite successful. The handbook, or directory was gotten under way. We listed all the libraries we could find in Mr. Powers' handbook and sent out questionnaires, the result of which appeared in the form of a directory in "Special Libraries" published in February, 1920. Then those entries were run by the Curtis Press, making a little yellow book which we sold for a quarter, and finally came out even. We

had that year forty paid-up members and a banner attendance of forty-eight.

The third year showed some progress. We began with a little feeling of sociability and self-confidence. We had our first social meeting at the Social Service Library, where we served cider and doughnuts and proceeded to get acquainted. Then, gaining in our self-confidence we invited the American Library Association to hold their next annual meeting at Swampscott. That invitation was later accepted. From a membership of forty we jumped this year to ninety-five paid-up members, more than doubling our membership, and our meetings have grown more and more successful.

The things that we have accomplished this year are not many, but they mark certain strides. About the first thing, we had some stationery printed. Then we took up the matter of a union periodical list. Fortunately the Boston society has some pretty active members, who are not afraid of work, and with one of these gentlemen at the head of the committee the different librarians handed in lists of their periodicals. These lists were looked over and a collection made of eleven different libraries, varying the nature of the library as much as possible so to make the list rather a broad one. Those eleven libraries with their magazines were listed in this union list of periodicals and annuals. The libraries included were: the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, the Boston Elevated Railway Company, the Insurance Library of Boston, Arthur D. Little, Inc., Lockwood, Greene & Co., the Old Colony Trust Company, the Social Law Library, the Social Service Library, Stone & Webster, the Women's Educational & Industrial Union and the Youth's Companion. The list is selling for fifty cents.

Then the directory was again brought up. Our last year's edition was out of date

and we needed very much a new edition for the Swampscott convention and for our own use. So a revision was started in May and a new edition was published through the courtesy of the city of Boston. This directory covers 115 special libraries in Boston. There must be more; we know there are, and we hope to list the rest of them soon. It is indexed by subject. We have also put in an index of librarians so we can find each other quickly. A number of committees have been appointed. Of course, we have a committee on membership, which also acts as a committee on hospitality.

We have some dreams for the future which I hope may be carried out next year. I should like to see in the possession of the president of the Association next year a card catalogue of every librarian in the city of Boston, and on that card a record of his former positions, his training, whether he is a member of the Boston Special Libraries Association only or of the A. L. A. or of the S. L. A. or of the Massachusetts Library Club and some special designation for each one who is a member of every organization to which he is eligible. Such a card would serve as a very useful document when questions come up of getting new positions. This year a number of librarians have come to me asking if I knew of positions vacant around Boston, and the executive committee, which meets every month has been trying to solve the problem of getting the news of such librarians across to the business firms who need them. It is a real problem for next year, how to circularize the business firms in Boston

who want to have libraries or perhaps have libraries with untrained librarians.

We have also this year given quite a little assistance to one or two institutions which are in difficulty over the library. One gentleman came to me and said he was starting a library; they were putting in the books; they were using Library of Congress cards and they were placing the books in order on the shelves, numbering the first book 1, the second book 2, the third book 3, and that they had an expert stenographer who was going to take charge of the collection. She would put subject headings which they found at the bottom of the Library of Congress cards on the top of the card, and the number, 1, 2, 3, of the book. He admitted, however, that it was rather awkward. Certain books come out in five volumes about a year and a half apart—it separated the volumes. I was able to help him there.

Then as an educational institution the Special Libraries Association can do a great deal. I always have the feeling that there may be a kind of barrier between the person who has had long experience but no technical training, the people who have had technical training and practically no experience, and the younger people who are coming in, anxious to be librarians, but who have not had time to get the training and who have not had enough time to get experience. Our associations can do a great deal in the way of bridging the gap. I think those of us who have had training want to consult more and more with those who have had the longer experience, and we can all do a great deal to help the newcomer.

The New York Special Libraries Association

REBECCA B. RANKIN,

President, New York Special Libraries Association

The New York Special Libraries Association cannot claim the youth that the Boston Special Libraries Association can. Our association began about 1909. My stay in New York has not been for many years, so I only know of it recently. The association seemed to have had a very severe sickness and it needed a good deal of reviving, so that is what we have been trying to do in the past year. We decided this year that we might be able to overcome the handicap of a scattered membership if we could find a time when we could meet, and we decided that the best time was when we were eating. So we conceived the idea of having our meetings dinner meetings. We have been having the meeting at 5:30 and just after the meal we have our business. Every meeting is a social meeting, or at least it starts socially, and when people

have had something to eat they are in a very much better mood to receive things intellectually than any other time.

Our first objective this year was to increase our membership. Last May there were 88 members. So we started out to try to increase our membership. We also felt that almost the same as this objective was a larger attendance at our meetings. If we could get more people to attend we would develop more spirit and have more opportunity of getting the speakers we wanted. We also wanted to accomplish some real beneficial things for the good of all special libraries in the city.

Those were the objectives that we started out with. Now as to how we accomplished them. In order to know who to ask to join our association it seemed necessary that we have something to start on. That at

once made it necessary that we have a list of the special libraries in New York. We started out with this object, using all the sources that were at hand. And working on that with the use of questionnaires and numberless calls on the telephone, after months we were able to get together the list of special libraries which you have seen printed in "The Library Journal." It resulted in a list of 250 special libraries. We know we have not all of them yet, but we are doing our best to improve it. Another list has been printed this month which brings the number up to about 280. We estimate that there are between 400 and 450 special librarians in the city.

Aside from the dinners, which we tried to make attractive and cheap, we tried to make a really live program. We were able to draw in many different kinds of libraries. We have not restricted ourselves to business libraries or any one type of library. At the first meeting we happened to take up the topic of the newspaper library, and everybody was interested. At that meeting we tried to separate people at the dinner table so that they did not know one another, and the first thing we knew, everybody that had to do with a certain type of library wanted to get together—all the people from medical libraries, all the financial libraries, etc. Our next meeting was a group meeting and we accentuated that feature by making it a competitive group meeting. We made ten large groups and appointed a group leader for each. The business of these leaders was to get as many people in their group interested and to notify each individual person of this meeting and ask their attendance. Thereby we got a splendid attendance and we even offered a prize to the group that would have the largest percentage attendance. The chemical-medical got it in this case with 90 per cent attendance.

Then we offered a prize for the best individual idea about library methods, and each group presented a number of methods that they were using. That group idea

seemed so successful that we have stayed right by it and at each meeting since we have appointed a group leader.

