

# LIBRARY PUBLICITY AND SERVICE

By

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## PREFACE

ANY attempt to describe publicity schemes and methods for public libraries must, inevitably, be conditioned by many factors over which the author has no control. There are three factors which make up the cycle of a book; author, reader and, perhaps most important, the linking of the author with the responsive reader.

This work has its origin in the sincere belief that the vital and primary purpose of the public library is the revelation of the best that is to be found in books. To encourage reading is a necessary, but incomplete, part of our duties; a sterner task is the exploitation of books, the tearing aside of the veil of inaccessibility and seclusion in order to reveal the hidden worth within.

The librarian, indeed, is the vital link in the life process of a book. He it is who can make books work! He has a duty as a medium for the translation of the thought of the author to the receptive reader. He must be prepared to act as a guide in the paths of literature for those perplexed and in need; to provide, as has been repeatedly said, the right book at the right time.

Such a duty has been bequeathed to all Librarians. Publicity should be used as a tool, *and only as a tool*, for this end. Yet a tool is a poor thing unless handled skilfully; similarly, publicity can be futile and absurd unless wielded with due care and handled with painstaking approach. No one method can be, universally, applicable without modification so that an attempt has been made, throughout this work, to retain that measure of flexibility of method that will allow the manipulation necessary for local application.

Whether or not this purpose has been achieved remains yet to be proved. Similar methods will show widely differing results when used by different people. Approach and application, so important yet so often neglected, vary widely from

person to person. Results accruing from similar methods must, therefore, vary and this very fact places a limitation on any assessment of their value. Safety perhaps lies in discussing principles rather than methods and, by flexibility of treatment and generality of appeal, to form the basis of a theory of action rather than to describe a series of isolated projects.

Such treatment could, perhaps, be extended with advantage. There are many processes and phases of Library activity, which would benefit from periodical examination; too many details and formalities tend to be taken on trust as being established in the order of things, and we tend to rationalize rather than to reason. The librarian who speaks of "closed-access" has, obviously, not given thought to his words, and similar blind acceptance can be traced in the handling of advertising media. A sceptical attitude and insistence on independence of thought can transform a whole system.

Library publicity has not escaped the enervating touch nor avoided the dead hand of time-honoured complacency. The same mistakes are repeated over and over again, reaching at times to a degree of absurdity that calls aloud for reproof. Such evidence of mental inertia pays no tribute to librarianship and is, in itself, the worst possible publicity.

An attempt is here made to describe the essentials of publicity methods so that future adventures in book exploitation can be progressive and unburdened with the weight of avoidable error. This is not to suggest that originality has no place in the librarian's armoury. The contrary is true; few subjects lend themselves so well to the individual touch and to the expression of personality. Yet, withal, the basic standards must apply, common factors must be numbered in any progressive venture, and fundamental principles must be maintained.

Undoubtedly, many will quarrel with the views expressed concerning the function of extension work and its limitations. It is inevitable that this controversy should arise and should continue in our profession which, I firmly believe, is fundamentally vital and progressive. Such controversy is healthy and essential and is, therefore, to be welcomed. The time for lamentation will be when the profession becomes complacent,

smug and satisfied, when thought becomes stagnant and complaints no longer heard, when individuals become incapable of doubt and assistants cease to know better than their chiefs. Yet, whatever may be the outcome of our present discontent, the issue will be decided, in the last resort, by the response of the community and by the capacity of the profession to react in unison and to profit by experience.

The path we take will not necessarily be chosen by our unaided judgment, but although freedom of action may be restricted, it is surely better to know where we are going and why we are going than to drift without aim or purpose. A public that looks for tangible results is not likely to be satisfied with pious aims and high-sounding phrases. A policy must be evolved and methods delineated; this work, within its field, is offered as a contribution towards this end.

Thanks are due and are gratefully tendered for blocks and other illustrative material loaned by the librarians of the following libraries:

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It has not been found possible to make use of all the material provided, but I am deeply appreciative of the kindness of those who have assisted in any way.

The illustration of the Group Lecturer to Young People is reproduced by permission of the *Kent Messenger*.

I am indebted to Mr. C. D. Overton for permission to make use of his descriptions of the indicator and the Ronecodex Visible card recording equipment used with gramophone record collections; and to Mr. C. M. Jackson, Borough Librarian of Shoreditch, for permission to reproduce examples of printed material.

C. A. ELLIOTT.

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## LIMITATIONS OF EXTENSION AND PUBLICITY

A PRIMARY canon of commercial advertising theory is that the advertiser should study the public to whom he is addressing his appeal. This rule carries equal weight in all library publicity, the chief importance being in the implication that the methods used should be governed by the purpose of the appeal. Publicity for extensional activities has increased enormously in recent years, yet the purpose of such activities, and consequently of the advertising, has not been too clear. It has therefore been considered advisable to preface the main text with a personal opinion on the purpose and scope of legitimate extension work.

Present day interpretation of the functions of the public library movement varies widely as shown by the wide assortment of activities provided under the name of "extension work". The official policy was stated in "The Post-War Reorganization Proposals of the L.A. Council", (Section 47): "It is the function of the public library to provide books; the adult education it provides will be mainly in the informal and unregulated study of these books by individual users of the library. For the organizing of informal educational activities the responsibility lies with the education authority and other agencies. The organization of lectures and other adult educational activities, therefore, is not properly part of the library service, but the provision of books for these purposes should be the responsibility of the public library system."

The principle, here laid down, that the librarian's concern is with books and books alone, is in line with the purpose of the public library system as defined in "The Report of the Select Committee to the House of Commons" in 1849.

Official policy has since been modified and shows signs of development towards a wider view of function. The present

position is fluid and much remains to be said before a final definition can appear.