We have a number of committees in our organization, but I think the tendency is in all organizations to depend on a few people. When you once find somebody who will work and you can depend on him, that is the man you put your finger on and you keep him working all the time. We had a social committee this year, but each evening we appointed a group of people to assist the social committee and at each meeting that was a different group. You can find out the timber that you have in your organization and after you have got it lined up you can set them to the particular task you want to accomplish.

Then we found that we did not have enough information about these groups. From our list we found how many libraries there were in the financial field and how many in the civic field, for instance, but we did not know enough about the resources of each of these libraries. So we thought we would start the idea that has been tried in Boston of a clearing house, and we formed a clearing house committee that made a questionnaire, and at the next meeting, instead of an open discussion, the groups got together and each one was asked to fill out his questionnaire. At that meeting we had one hundred cards filled out.

We started an employment office about 1914 or 1915 under Dr. Williamson in the Municipal Reference Library. Last year the whole responsibility of the employment work was given over to the Y. W. C. A. Employment Bureau, the woman at the head of it, Miss Eugenia Wallace, being a special librarian and a member of our association. The officers of the National Association may be assured that they have the full support of our association. We hope this clearing house idea may be carried out and as soon as it is carried out it may then become national.

The Special Libraries Council of Philadelphia and Vicinity

HELEN M. RANKIN,

Secretary, Special Libraries Council of Philadelphia

The history of the organization of special libraries in Philadelphia may be traced back to 1913, when the Special Libraries Association appointed directors for the various geographical sections. Mr. Morton, Librarian of the United Gas Improvement Company, was appointee for Philadelphia, and thereupon invited all the local members to meet with him and plan for a local organization. Several meetings were held,

among them a dinner meeting at Mr. Morton's own home, and a much larger dinner at which Mr. Lee was the guest of honor. The Pennsylvania Library Club showed its interest by electing Mr. Morton its President.

Unfortunately, soon after this, Mr. Morton's ill health obliged him to restrict his interests, and his death, which was not long in following was a real blow to the

special libraries movement in Philadelphia. Mr. Fairchild, of the Philadelphia Rapid Transit Company was appointed regional director in succession to Mr. Morton, but the outbreak of the war and the consequent business difficulties made it impossible for him to give attention to library matters..

For a number of years, nothing further in the way of a local association of special libraries was attempted. Individually, members of the Special Libraries Association urged the advantage of membership upon newly formed libraries, and partly through meetings after the Pennsylvania Library Club, and partly through business visits, kept up more or less contact with each other.

The need of regular meetings was becoming increasingly apparent, when in September, 1919, Mr. Fairchild called a meeting in the form of a "Talk-it-over" dinner to consider means of closer coordination and cooperation of Special Libraries and librarians in Philadelphia. A Ways and Means Committee was appointed at that time to prepare a plan of organization. It was decided that the newly formed organization should be called, "The Special Libraries Council of Philadelphia and Vicinity," that for the sake of closer ties between the general and special libraries, the Council should affiliate with the Pennsylvania Library Club. The officers are: a Chairman, a Vice-Chairman, a Secretary, Treasurer, and an Executive Board, composed of the Chairman, Vice Chairman, together with three other members of the Council. The next step was the preparation of a "program of work" 1. A clearing house of information. 2. Directory of sources of information in and about Philadelphia 3. Union list of periodicals and annuals 4. Publicity. 5. Interesting programs.

The Free Library of Philadelphia very generously offered the Municipal Reference Division as headquarters for the Clearing House furnishing telephone and messenger service. Thus equipped, it is ever ready to serve the Special Libraries cooperators by trying to discover the person, library or publication that can supply the needed information in the shortest possible time.

The majority of the questions are such as can be answered from the sources of information in the Free Library, and other large technical libraries. When necessary, the question is referred to the special li-

brary best qualified to deal with it. Great discretion is used at all times to avoid causing any unreasonable expenditure of time on the part of the business librarian. A record of questions is kept, with notes as to sources from which answers were obtained. At the clearing house, is also kept a record of persons wanting positions in special libraries work, also those wanting the services of special librarians. An almost intangible result of our organization and meetings is the spirit of cooperation which exists between the general and special libraries each availing itself of the benefits to be derived from the others. The Free Library has also extended to all members of the Council a special borrowing privilege to its large collection of reference books, its government depository, back files of periodicals, etc.

The current year witnessed the completion of a "Tentative List of Libraries in Philadelphia," prepared by the Committee on Directory of Information. The Committee had a list of about 150 names of librarians and others in and about Philadelphia, to whom letters were sent asking them to fill out a card giving directory details and subjects in which they specialize. The results of this survey were issued in mimeographed form.

The mimeographed list after considerable revision was published in the form of a Directory, appearing in "The Library Journal" of February 15, would listed 107 libraries in varied fields, with about 250 entries in the subject index. In order to obtain the needed material for the new edition of the Directory, the Committee is planning an intensive campaign to unearth and bring to light many now unknown special libraries and special types of information.

One of our chief aims has been to put the special librarians in closer touch with each other. The extent to which this has been accomplished is due, I believe, to the meetings of the Council held at regular intervals, thus affording opportunities for an interchange of ideas, discussion of methods of work, thrashing out of respective problems, etc. The Special Libraries Council of Philadelphia has, in our opinion, splendid opportunities for development, and whatever our progress has been, from the efforts of those who have given of their time to promote the movement, the real work has just begun.

The Cleveland Club of Special Librarians

ALTA B. CLAFLIN,

President, Cleveland Club of Special Librarians

The Cleveland Club of Special Librarians—a good example of close cooperation between the public and special libraries of a city—was organized in December, 1919, at

the call of one of the department heads of the Public Library. Its membership includes five chiefs of divisions at the Public Library, representing the Stations Depart-

ment, Main Reference, Technology and Economics Divisions, and the Municipal Reference Library.

The number of special librarians in Cleveland is small, but they represent a wide diversity of industries. Our members include the librarians of large automobile, steel, carbon, tractor and electrical companies, a hospital library, the Lake Division of the Red Cross, a department store, a large clothing manufacturing plant, one of the leading newspapers, the Museum of Art, and the Federal Reserve Bank library.

Since our organization there has been considerable change in personnel. Owing to business stagnation two or three of the industrial libraries have become inactive or have been discontinued altogether. Our meetings take place once a month except during the summer. At first our chief interest was in getting acquainted with each other's libraries and their organization and objects, and naturally we met at the various institutions represented. Later a good attendance has been secured by meeting for dinner, followed by a general talk or report. Miss Tyler was our guest at one of these

dinners and her talk and the discussion following was of unusual interest.

Our future problem is to hold our scattered membership together by good programs and some sort of cooperative work. One result of our association has been a union list of periodicals in Cleveland libraries, which is now in the hands of the chief of the Technology Division at the Public Library, to be printed within a few months. Our organization also made possible a Special Libraries Section at the last convention of the Ohio Library Association. This will be continued at the coming convention this fall.

No one questions the benefits of such an association as ours, no matter how small the membership. One of the difficulties of special librarians is a sort of loneliness, and an absence of any means of comparison whereby we may gauge our own success or non-success. Personal contacts, through a formal association with others having to some extent similar problems, gives us more assurance in meeting our own, and a knowledge of where to turn for help when necessary.

Obtaining Information for the Special Library

The Acquisition of Special Library Material

ELSIE L. BAECHTOLD,

Librarian, Irving National Bank, New York City

Editors Note:—The three general sessions of the Convention were paralleled by three group meetings in which intensive consideration was given to the problems of special library organization and management. The first group meeting, of which Mr. Lewis A. Armistead was Chairman, had for its topic, "Obtaining Information for the Special Library." Miss Baechtold presented the first paper.

Last winter I compiled a chart illustrating the actual operation of selection, ordering and acquisition of special library material. Mr. Armistead asked me if I would enlarge that chart and bring it to you tonight, because we seem to be doing the same thing in so many different ways. It might be a good chance, while many of us are together, to discuss an ideal method by which we could select, and order and acquire the material for our special libraries.

The information on this chart is not complete. I sent letters to about a hundred special librarians. I wish I could have made it a thousand, but time was limited. I had replies from about thirty. I asked these thirty librarians if they would tell

me their methods of selecting, ordering and acquiring material, up to the time it is accessioned. Many of the answers received were too general to be of value, but others gave details that proved most helpful.

In selecting material there was not much variation. People used about the same sort of sources to select from—the "Publishers' Weekly," the Government check list, the list of publications of current periodicals, publishers' circulars, special circulars, etc. In many cases purchases are made in response to requests made by company officials, and such requests call for careful attention as the inquirer may be an influential man.

The next question asked was: "Who

selects the material?" About sixty-five per cent said that the librarian had the authority to do the selecting. The remainder were obliged to obtain authorization or the O. K. of higher officers, etc. This brings up the question of professional recognition. We as specialists ought to know our materials sufficiently well to select better than someone who has only a general idea. I think that we should make every effort to win professional recognition in matters of this kind. In most cases I think that the selecting is done by the librarians themselves, but there are many who have not this privilege.

The next question was: "Who O. K.'s the selection?" Different methods were followed by different libraries. As to O.K'ing, the librarian sometimes was responsible; sometimes the purchasing department, or perhaps a higher officer of the firm. Where there is a library committee, that body quite frequently is responsible for O.K'ing, as the members of the committee are interested particularly in library matters.

With regard to the methods employed in ordering material, the practice varied considerably. I know of one library where the orders go through eight different hands before they are sent out to the publisher. If you want a periodical in a hurry, you have to send it through eight different hands and certain of these people are not at their desks, or are not to be found, and you see what is going to happen. I suppose this is an individual problem, but it would be a great advance if we could devise some ideal plan and say: this works.

There were very few of the libraries that permitted the librarian to do the actual ordering without the O. K. of somebody else. I suppose this is usual in special libraries. Two librarians were permitted to purchase unhampered up to \$50 or \$100. For anything over these amounts, they were required to ask permission. Practically all of them were required to put it up to some superior officer and get his O. K. first.

Another important thing is the ordering of the material. Returns showed that it was divided 50 per cent each way: the librarian ordered sometimes, and sometimes the purchasing department placed the or-

ders. If any of you have had the experience of putting orders through a very busy purchasing department which orders anything from tacks to fine desks, when it comes to a magazine subscription or a book the order is apt to be side-tracked. I think it is a real triumph, in special libraries where orders must go through the purchasing department, if the practice can be changed so that the librarian is permitted to do the actual ordering.

As to the question of procedure in ordering, some librarians have a great deal of red tape, using a duplicate and triplicate order form and requisition and the signatures of many people. When the material is actually purchased and ordered and the bills come in, it is interesting to know who is to handle the bills. If the librarian does the ordering, it would follow that the bills should come to him or her for O. K. In some libraries the librarian's signature is sufficient for the bill to be sent on to the Auditor and paid, but I find that that is very infrequent. Usually the librarian signifies that the material is at hand, then the bill is passed to some one else who signifies that it is all right, and then it goes to the purchasing department and finally to the Auditor and is paid. This is sometimes a serious difficulty, because a bill may be held up.

In regard to the receipt of material, that also hinges on who orders it. Usually the librarians who order the material also receive it. One librarian told me that all their purchases came to the mail department first and were then sent on to them. I think that was the only case where material was handled in that way. In many cases material was received by the purchasing department and then forwarded. In some of these cases the library did not receive or handle the bills in any way.

The records that are used in the order work and the acquisition work were rather interesting. I just want to cite one or two that impressed me especially as being most valuable. There is the use of colored cards for different kinds of material ordered and the use of the order card almost as a shelf list card, and after the material is received it is transferred to the received file and then to the regular shelf list, obviating the necessity of making another shelf list card.

Using the New York Times Index

JENNIE WELLAND,
Librarian, New York Times

Some of the people present are in charge of libraries that subscribe for the Times Index and I wonder if you always get the most good that you can from it. We know that a great many people turn instinctively

to the newspaper offices for answers to certain questions. All kinds of questions come to us, as, for example, "How many miles from here to Japan?" "What is the flag out for today?" etc. Most of these ques-

tions we refer to you librarians; some of them we do answer, and the Index can be of great utility to both of us in this connection.

Consider, for instance, the matter of the financial condition of various companies. Such condition may be indicated by whether or not it declares a dividend. If it does declare a dividend things seem to be going pretty smoothly. We have recently seen a number of companies pass their dividends. Do you realize that you might obtain interesting information regarding the financial condition of various companies by methods such as the above from the Times Index?

You have directories that give the names of the directors of corporations. These corporations sometimes have meetings at which new directors are elected. If that company has had a meeting and new officers or directors have been elected, the fact very likely has been reported in the newspapers, and if it has been reported in "The Times" it is to be found by means of the Times Index.