Another viewpoint which has progressed rapidly since the war, is that, since the library should be the centre of culture, all forms of cultural activities may legitimately be sponsored. Groups and societies may be organized for studies that have a cultural purpose. Such studies may not be connected with books and reading, but, it is claimed, a fund of goodwill and prestige for the library service is created.

It may be queried whether such goodwill is sufficient return for the dispersal of forces. However praiseworthy these activities may be in themselves there is no justification for their use except as a means to an end, that end being the use of books. The theory would appear to confuse means with ends and to be based on a misconception of the libraries' function. By its wide prevalence it effectively prohibits the logical approach to extension work that is necessary if duplication of effort and contention with other agencies is to be avoided. Any overstraining of resources will surely react to the detriment of the service.

The purpose of the Public Library service is:

- (1) to select and collect books and other written and printed records;
- (2) to analyse their contents and make them available to the widest possible public;
- (3) to act as a link between book and reader.

Some amplification of these items will be useful:

(1) It is sometimes stated that our purpose is to collect all forms of record. But records as expressed in art and in natural specimens were deliberately divorced from our sphere when art galleries and museums were given separate existence.

Are we entitled to collect films and gramophone records? These activities are intrinsically valuable but does this constitute justification? The criterion must be the value to us as librarians; all extra activities must be means, not ends.

(2) We analyse the contents of books when we catalogue and when we overcome the inevitable separations of our classification schemes by displays and book exhibitions. Such an important part of our work should be superlatively well

done but, unfortunately, it is not always possible. Such analysis is carried further in book lists, specialized subject lists and bulletins and also by personal contact in the form of book talks, discussions and readers' advisory services.

(3) The third part of our duty receives the least attention, yet it is most important; it gives the finishing touch to all the rest. A book in itself is dead, an inanimate object that does not come to life until placed in the hands of the responsive reader. The librarian must act as the link and translator; the channel between the thought of the author and the mind of the reader. This is the most difficult of our duties but it gives the greatest satisfaction when successfully accomplished.

The three functions are not distinct and, in fact, overlap to a considerable extent. The failure of any one section is sufficient to throw a blight over the whole service; all are essential to the fulfilment of our work.

These items constitute a tremendous task, the performance of which demands all our time and all our energy. The field is so wide, and our resources by comparison so slender, that prudence demands the sternest husbanding of our strength. What reason can there be for leaving our own field, which we are eminently capable to till, in order to trespass on the preserves of others? Can we honestly claim to have completed our own work? Until we can do so we have no possible right to think of extra activities in any shape or form. "Consolidation before elaboration" is an apt slogan.

Co-operation with other agencies should certainly be practised. But co-operation should be limited to the offer of services and resources and, where possible, the linkage of these activities to the use of books. In the realm of books the librarian is on his own ground. He can increase the interest of a subject by applying to it the knowledge to be found in books.

That is his function; to reveal the sources, to analyse the contents of books for the uninitiated and to lead them to use books for themselves. These activities are sufficiently wide to occupy his time and energy; he has no mandate for initiating and organizing, nor is he trained for that purpose. As a bookman he is a professional, but as an educationist he is an amateur.

Consideration should also be given to the fact that culture is an attribute of the individual and is the result of self-development within a favourable environment. It cannot be imposed from without, and the librarian's best contribution to its general attainment lies in the limitation, conservation and concentration of powers in order to provide a book service of excellence. He is then in a position where he can give effective aid to the person in search of those cultural attainments *that fall within the library orbit*. This method is surely to be preferred rather than a general dilution and spreading of forces over a wider field?

None of the foregoing should be regarded as condoning the policy of *laissez-faire*. On the contrary, it is a plea for the conservation of forces in order to be able to wield them effectively as a positive instrument of attack.

When we have provided an effective service for existing readers; when we have consolidated and are conscious that we are fulfilling our functions, there is still the fact to be faced that the services offered are being utilized by one section only of the populace, the national average being 25 per cent. It is necessary, therefore, to take steps to extend the service to the 75 per cent. of the non-users, and it is here that extensional activities can be utilized.