Other things happen at the annual meet-

ings of these corporations that you might be interested in. They may vote to increase their capital stock. The Times Index will give you some idea of their activities. The exact name of a corporation or the exact name of an organization, whether it is a national society or an international society, may also be looked up.

This kind of thing happened while I was doing library work. A lawyer in our town had a case brought to him, and he wanted to act on it at once. A man felt he had claim to a certain amount of property. He learned that the man in whose estate he was interested was reported to have been killed in an accident a number of years before. He wanted to make sure whether or not this man was dead. At that time the Times Index was not published, and I could not answer in ten minutes, but if I were asked a similar question now, I should have little difficulty in answering. I should look up my list of accidents, occurring within a certain time, and then I would find the list of casualties, to find if that man had been in that accident, and if so, whether he had been killed.

A Museum of Electrical Instruments

HELEN E. HEMPHILL,

Librarian, Western Electric Company

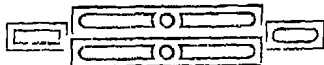
A hackneyed but important maxim says: "Know the men in your organization." I feel that this is a matter of first importance for the librarian who is organizing a new library or taking over an old one. In some ways it is even more important than such matters as cataloguing, filing, and so forth.

A manufacturing corporation which has developed an art from its inception, the way the Western Electric Company has developed the telephone, has on its staff men who are pioneers of that art, and these men are your most useful source of information. We have among our pioneers and inventors the curator of our historical museum, a man who has always been very helpful to the library.

Mr. John Cotton Dana, in an article published a short time ago in "The Library Journal," discussed the problem of making museums "alive," referring, of course, to the large, public museums. The Western Electric Company's Museum is anything but the

dead circus that Dr. Slosson referred to this afternoon. Our Company is making history so rapidly that we are obliged to put instruments in glass cases as soon as they come out. The loud-speaking telephone used by President Harding in his inaugural address, became ancient history by the time the Havana-Key West cable was opened a month later.

The Museum has a chronological arrangement of receivers and transmitters from the time of the first telephone of Alexander Graham Bell to the present time. It has, among other things, the instruments used at the opening of the trans-continental telephone line in 1913; the one used in talking by wireless telephone from Arlington to Honolulu in that same year; the submarine detectors and airplane sets developed during the war, and many other interesting devices. By means of this museum all instruments used in such epoch-making achievements are preserved and labeled, and they become our record of telephone development.



Organizing Special Library Data

The Service of an Industrial Library

EDITH MAC PHAIL,

Librarian, Scovill Manufacturing Company

Editors Note:—The second group meeting, devoted to the topic "Organizing Special Library Data," was presided over by Mr. George Wintthrop Lee, as Group Chairman. Representatives of the Filing Associations in several cities were invited to present papers at this meeting and two such papers are published herewith. Miss Mac Phail delivered the first paper at the meeting.

Any one who goes into industrial work has to be in the business about a year before he can know the kind of research work to carry on. One of the first steps is to analyze the organization and to find out the specialties of the important people in the organization. It is also important to learn the language of the plant—this sometimes will save hours of search and enable the librarian to get to the heart of a given question in the shortest time.

To illustrate this point; one of the men from our factory wanted to know something about eyelet machines. After considerable search I discovered that plain plunger presses were used on eyelet machine work. Not long afterwards one of the scientists from the factory said, "I wish you would get all the material you have on grommet machines. I found that grommets were eyelets, and so I gave him everything on eyelets.

The men soon begin to realize that you are using the expert knowledge of the people in the organization, and they will bring questions to you which they are reluctant to ask of each other. These men bring their questions to the library and in this way it frequently happens that men are brought together who never would have thought of discussing their mutual problems in this way. A great many times it means that the question is answered and the man who has been asked for the information is much pleased by the thought that he is giving expert advice that will prove helpful to the recipient and indirectly to the firm. Development of this type of service means that new men coming into the organization will be brought to the library to get acquainted with the resources of the plant or factory.

The next step is to find all available

sources of information in the city or immediate vicinity and to make a subject catalogue of all such informational sources. It should be thoroughly understood that the information thus obtained is for the benefit of the organization which the library represents and that you can reciprocate just so far as the policy of your Company permits. With this understanding, competitors' libraries are able to cooperate and very often exchange common information on a subject. This is the application of the sponsorship idea.

Practically every industry maintains its staff of research specialists to make experiments for the improvement of the company's product or for the development of new business. In this connection the library has the important function of compiling bibliographies and collecting data for the aid of those who are carrying on routine research or who are making new investigations. In carrying on work of this character all possible sources must be consulted, special bibliographies must be prepared and every effort put forward to aid the research staff.

The American Brass Company Library has an interesting method of distributing information. About thirty-five periodicals are currently received. These periodicals are read thoroughly and bulletins are then compiled and distributed to all department heads. Every article of interest is catalogued. The Winchester Repeating Arms Company has another way of getting information quickly to the men. Two subscriptions to certain magazines are maintained; interesting articles are clipped and put in folders. These folders are sent to the men most interested in the subjects covered, so that they do not have to wait for the magazine to circulate.

Special Library Office Forms

MARGUERITE BURNETT,

Librarian, Federal Reserve Bank, New York City

The topic assigned to me is Office Forms and it seems as though this should be a good opportunity to get some help in what to me is a very real problem. I feel that perhaps I am not born too late to get some inspiration and help in my adventure towards what is to me a library frontier, and I think any business librarian starting out will feel the same as I did a year ago when I had to come into my library and had only one office form to begin with.

With two exceptions the forms adopted were borrowed from New York special libraries. I hope that the libraries of the National City Bank, the Guaranty Trust Company, the American Telephone and Telegraph Company, and the National Bank of Commerce will not be too much surprised when I give them this unavoidable publicity. As I had no time to undertake a careful survey I simply took what I could from the forms already worked out by these libraries.

The forms in question are connected with the three main functions of a special library: ordering, reference work, and indexing. The order cards are borrowed from the National City Bank. Their scheme of four different colors indicates whether a book is free or purchased or whether it is an annual or a single order. This scheme has proved very useful to me because it segregates automatically those cards which need attention in the case of the annuals.

When it comes to ordering methods, the question comes up whether to write a letter or a post card; we decided on the latter. When it came to the questionnaire what frightened me was how I could express concretely the thought, and have a sentence that would apply to any kind of work that I wanted in the future. Then, how should I sign the card, with my name as librarian or in some other way.