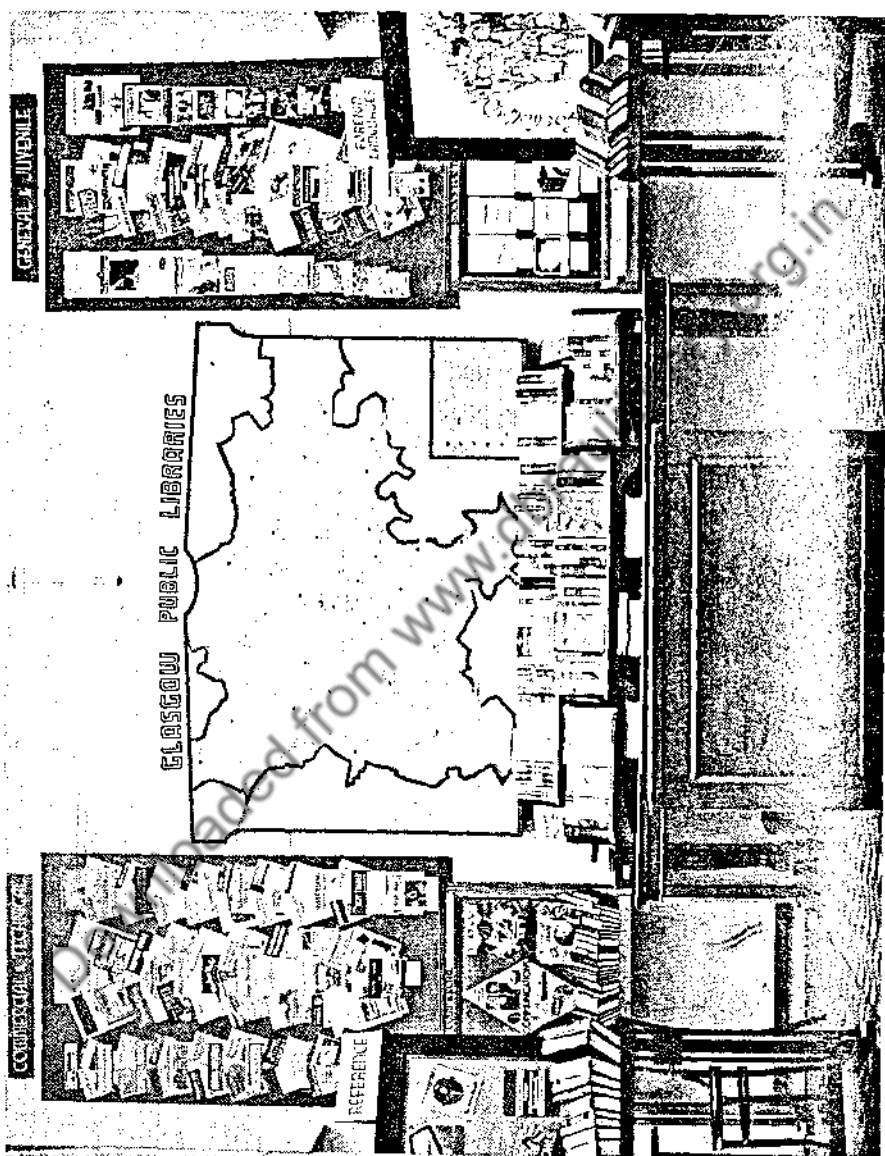
Great care is necessary. We may be advocates of culture, we may desire to assist in the extension of musical and artistic appreciation, but these channels must not be adopted as ends in themselves, however praiseworthy they may be. Our concern is with the spread of culture through the written record; other methods may be adopted as a means of contact with outside groups, provided that the purpose throughout is the extended use of books.

If we hold to this purpose we cannot go far wrong. But if we lose sight of it, or ignore the principle implied, we shall eventually find ourselves drifting in queer places. One thing leads to another so imperceptibly when there is no criterion to guide, that, sooner or later, we will find ourselves acting, or trying to act, as universal providers unless enthusiasm is tempered by discretion. The problem is one that affects all librarians, yet the decision must be made by the individual



*By Courtesy of the City Librarian, Edinburgh*

*Information Screens at Leith Library, Edinburgh. Essential features,  
well sited and designed to attract.*



By Courtesy of the City Librarian, Glasgow.  
A well-balanced, standard display at Glasgow.

and by his committee. A common principle is desirable in the interest of public welfare and of librarians themselves.

There is, however, another difficulty which must be considered in connection with extension work that is undertaken to encourage reading. The librarian attempts to attract more readers while maintaining his standards of provision, and the emphasis on a minimum standard is particularly necessary to-day. Compulsory elementary education provided a large number of borrowers who were literate, but not educated. The new State Educational Provisions may raise the standard of reading and it may increase the numbers of those capable of accepting a higher level of literature. The need, always urgent, for development in this sphere has therefore received added impetus by outstanding events and should serve to give high priority to reading aids among the methods of extension. It also reinforces the claims of those who ask that a complete book service shall be provided before other developmental schemes are undertaken.

It may be that a person who is just literate requires books suited to his mental capacity. If this is so, such books should be provided as part of our service, and this has been done. Unfortunately this provision offers such an easy method of swelling the issues and impressing the Committees, that it has become its own justification, and has achieved an unhealthy, rank growth, threatening now to stifle the body on which it depends. This daily dose of unimaginative trash is being served to all and sundry, and, since it is sweet and easily digested, it is seducing the allegiance of many who are capable of better things. In this hurried age all are entitled to soporifics, many need them, and it is not the librarian's task to dictate reading standards. But it is his task to show the value of the best authors and to offer his services as mediator between readers and literature. He is not doing this! Make no mistake about it, self deception is no longer possible, the figures tell a different story!

Some systems in this country are fulfilling their obligations to the community, but they are woefully few compared with the number that are not. As often as not the blame cannot be laid at the door of the librarian, the causes are many but the

original fact remains. While the library's real purpose remains unrealized, is it wise to extend its boundaries? Should the service not be concerned rather with books and readers?

The educational provisions, therefore, represent both a challenge and an opportunity. The receptive capability of the population can be expected to rise with the increase of educational facilities. Is it not preferable for the librarian to use his energies to exploit this, or is he going to compete with the educationists?

To sum up: the librarian should give a first-class service to his existing public. Having done this he should enter the field of extension with a view to spreading the news of his service. He should be prepared to co-operate with all cultural agencies, but, because of his rigidly held bias, he will find that activities will automatically group themselves in his favour into an order of priority. Those activities should come first that are most closely linked with the use of books and which promise to give the greatest results for his purpose. Other projects, though cultural and praiseworthy in themselves, should be sacrificed to the primary needs.

Local conditions must decide the final priority in each case; the important point is to ensure that a logical sequence is adopted, the purpose of the work being the governing feature.

Such is the framework on which the rest of this work is based. The opinions will probably be disputed, but the methods will not thereby be invalidated.

It is unlikely that agreement will be reached on this question, but we do know that the work itself will increase. We know also, that the final decision regarding activities rests with the Local Authority and not with the Librarian. The Education Act of 1944 gave great powers to Education Authorities for the extension of facilities for adult education. So far as London is concerned many of these powers have been passed to the Local Authorities by the L.C.C. (General Powers) Act, 1947. Many authorities throughout the country will administer their powers, wholly or partly, through their library committees. It is essential that any extra functions imposed on the library should be accompanied by the necessary staff and



financial resources and should not operate to the detriment of the basic library service.

It might be difficult to achieve this. There is also another danger which can hardly be avoided unless the new duties are separately administered. Let us take a library system "A", that has a basic library expenditure of £10,000. Extra duties are imposed and a further £5,000 granted in consideration of this. The tendency will be to lump the whole into one and budget the library service at £15,000. As it stands this is harmless; book-keeping is facilitated and separate accounts avoided. But then the economy axe arrives, as it periodically does, and a 10 per cent. cut is announced. The library budget is reduced, not from £10,000 to £9,000 but from £15,000 to £13,500. Will the extensional activities be cut? Hardly; such stunts are tangible, they appeal to the citizens who are voters; extensional activities must not be cut! Basic library expenditure will then be £8,500.

Perhaps a logical approach to extension work and an insistence that it is an added function, to be financed and administered separately, might prove to be good policy as well as good librarianship! It is right and proper that our heads should be in the clouds but only if we are sure that our feet are firmly on the ground.

## CHAPTER II

### PERSONAL PUBLICITY

**P**ERSONAL publicity is supremely important, and provides contact between (a) staff and reader, and (b) stock and reader. It is obvious that no amount of publicity will take the place of a good stock and an effective and willing service.

The work of libraries is growing more complex, but in spite of the urgent claims of extra activities, the fact that a satisfied reader is the most valuable asset must never be forgotten. When a reader knows that the library is able and ready to help him, then he is ready to tell his friends about the good service offered. As soon as his civic pride is awakened, he will be ready to press for the maintenance and improvement of his library service. If the public can be interested, if it is possible to make the library the place where people turn when in need of information and inspiration, then the way will be open for the removal of many of the obstacles which have restricted progress in the past.

Personal contact between the trained senior staff and the public must be stressed, and should take priority over all other aids. The issuing desk is the focal point of the library. Here the planning of the technical staff is directed into practical channels to serve the needs of the public. A trained and efficient staff can make the most of limited resources; politeness and willingness to assist create a fund of goodwill not obtainable in any other way.

It is unfortunate that, in many cases, the most junior assistants, busy with counter work, are the only members of the library staff to whom the public can appeal. What, then, becomes of the remaining functions; how are we uniting reader and book? Although behind-the-scenes work is important and calls for skilled attention, it should not be allowed to monopolize the whole of the trained staff. Such work is

preparatory and intermediate; the final task is in assistance to library users.

An answer to the problem of personal contact seems to lie in the provision of readers' advisers, particularly in view of the trend towards the separation of counter work and technical duties. In previous years there was little or no differentiation. All assistants served behind the counter at various times, so that a reader could always depend on help from an assistant with some training in the use of books.

With a non-technical counter staff an adviser should always be available to unravel the intricacies of classification and catalogue, and to ensure the fullest use of all facilities. Work in this field forms a first-class training for the assistant, while the day-by-day reports are the best guide to the librarian on the efficiency and deficiencies of the service. Provided it is well done, this is probably the finest service that can be offered.

It is undoubtedly true that personal assistance should begin immediately a new reader is enrolled, but the task is not quite as simple as that. Ideally, the borrower should be taken in hand by an experienced assistant, the mysteries of the classification scheme and catalogue should be explained, and the method of tracing a book from catalogue to shelves described. That is the procedure laid down in text-books. But the doubt arises whether such a method is ever possible; or, being possible, whether it is desirable.

Consider the new borrower. He has joined the library to get books and, before he can make his choice, he is recruited as a "compulsory volunteer" in a tour of the library, forced to listen to a lecture on something in which he has no interest, and is fortunate to escape without having his book chosen for him. The catalogue is, for him, a mystery still and likely to remain so.

A more gradual approach might be more successful. There should be a printed guide giving a simple explanation of the working of the catalogue and the classification scheme. A copy of this should be handed to the new reader. He may or may not read it. If he does read it he may not take the trouble to understand it. It doesn't matter! For the moment it is

sufficient for him to know that the books are arranged according to some sort of plan, that the catalogue is for public use and is somehow connected with the business of finding books. That, at least, is something. He may never get beyond this elementary knowledge. Many borrowers do not and, unless their self-interest leads them to it, no amount of intruded instruction will force them to learn.

Here is the key to the problem; self interest! If the catalogue is logically and fairly simply arranged, as it should be, any average person will master it *if he wants to do so*. If he cannot master it immediately he will study the printed instructions or ask for assistance; but only, be it noted, if his interest forces him to it.

How can this be achieved? How is it possible to arouse a person's interest in the arrangement of books on the shelves, cards in a catalogue, and the relationship between them? One answer is given in the chapter on bulletins, though no pretence is made that this is the only or the ideal method. Briefly, the method there proposed is to omit classification numbers from the works listed in bulletins. If the works are attractively presented, with well written annotations, some readers are bound to want to read one or more. They will be interested to find those books.

They *may* then approach the catalogue, but are more likely to enquire of the staff. When they do this, the book is not produced for them; instead they are shown how to find it for themselves, by tracing it from catalogues to shelves.

It is not the same as the recommended initiatory lecture because the circumstances are so much different. Firstly, they have asked for it; secondly, they are interested in the result. No residue of injured pride remains and there is no hint of press-gang methods.

There may be some reluctance to abandon time-honoured practices and to adopt what could be described as an insidious method of infiltration, by some, and as low cunning, by others. But the scheme works! Readers do learn to use the catalogue in this way and that must be a redeeming feature.

Another aspect of personal assistance is provided by the talks given in the library to classes and groups. School children,

school-leavers and social groups often are invited to the library and conducted round in order that the whole of the service may be explained to them. This is very valuable work, since it is regrettably true that the majority of readers use only a fraction of facilities offered.