Then there is the question of acknowledgment. I suppose you have heard the old saying that gratitude is a lively sense of favors to come. One must express the gratitude when the favor arrives. There is a difference of opinion as to whether you should write a letter on the regular letter-head of the firm, or whether you should use a post card. Personally I think that when the material comes to you as a matter of form, you may acknowledge it in a formal manner and use a simple form of post card. Then, what form of phraseology will be brief and appreciative and genuine and yet not state too much and not be gushing? I think that if I had samples of all forms

used by different libraries, it would be a great assistance to me.

When it comes to reference work, I suppose all libraries desire to keep some sort of record of questions asked. Opinions seem to differ as to whether the record shall be a brief one of the question asked, the one who answered it and the date and the main sources of information, or whether you will list all of your sources. Here again I believe that the two sources ought to be made into a bibliography and filed in the regular way. My file is simply a yellow slip which gives briefly the question and two or three sources.

In regard to indexing, I have two forms which, so far as I know, are original. One was suggested by the head of our Statistics Department and has proved very useful. As you perhaps know, the Statistics Department of the Federal Reserve Bank gets out a monthly survey of business conditions. The material for that survey is collected first-hand from the business men, retailers and others in industries. The men who go out for this information have a first-class reference list that I wanted to get on cards so that it would be preserved. By means of these cards we have prepared a "Who Knows" file. You look there for the name of the firm that can give you information on cotton or exports or steel or whatever it is that you are interested in. Already we have a drawer full of cards. In order that the man shall give you the information that you want for your permanent records, we make a second slip, which is a duplicate of the top one, and each one carries a number in his pocket wherever he goes and he is supposed to hand in these slips from time to time. I might say that the librarian has to remind them periodically, and every Monday morning their memories are prodded. The slips give the name, address and telephone number, and when received they are "rated." If the head of the department is interviewed, it is "A" for authority; if it is an assistant the authority rating is "B," etc.

Another form is the indexing reference slip, which we have found quite successful. On this slip is the following note: "Please indicate, for library indexing purposes, the paragraph or chapter in this book that you have found valuable." We have received a great many references from these books that we have not caught ourselves.

Earlier in the evening Miss Hasse spoke of the slogan of the immediate future as being standardization, and Miss Baechtold told of a plan whereby the Special Libra-

ries Association might work to this end. I would like to suggest that we include in our program, standardization not only of ordering methods, but of library forms as well. If we could collect the sample forms, pending the time when the Special Libra-

ries Association can give official approval to a standard form, we would be doing a great service to special librarians. If the collection could be kept at a central point and mailed I believe it would prove a great help.

Special Library Indexing Methods

MARGARET C. WELLS,

Librarian, American International Corporation, New York City

The American International Corporation Library is actually the Clearing House of the Corporation. We are asked all sorts of questions and receive all sorts of material for filing, such as maps, charts, pictures, lantern slides, blueprints, etc. The library works hand in hand with the Research Department.

The library's subject classification, used for sorting and filing all miscellaneous data, such as clippings, pamphlets, miscellaneous circulars, reports and memoranda prepared by the members of the Research Department, is the same as that used by the File Department. For material, such as maps, that require geographic filing, a geographic classification, also used by the File Department, is employed. The necessary index cards are made and abbreviations are placed before the subject number. These abbreviations indicate at a glance the type material that may be desired, when one is consulting the catalog: Initial C—Indicates clippings; Initial P—indicates pamphlets; Initial M—indicates memoranda or reports prepared by the Research Department, and Initial MI—indicates miscellaneous circulars or other miscellaneous information.

We make an Author card for each publication (with the exception of clippings) using the Cutter Author Table. Some may question the feasibility of this, but as we have very frequently been given such questions as what publication did we receive a few months ago issued by the Guaranty Trust Co., what publications have we that have been issued by the Bankers' Trust Co., what, and when did Mr. Smith of the Research Department prepare certain reports, what was the name of the pamphlets we received a few months ago by B. M. Anderson (subject rather vague in the inquirer's mind), we are confident the extra time spent on indexing is fully warranted. All Research reports are filed chronologically under the subject.

Maps are fully carded and cross-indexed. The cards are arranged alphabetically and the maps are filed in large map cabinets by

the geographic classification number. All material which is too large or too bulky to be filed conveniently either in the vertical files, in the large map cabinets, or on the shelves, is properly carded and placed in a stock room. Of course, the index cards indicate the disposition of such data. A list of this material is kept which serves as an excellent check for identification of the Library property, if by any chance it is misplaced in the Stock Room. It also serves as a good inventory record.

We file all pictures numerically and the necessary subject cards are made referring to the individual folders. All pictures are filed, properly labeled, in one folder bearing upon one subject, unless there are too many. In that case, a proper classification is made and pictures are sorted, listed, and properly numbered according to this outline, labelled and filed in individual folders, numbered according to the classification scheme. This classification with a list of the pictures in each folder is placed before the first folder on the subject.

The index which we have found most helpful is the one we have for the United States Laws. At the beginning of each Session a subscription is placed for a set of the "Slip Laws." These are filed in a binder numerically by the Public Act Number. The necessary subject cards are made for those Acts which are important or for those which may possibly be of special interest to the Corporation. On the subject cards is noted: the title of the Act, the date passed, the number of the Bill as introduced in the Senate or House, the number of the Congress and Session, and the Public Act Number. A card is also made for each Act giving the above mentioned information, and a set of these cards is filed by the number of the Bill as introduced in the Senate or House. This file is kept in case an Act is wanted when only the Bill number is known. One may readily see that the Public Act number is the key for locating the Act. This file has proven invaluable many times.

Classifying Business Books

ESTELLE L. LIEBMANN,

Librarian, The Ronald Press Company

The Library of the Ronald Press undertakes very little research work, but we have developed a classification for business books which may be of some interest to the members here assembled. We tried every known classification scheme, but could find none that fulfilled our needs. In the classification that we finally adopted the books were divided into three general groups, namely, Finance, "Units of Operation" (meaning the actual working departments of a business), and Administration.

In working out the details of the classification plan a chart showing the field of economics and business relationships, proved most helpful. This chart, on the one hand, shows Production and all the elements entering therein; Distribution and the various functions entering into distribution, exchange, money, markets, etc. To organize a business money has to be procured, a site has to be selected, the buildings have to be constructed or bought. This makes a going concern which functions, organizes, administers, produces and distributes. Our point of view refers to business organization rather than to pure economics. So our first classification group was finance, the initial factor in every business; the second group was the going concern with its units of op-

eration, buying, purchasing, selling, merchandising, etc. The third group, administration, includes accounting, etc. The fourth group was education and employment, including labor problems; the fifth and sixth the more general aspects of economics, such as public administration and finance, law and taxation, and foreign trade, commerce, transportation, etc. We devoted one section to the printing and publishing business and added a miscellaneous group to provide for any unforeseen subjects.

The details of the schedules follow to a great extent those of the Library of Congress Classification, although Dewey has also been used. There is much room for improvement, but the basic idea of the classification has been very satisfactory. The accounting classification has been the same as that adopted by nearly all accounting libraries. Everything has been classed under function rather than under the industry so that accounting for retail trade would be classed with accounting; advertising for retail trade under advertising, etc. Under each department or function there is room for any kind of business. The catalogue, of course, brings them all together.

The Boston Filing Association

RUTH E. CLEMENT,

President, Boston Filing Association

The Boston Filing Association at the present time has two hundred and sixty-five members. We hold filing meetings each month; we have speakers representing the different methods of filing, and we have a question box at the end.

We hear a good deal about libraries being needed, that is, books being needed, but if one goes around very much you notice how little books are of use to an organization if there is not the right person there to make use of them. You may have a large library and not have it used, but if you had a person familiar with library methods they can help a great deal.

I was with a railroad a few years ago, and their library it was in a chaotic state. They enjoyed it because they had so many duplicate copies of books. A man could stand in the middle of the floor, and, if he wanted a 1911 Railroad Commissioners' report, he could put his hand on the floor or on the shelf and help himself. I weeded

out the library and took out nearly six hundred duplicate bound volumes and three hundred and fifty unbound volumes of periodicals. The Vice-President went in one day and could not find anything that he wanted. He was distracted, and he nearly tore his hair, and I wondered what was going to happen to me. Finally, by degrees, they would come to the librarian, and when they took a book they would leave the slip with me, and before I knew it they were asking me all kinds of questions, what the statistics of railroad strikes were for the last month, to be ready for a court case in the morning, etc. By the time I left them, I found it was worth while to be a librarian and be ready to help.

At the present time I am in the real estate business, and one realizes after being in such an active business, how it is that men come into a public library and hold up their hands. They do not want to look at a card catalogue, and if you are

in a live business, such as real estate, you will realize why. A man wants a thing when he wants it. He does not want to be told to go to a book; he does not want to be told to go to a stack. He merely puts his question, and if he wants to see the letter that he wrote the photographer last week, you should remember the name of the photographer.

I remember a letter that was written to Chicago asking for information on wood preservation and creosoting. That happened to be a subject I knew a little about, and I secured the "Industrial Arts Index" and looked up references on wood preservation. The man who wrote the letter was greatly surprised. Business men have no conception of the help for their business which can be gotten from the librarian.

I am going to see if we librarians cannot get to the front. We have to remember simplicity. It is the greatest art, and we will find in all kinds of business that they try so very hard to be systematic that they overdo system.

In my own business, they undertake to number the buildings we manage. A tenant will call up and say that something is wrong, and you have to know the number of the building to make the proper record. If it happened to be a building which had not been called upon for some time, you would have to refer to an index instead of merely finding it by your street arrangement.

We not only do a real estate business in Boston, but we are doing a large chain-store business throughout the United States. When Mr. Ballard asked me what we could do on a chain-store file, I went to Mr. Lee, and he said, "Haven't you seen that bibliography of chain stores in the Library of

Congress?" There I found what I wanted to know, that there were in 1919 65,000 chain stores, nearly 5,000 chains. Of drug stores alone, there were 350 chains and of Woolworth stores, eleven hundred. When we are dealing with such a tremendous business we have to keep alert on all the locations throughout the United States and be ready to offer them space.

We have maps of every city we can get hold of in the United States, of over 30,000 people, and on these maps are plotted all the locations and who occupies them. One map, for example, shows every tenant in every store in the heart of Boston. Mr. Ballard goes to California and may sit down with a man who will say, "I want seven locations in New England." Mr. Ballard will then take out a Boston map, a Haverhill map, or a Providence map, and say, "Here is your location; there is Woolworth next door; there is so and so across the street." All that means a great deal of office detail. We have to work constantly to keep them up to date, so that when people come to us we can talk intelligently. We compile little booklets containing photostatic copies of our large maps, and we send them to Woolworth or Liggett, and tell them to look over the locations which we have to offer in various cities. I can tell you it is very worth while and, as a librarian, I am delighted to be in the business and to feel that perhaps our profession can offer something to big business. I cannot help but feel that we are certainly in an age of specialization, and everyone should specialize in his own subject, and if there is anything in the world that we in the real estate business can offer to anybody else in business, we will be only too glad, and I am sure that the special libraries will cooperate.

The Philadelphia Filing Association

HELEN CRAFT,
Philadelphia Filing Association

I have been asked to tell you about our Association in Philadelphia. I do not know whether it is as old as the one you have here in Boston or not, but it is very small. We only have twenty-nine members, and they all have to be file executives, to belong.

Mr. Montgomery, of the Library Bureau in Philadelphia, invited a number of young ladies to have dinner at the Arcade Restaurant and form this Association. Its real object is to bring up any point not understood, so that somebody else in the Association can help you. The members are from all the important firms in the city and surrounding territory. We have a great many

very large concerns just outside of Philadelphia.

We give this dinner every month and have some interesting speaker. One speaker told us about the Federal Reserve Bank; another described the work of a large steel corporation. After the speaker is finished, we bring up any question that we wish. Most of the girls have subject files, but they also have automatic and geographic. We have very few who are public librarians.

I have taken over the special library of the Phipps Institute, a library on tuberculosis. It was in very bad condition. All the books were in the middle of the floor.

It was not catalogued at all. We could not use a regular Dewey decimal system. We have to use a special system that is used by the School of Physicians in Philadelphia. It is mostly tuberculosis, and we do a great deal of work for tuberculosis. If you understand anything about doctors, you know how impatient they are. My great trouble is to get the books back again. They will take them home and do anything they please.

I find I get best results by using tags for each individual doctor. That is the quickest way, because they will not wait a minute. I do a great deal of cross-reference work. They may know that someone has written a book on a certain subject, but they have not the remotest idea who wrote it. It is for you to find that subject.