Equally important are the talks given to groups outside of the library. There is nothing else to take the place of the personal message. Posters and printed literature can give a definite message, which might hit or miss. Only the spoken word can be adjusted to meet the needs of the occasion. Criticism and suggestions are received at such informal meetings which would otherwise not be heard.

Personal attention is not entirely confined to direct contact. In every library the file of unused tickets sooner or later becomes a problem. Forms are completed and tickets are not collected; when the selection of books is not to the readers' taste tickets are sometimes left behind, to be called for, but the call is not made. It is possible to put many of these tickets back into circulation at the cost of a postage stamp!

The question of lapsed borrowers should receive more attention than it normally does. There seems to be little sense in spending time and effort in attracting new readers when we pay so little attention to those we have already.

It is worth while to keep a close watch on registrations that are not renewed. A letter sent in such cases will often effect a renewal. The following, or its equivalent, will serve:

Dear Mr.

Mrs.

Miss

I note that your library tickets expired on .....and have not been renewed.

The service endeavours to meet the reading requirements of all users and I trust that you have obtained full satisfaction from your use of our facilities. If you have any difficulty in obtaining the books you require, or if you have any sug-

gestions to make regarding the improvement of the service, please do not hesitate to let me know.

I enclose a form for the renewal of your tickets if you so desire.

Yours faithfully,

Such a letter can be duplicated and despatched as part of the routine duties of the registration assistant. It takes little time and is quite effective in use.

A well-appreciated and necessary service consists in the delivery of library books to old people and others who are physically incapacitated and who cannot, therefore, attend the library in person. There is usually no difficulty experienced in arranging with local organizations, such as the Women's Voluntary Service, to collect and deliver at regular intervals. Provision of this kind need cause little inconvenience to the normal working of the system and confers a real benefit upon a handicapped section of the community.

Closely connected with personal publicity is the establishment of internal aids, for the effectiveness of the latter depend to a large extent upon the former.

The primary aids are the classification scheme, catalogue and mechanical guides. These are provided generally and need no comment here except to note that their purpose as aids to the reader should not be forgotten. It is possible for catalogues, in particular, to be so technically perfect that they are unintelligible to the average reader!

Every library should be provided with a well-printed pamphlet setting out the essential features of the service; times of opening, facilities, method of finding books, address and telephone numbers of branches, with transport facilities. This general purpose pamphlet is always useful. A copy should be presented to every new reader and copies should accompany all other publicity material for distribution to clubs, firms and groups.

Although not an "aid" in the literal meaning of the term, mention should be made of the necessity for keeping stock

up to date and clean, and selected in subject interest to meet the peculiar needs of the locality. Use made of the stock is a guide to requirements up to a point, but the best guide can be provided by the staff who are in actual contact with the public and who are called upon to satisfy their demands.

The use of stock includes also the use of fiction. But while attempts are made to exploit and further the use made of the non-fiction section, fiction itself is frequently left severely alone by the librarian. In other words, reader guidance is confined to the users of the non-fiction stock. It can be seen that there are three types of fiction readers using the public libraries:

- (1) Readers of light fiction.
- (2) Readers of standard works.
- (3) Readers of both light and standard works.

The object, presumably, should be to reduce the preponderance of class (1) readers in favour of classes (2) and (3). How can this be achieved?

Most libraries provide light fiction to a greater or lesser degree for one of three reasons:

- (1) To promote issues.
- (2) To satisfy a public demand which is deemed to be legitimate.
- (3) To attract readers with a view to improving their taste.

Whatever the initial reason, an improvement in the standard of reading would be approved by all. The display, accompanied by an annotated list, will help in this object.

Many readers read nothing else but the lightest of fiction and, if this is not available, will leave empty-handed rather than attempt something fresh and perhaps a little more difficult. It is not sufficient to ignore these people and to leave them to their own devices, nor is it wise to attempt too obviously to improve their taste.

An indirect method is indicated; the method of the fiction display with annotated lists written to attract and interest. When arranged with understanding, such displays might serve to persuade the "thriller fan" to branch out into a new field. Thus in the fiction run could be set a display of such books as Maugham's *Ashenden*; Household's *Rogue Male*; Buck's

*Good Earth*; Bennett's *Clayhanger*; Sinclair's *Jungle*; London's *White Fang*; Robert's *North-West Passage* and Forester's *The Gun*. There are many others of this type; well written, not too difficult to read if given a fair trial, and likely to lead to still wider fields.

The essential part is the annotation, the compiling of which will demand much technical skill and a knowledge of the readers concerned if it is to perform successfully its function. The task is made a little easier if the practice is adopted of cutting the publisher's blurb from the book jacket and pasting it on one of the preliminary pages. The blurbs supplement the annotations, since they are written by men trained to assess the public taste, to incite interest and to sell the book. There is no reason why use should not be made of this technical skill, which costs nothing but the labour of cutting and pasting. Blurbs should be utilized in this way for all non-fiction, and all fiction except the lightest. These works sell themselves, and require no pushing.

Closely allied to the fiction display is the method of the selected author described in the chapter on "Bulletins". Essential and interesting information concerning an author is followed by a list of his works, both fiction and non-fiction, contained in the stock. This list is displayed above a book trough in which the books themselves are arranged.

This method is valuable, inasmuch as it helps to bridge the gap between fiction and non-fiction and between light and standard fiction. To take Upton Sinclair as an example. How many readers of his novels have read one of his factual works? The same applies to Jack London, Dorothy Sayers, H. G. Wells, J. B. Priestley and a host of others.

So far as the bridge between light and standard fiction is concerned, assistance here is rendered by the predilection of certain authors for pseudonymous authorship. It whets the appetite of readers to discover that Countess Barcynska and Oliver Sandys are one and the same person and that both names are pseudonyms of Mrs. Carodoc Evans. Mrs. G. Long writes as Marjorie Bowen, George Preedy and Joseph Shearing; C. Day Lewis as Nicholas Blake. The authority list will provide all the material for a succession of similar displays.



Such a display of the collected works of an author, written under various pseudonyms, promotes reader interest and introduces an element of purpose into the most flippant and casual reader. It might even encourage a study of style by the comparison of works of an author written under different names.

There are many variations on this theme and many methods open to the librarian who is seriously concerned about reading taste. Displays can be made to exploit stock. That is a serious business, yet the displays, especially of fiction, should not present too serious an aspect. Lightness and appeal can be added by introducing photographs of the authors concerned. These can usually be obtained from the publishers.

Every effort should be made to capitalize on present assets, such as the popularity of existing authors, in order to encourage readers to widen their scope.

Objection may be taken to the provision of light fiction, but is it possible to lay down any hard and fast rule on this question? The selection of books with regard to quality and type is governed by the capabilities of the readers. The standard of education varies from place to place, and the standard of intelligence from individual to individual. Consequently the ability of readers to make use of the stock similarly varies. It is not, therefore, possible to be dogmatic on the subject.

The Librarian's duty lies in this very fact. His task is to gauge the capabilities and limitations of his public, and to select and provide according to these factors.

There is a field for research here. The library service is, or should be, a personal service, and the great need to-day is for investigation into *personal* reading habits. In our haste *not* to give the public what they want we are often inclined to give them instead what we think they *ought* to want. Both views are wide of the mark; the public should be given the best that it is able to assimilate.

Very little is known about the difficulties of readers grappling with a stock too far in advance of their capabilities, but it is known that a man's ability to read and understand is usually ahead of his taste or inclination. Here, then, is scope for

encouragement and guidance. The gap between taste and possibility must be taken into consideration in all selection and provision. Only by so doing is it possible to reach the mass of the population who do not use the public libraries, not because they do not want to, but because the stock provided is not suitable for them. Children are not expected to be able to use the adult library; why then should the poorly educated man be asked to use a stock of too lofty a standard? By skilful manipulation and selection of stock based on knowledge of readers, it is possible to provide for all tastes and all types.

The range is wide and embraces all classes. It is not our job to improve people; they should be given every opportunity to improve themselves. There is a vast difference between these viewpoints; self-development in an atmosphere of freedom should still be the objective.

What does this mean in practice? Is it true that many readers do not know what they want? Yes, it is true, but it does not necessarily follow that they will accept whatever is provided for them. It is important not to fall into the error of imposing an arbitrary selection on the public. If we were sure that readers would accept and make use of this provision, well and good, but this is not so. While it is true that many people do not know what they want; while it is true that they like to be told what they want; it is also true that they must be offered something within the bounds of their capabilities. It must not be forced on them as is so often the case, they must be led to it. Their needs must be ascertained before they can be assuaged.

L. R. McColvin suggests saturation of those books that are genuinely useful even at the expense of the trash. He suggests that we shall lose many of our present readers, a loss that need cause no tears since they will be replaced by those worthwhile readers who have a useful purpose. Such readers are of two kinds (*a*) those who do not and have not used the public library service and (*b*) those who have tried but have abandoned the service because it has not provided them with the material required.

All this may be true as a general statement. But while the above policy will certainly lose readers it will not auto-

matically gain others. Before this can happen it will be necessary to inform the new public of the improved book service, and for this purpose skilful publicity will be required. If this is combined with a genuine and patient attempt at reader guidance, it may well be that the loss of readers envisaged may, in the event, be less alarming.

The problem, as a whole, resolves itself into one of true librarianship compared with the mass provision of books. The two are often confused in practice. In order to give the public the best that they are capable of assimilating, it is necessary to arrange for personal contact for the purpose of gauging taste and potentiality of readers and the suitability of stock in standard and range. The future of librarianship lies, not in the mass provision of "culture", but in the analysis of reading tastes and habits, the capabilities and requirements of readers, the development and manipulation of book selection to cater for the specific needs of the community served, and the extension of such book service to the widest public.

No book stock can be considered adequate unless it serves the needs of its users. We must, therefore, know something of these requirements in order to select wisely. We know little of the reading habits of our own readers; we know even less of those who are not library users.

We do not know whether we are providing the best possible reading material or whether our provision is merely tolerated as a substitute for something beyond reach. We do not know how many people have tried to use our book stocks, and found them wanting, any more than we know the real reason why such a large proportion of the population make no attempt to use the facilities provided.

Yet these factors must be known. For reading is not a static process; it is a vital function that consists of the transference of the experience and ideas of the author to the receptive mind of the reader.

Reading, therefore, is the sharing of experience. A book is a lifeless object until animated by the appreciative reader who can grasp the thought of the author and assess it in terms of his own experience.

Experience in the reader is necessary for the true apprecia-

tion of any work; experience in the form of background knowledge which enables its possessor to assess given facts at their true value, to draw inferences and to recognize implications.

Lack of such experience will create disharmony between author and reader that will be harmful to the state of mind necessary for appreciation and comprehension. This is almost certainly true of both recreative and informational reading.

If this is so, it follows that to set up an arbitrary standard of excellence in reading taste is wrong and logically unsound. The reader must be related to the book. As much mental effort may be required for one person to read Aldous Huxley as for another to read Sartre or Eliot.

All of this may be reduced to the text-book maxim that book-selection should be conceived in terms of the people to be served. Unfortunately, this excellent advice is too often left to moulder within the pages of the manual and its full implications never considered or practised.