Selling Special Library Service

Effective Advertising Library Service

MARY LOUISE ALEXANDER,

Librarian, Barton, Durstine and Osborne, Inc., New York

Editors Note:—Miss Orrena Louise Evans was Chairman of the third group meeting and Miss Alexander presented the first paper.

The library of an advertising agency is different from almost any other special library. Advertising covers all the field of human endeavor and we must have information of all the products that are being advertised or can be. So it is of the utmost importance for us to learn of all possible sources of information. We clip trade journals as they come in. We take "Printers' Ink," and ten minutes' after it comes in it is a shadow of its former self, and put the extracts into our clipping file. Another source is the government list of trade associations. We have a card file of these and cross index it very carefully.

Mr. Parlin's reports are particularly valuable. He makes a study of the food industry. His are by far better known than the others. Many magazines and many newspapers are doing the same sort of thing. If you go through "Printers' Ink" you will find four or five newspapers which have made a special study of one subject. It might be salad dressing in Milwaukee or some dental product in New Orleans. These things are listed and we jot down on paper that there is such a report. The real trouble is that there is no printed information on certain subjects. If some one wants information on shoes or on the oil to burn in his lamp or on what part books play in the life of a great man, this information is generally available. Then they will come to me and say "Who rides a bicycle? Are we selling bicycle tires to the little boy and the factory worker? What is a plumber? Is he a highbrow gentleman who

needs technical information, or must we talk down to him?" So it is the question of the best information on every kind of topic.

When I went into the office of Barton, Durstine and Osborne a year ago they had never had a librarian and they were a bit dubious. Many of the men wondered why I was there. If I had served tea at four o'clock they would have been quite satisfied. So I had to cultivate these gentlemen very hard. They would come in with queer sorts of questions and the first point I made was never to turn down any sort of job. It has gotten me into trouble, but I think it paid, because they have learned to come to my department. Even if it was only a messenger boy job, I succeeded in getting them the information, so they would know that was the place to ask for it.

Another thing I did was to go snooping around the organization. I went, for instance, into the art library. The artists as a rule didn't use libraries. They had no stock of figures or drawings to refer to. If they wanted to draw a postman they would wait until the mail came. So I discovered that a file would be very useful for them. I have this clipping file, which is lots of fun for me. So when they need *Father Time* or a windmill it is there in my subject file.

Another place that I snooped into was the executive offices. The men who write the copy are really responsible for the information for each client, and I found that they were making investigations and the

carbon copies would as a rule go in to their private file. Stenographers are not expert filers and they were frequently tearing around to know where the carbon copies were, so I made a strict rule that they should make an extra carbon copy for me. They come into my department and are filed in the name of the client, and I find I am going to have a complete history of each account.

Before I stop I want to say that in selling special library service I think the ad-

vertising field is perhaps the best place to begin. There are twelve hundred agencies, I believe, in the country, or perhaps more than that. There are about 250 in New York City, reputable agents, and we have only found four with libraries. This is a tremendous field. If you have library friends in search of positions ask them to sell the library idea to advertising agencies. I can vouch that it is the best fun in the world.

Selling Company Employees

E. MAE TAYLOR,

Librarian, Philadelphia Electric Company

The library of the Philadelphia Electric Co., really a part of the welfare work of the company, extends its service to two distinct types of inquirers. We have the man who wants information and knows where to get it. This is the man who has had educational advantages. Then we have the man who has not had educational advantages and who wants the information but he isn't quite sure where he can get it, nor does he know how to get it. This latter is the man that we try especially to help.

One of the large generating stations of our Company is about fifteen miles from the office. One night a man called me on the telephone about quarter of five and asked me what time the library closed, and I told him at five o'clock. He seemed very much disappointed and said, "Oh, I don't think I could get there in time." I asked him, "Is there something I can get for you?" He said, "No, I don't think you can. I want something, but I wanted to come up and talk to you because I don't know what I want." So I said, "What time do you think you could get here?" "I don't believe I could get there before quarter after five." So I said, "You come here and it doesn't make any difference what time you get here; I will wait and get what you want if I can." I waited and the man came about 5.30. He apologized for having kept me waiting, but he said, "Miss Taylor, I want something very badly. Next week I want to take an examination on boilers, and I didn't think I could get to the library to get the books and I went to a bookstore to buy them, and they were so expensive that I found I couldn't buy them, and unless I can get them here I can't take

the examination." So I said, "You just browse around here and see what we have, and if we haven't what you want I will see if I can get it for you." He took several books away with him and about three weeks later he called me up and said he had successfully passed the examination, and I felt fully repaid for having stayed.

We try to sell our library service by current reference lists and by calling the attention of persons who are interested in special articles to the articles as they appear in the magazines. Last year we instituted a poster campaign. We issued four posters at intervals of three months and we sent one to each department of the company and we had very good results. It kept the library constantly before the people. The posters which were striking in design, were designed by several girls in the company who had ability in that direction.

Librarians should try to make people feel that they are really interested. I quite agree with Miss Thomas in this respect. I think that even the people who know what they want sometimes have difficulty in making their wants known. I very often have men come in to me, men who are engineers and who know far more of engineering than I do, but they will say, "Miss Taylor, I want something; I don't know what I want, but I will tell you and may be you can tell me what I ought to have," which very often we can because it is our business to know books and periodicals better than they do. But I do believe with Emerson that life is not so short but that there is always time for courtesy, and I do believe it is one of the most important factors in selling library service.

Selling Service by Correspondence

EDITH THOMAS

University of Michigan Library Extension Service

The University of Michigan's Library Extension Service was organized primarily for the purpose of serving the schools of the state; to furnish them with aids for the teaching of civics, history, public speaking and debating; to assist general civic organizations interested in problems of government and sociology; to supplement the work of the local libraries, and to furnish material where no libraries exist.

Material is sent to the schools, to the smaller colleges, to libraries, to civic organizations, to granges, and to any individual in the state who wants something that we can give him. The service began with nothing—a little corner of a table, and the knowledge that there were people who needed our help. We knew something about these people; something of their needs, something of the things they did not have. We knew the kind of things they would like to have if they could have them—often when they themselves did not know their own needs. We studied what they were going to need, and endeavored to get that material together in advance. Just as soon as our material was ready, we made modest announcement of the fact, and in a short time these people were coming to us for assistance.

For example, a visiting educator says to a school man in a remote section: "Are you doing anything with the project method in your school?" As a result of this question the local school man immediately becomes interested in the project method in education, and, if there are no libraries or other sources of information in his vicinity, he writes to the Library Extension Service at Ann Arbor. In the meantime we have found out as soon as he, perhaps more quickly, that there is going to be discussion of this subject and we have located sources of information and assembled data to prepare us to handle the contemplated inquiries.