The object, surely, should be to encourage the reader to read those works which exercise his faculties to their fullest extent; to read within his capabilities, but not beyond, having full regard to the limitations of vocabulary and the effect of environment. This type of reading will exercise and extend his talents, widen his mental horizon and make him eager and able to progress further.

This seems to be one of the real tasks of librarianship; reading guidance to which much lip service is paid. Are we incapable of developing this service?

How much time is wasted in mechanical, routine and clerical duties? How much diffusion of energy in unprofitable and alien fields? Let us get back to books; let us tend to readers; let us do the job for which we are fitted; the analysis of books, the intellectual requirements of readers, the blending of these so that the unused stock becomes alive. This is our true function, this is our real task in the sphere of culture!

## CHAPTER III

### DISPLAY

**D**ISPLAY as applied to the non-fiction stock is designed to bring together (1) those subjects necessarily separated by the scheme of classification, but which are normally associated, (2) subjects normally separated but which are temporarily linked by reason of topical interest, and (3) secondary subjects, ignored by the classifier in favour of primary subjects.

Display is only one aspect of the process that results in the revealing of the contents of books. The display, like the classification and catalogue, is therefore the tool of the librarian in his task of stock exploitation.

Dr. Savage uses the term "display" in a wide sense as being, more or less, synonymous with stock exploitation. Thus he says that book classification, which should consist of grouping by bibliographical warrant, is a method of display. For the sake of clarity it might be more useful to limit the use of the term to its normal and restricted meaning of special grouping and to regard it, with classification, cataloguing and reader guidance, as a link in the chain of book exploitation.

The principle of co-ordination is not affected by the distinction, which is, however, vital; for display, regarded as special grouping, presents problems that are not present in the more permanent aspects of classification. Classification should, indeed, consist of the arrangement together of material that is used together, such arrangement not being of a temporary nature. Conversely, display consists of the arrangement together of material linked by a temporary, often topical interest. It is the discarding of the original characteristic of classification in favour of one that has temporarily taken on importance due to current events or interest.

The final placing of any book in a scheme of classification

depends upon pure subject plus aspect, purpose or interest. The combination forms a subject group or compound subject that is used as a unit for classing, thus ensuring that each book falls into its most useful place in the sequence. Separation of like material is inevitable but this disadvantage is accepted because of the greater general benefit that results.

One of the methods of display consists in the discarding of aspect and rearranging by pure subject. The following titles illustrate the difference between permanent classification and temporary display:

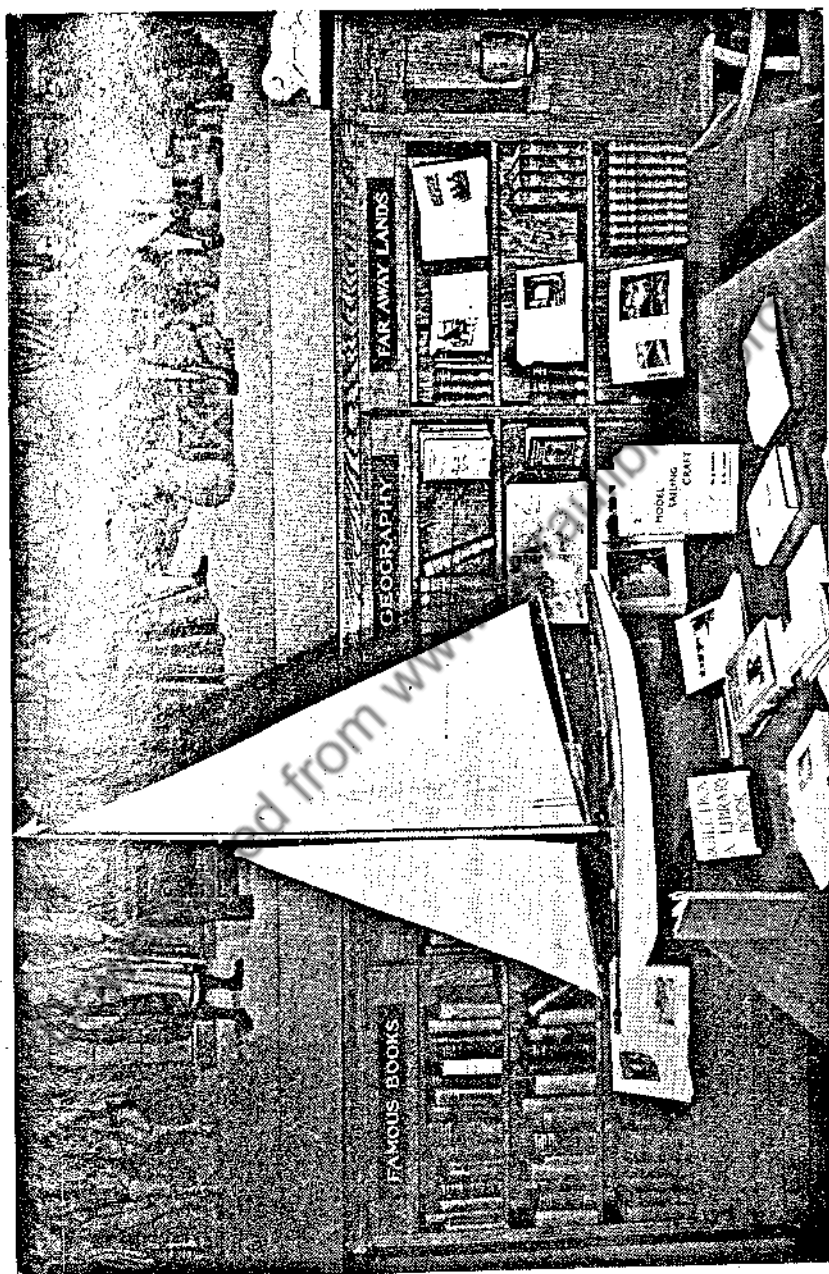
Theory of electricity	537.1
Methods of electrical engineering	621.3
Electricity in the home	644.315
Electricity as a curative agent	615.84

The subject of each is electricity; the different placings are due to the differing aspects that affect the final classing. Display would ignore the aspects and arrange these works together in one sequence.