Whether the special librarian can "sell" his service to his particular clientele, to his particular community, or to his particular group of men, depends upon the character of his clientele and the various needs for the type of service that the librarian can render. Once the librarian has come to know his clientele and their needs, and has managed to collect information of the kind indicated, they will come to him constantly for aid. When the library has served one man well, perhaps better than he

had hoped, that man is both satisfied and grateful. When another man comes to him with a problem, he says: "Try so-and-so," and the new inquirer is thus brought to the library. The big part of the game, after all, is to anticipate all of the inquiries of these innumerable people, and to be prepared when the specific inquiry is received. This is the whole problem of salesmanship from the library standpoint.

I say that this is the whole problem, but it is essential, of course, that you, the active agent, know your own field first. You must know the names of people interested in your subjects. You must know what they are going to want and you must know what they should have. You cannot know what they should have without studying the subject and referring to all possible sources of information. If your library is concerned with one field only your problem is much simpler. But the larger your group of problems, the more sources you must keep in contact with, the more contacts you must constantly establish. If you do not make new contacts every day you will not be ready for the new problems when they come up.

How you make your adjustment between your field and your problem depends upon you—upon your personality, your originality, and your method of attack. You must be alive; you must be sympathetically interested in the problem of every individual who comes to you, whether you touch that person by correspondence or by actual human intercourse. If you are not interested in that individual as you would be in some thing that you are eagerly interested in for yourself, and if you do not want to give him more than he needs—that is to say, to give him more than he really hopes to get—if you do not feel it an adventure, a game that you are keen about—you will not sell as well as if you did. It is just this enthusiasm for your work which makes the difference. The final effect, of course, depends upon you. Other things being granted, knowledge of your field, of your forces, of your subject matter, and having the right thing, the best thing, are essential. You must let people know you are on the job. "sell" by virtue of what you have given the first time and the second time and the third time, and then keep putting into your work 100 or 150 per cent of readiness for every new problem, and that is all there is to it.

Selling Legislative Reference Service

HORACE E. FLACK,

Executive, Department of Legislative Reference, Baltimore, Md.

All of us who are engaged in special library work have learned, I believe, through our own experience some of the things we must do if we are to put our service across. I have charge of a combined municipal and legislative reference department. I believe it is the only one in the country that does combine both of these features. We started out as a municipal reference library, though it was called the department of legislative reference to give it a little more dignity. We started out working with the mayor and the city council and the heads of departments in the city of Baltimore. I found when I assumed the position—and it was the first city that had started a reference library—they had the idea that here was a theoretical fellow who had come down to try to interfere with the doings of politicians. Seeing the situation as it was, there was nothing to do but to work along quietly, assemble the material, be ready to present the data at opportune times, and get personally acquainted. Our plan was to bring information to the attention of department heads as tactfully as possible, keeping in the background ourselves, and I found that our plan worked very satisfactorily; after all, those of us who are engaged in this work are not as interested to have our names brought to the public attention as we are in seeing that the public gets the benefit.

So, starting on this basis, we gradually worked on, and these people now come to us for nearly anything that they want concerning any ordinance that is pending. We draw up probably 90 per cent of the ordinances that are passed, whereas previously many of the councilmen had had to pay a lawyer to draw their ordinances or get somebody else to do it, with the result that ordinances were not drawn as carefully as they should have been.

After we had been there a few years we called the attention of the Baltimore members of the legislature sitting in Annapolis to the work of the department when they were elected and asked if there was anything we could do for them, and we began drafting bills for them and furnishing information. This service was later extended to the country members. After a short while the question came up of creating a state reference bureau. What they did was to add new duties to our department and give us increased funds, so that at the present time we are working for the city and for the state. We do not have to advertise. We let the members do that for us. Of course there are always new members elected each year and as soon as they are elected we send a note to them with a copy of our report, showing some of the

main topics with which we deal, offering to help them draw bills and to furnish information generally. These men feel that we are thoroughly non-partisan and non-political. At the last session of the legislature, although I had no one to assist me, I drew one-third of the bills that were introduced. For five months of every second year we are very much overworked, and the last legislature, realizing that, has given us a fund, so that next time we will have some increase of our force, but even that I feel will not be sufficient.

I have found from my own experience, that the most important thing is tact, courtesy, willingness to help. Don't watch the clock when it comes time to close; if there is somebody wanting information, don't get fidgety or nervous because it means very much sometimes to those fellows. We cannot be as rigid as some of the other libraries in demanding the return of material at a certain time. Frequently a man has come in and said, "Here is what I need but you don't let it go out, do you?" I say, "Certainly, we let it go out." We have lost some material; sometimes it is very difficult to replace, but let him take it and at least you have made a friend and advertiser and he is going to come back.

It was quite embarrassing when we began to draw bills for members of the legislature. There was no one on whom they could call except some lawyers who were in the legislature and some lawyers who made it a practice to attend the session and draw bills at a charge. When they came to us they could hardly understand that we were willing to do all this work. They wanted to pay for it, and when we turned it down they wanted to insist on it. They seemed to feel embarrassed that they had put us to so much trouble until we made them realize that that was part of the service that the state and city were paying for, that it was theirs.

The only thing I can say is, get your data beforehand. Certainly don't advertise that you have things and then fall down on it. It is much better to go along quietly and build up as you can accumulate material; not do too much advertising until you get the data ready; then let the people know about it and supply them, and they will tell somebody else, and the problem after a while will be to meet the demands made upon you. The most important point is to use intelligence and originality in getting information together, and then to be cordial and friendly and tactful when visitors come in to get it.

It may surprise you to know that until quite recently the Maryland laws as finally

passed were engrossed in longhand as they originally did it in England and in this country in Colonial days. As soon as I assumed office I realized that that practice was out of date. Of course I could not advocate or propose any measure, but I wrote around to the different states and found what their methods were, and then I made a compilation, showing the states that had printing or engrossing or enrolling. These was one progressive senator who was interested in reforming legislative procedure. I casually handed him this material and

said, "Knowing that you are interested in reform in legislative procedure, I thought you might like to know how other states handle this proposition." He went to it at once and got the credit for it and everybody felt that he accomplished a great reform. So in our department it is always well to keep ourselves in the background and let the people to whom we furnish the information get the credit. They are going to say later to other members and officials, "You will find that is an awfully good place to go to."

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