The process is thus seen as temporary reclassification according to a new characteristic demanded by the needs of the moment. As J. D. Stewart has already pointed out; over-indulgence in display is the negation of classification, even classification conceived as book grouping.

One of the functions of display is, therefore, to act as a co-ordinating agent, to relate subjects normally separated and to bring into prominence those aspects and topics that are of secondary importance viewed from the angle of primary classification. Such an agent may be regarded as the thread running through the scheme of classification adopted, linking allied subjects, emphasizing neglected relationships and stressing the importance of subjects enhanced in comparative value by the needs of the moment. The acute dilemma of the classifier in deciding between primary and secondary subjects is thus partially reduced. Secondary subjects are rescued from the oblivion of the catalogue; they may be brought into prominence and linked by display.

Both classification and cataloguing have their own contribution to make towards the revelation of the contents of



By Courtesy of the City Librarian, Sheffield

A visual method of attraction from Sheffield.



By Courtesy of the Borough Librarian, Luton

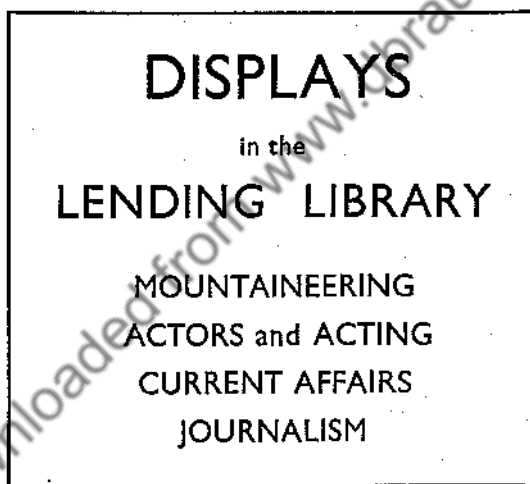
*Luton's colourful and informative pointer to the topographical section.*



books. Display reinforces and supplements these efforts and is thus seen as an agent for co-ordinating the analytical resources of a system. A good display consists, for this reason, not of isolated works, but of a series of mutually supporting contributions.

Objections are sometimes raised since it is claimed that the display takes books from the shelves out of their subject sequence, and so robs the classification of its effectiveness. If displays are too numerous at one time this is true, but it does not hold good for normal display work limited in number. Moreover, only a selection of the material on a subject is usually displayed, so leaving subject representation on the shelves.

It is obvious that the display should be well set out to attract attention. It is also advantageous if a notice board is set up in the entrance hall:



This notice will serve the dual purpose of warning the readers when their subjects are depleted through display and of attracting casual visitors who are not library users.

In this way the disadvantage of robbing the subject sections is very much reduced, if not entirely obviated. It may be assumed that all library users will see either the display notice

or the displays themselves, though not all will be interested. But those persons affected, those whose sections have been depleted, will see and will be attracted. The notice to the actual display, later described, will reduce the danger that they might inadvertently neglect the shelves.

In order to gain completeness, books should be enlisted from every relevant section of the library. Every subject may be considered from several aspects, and some of these aspects are necessarily separated on the shelves. The display will bring these together and, apart from the advantage of introducing readers to books and viewpoints unfamiliar to them, will serve as a demonstration of the arrangement of the classification. The added advantage of revealing the relationship of subject with subject, linked by natural affinity or by topical interest, is not to be despised.

A reader who has not bothered to read the carefully prepared classification instructions, or to master the catalogues, may realize for the first time that all the relevant material on his subject is *not* collected in one place in the library.

So much time and effort is spent in preparing catalogues, with their meticulous references and cross-references, but it is unfortunately true that the work is for the enlightened few rather than for the many. Yet is it fully realized that a display can be a practical illustration of cataloguing method and, conversely, that the catalogue can save much of the time required to think out all possible aspects and relationships of subjects for displays? To take an example: under the subject heading "UNITED STATES" in the catalogue appears the following:

UNITED STATES	— Antiquities	913.73
"	— Army	355
"	— Biography	920
"	— Census	317.3
"	— Church History	277
"	— Climate	551.5
"	— History	973
"	— Industries	338; 609
"	— Religion	277
"	— Social Conditions	309.1

These, of course, are only a few of the aspects from which this very wide subject may be viewed. In addition to the sub-headings, many references are given showing even further possible sources of relevant information.

Here is much of the material for display. The method is inexpensive and very effective. All that is needed is a small table and a book trough to which a notice can be attached. The following will serve as a guide:

*Books here displayed  
are separated on the shelves  
for practical convenience*

**THIS IS A SELECTION ONLY**

<i>Author</i>	<i>Title</i>
"	"
"	"
"	"
"	"

For additional works look in the  
catalogue under the name of the  
subject

*(Name of Subject printed here)*

The opening sentence is not the whole truth, but it is sufficiently correct to excuse the separation of like matter; a longer, more accurate explanation would not be read, would probably confuse and would defeat its own purpose.

Since books are freely available from the display its contents will be continuously changing, the trough being kept fully charged by additions from the shelves.

A useful additional feature, which adds to the value of

a display, is the provision of a duplicated list of the material to be included. The disadvantage of allowing books to be taken from the display is reduced appreciably since absent books are recorded and may be noted for later use by those interested.

The compilation of such lists is a most profitable form of training for assistants, while for the librarian it offers an immediate check on the strength and weakness of his stock representation.

The appearance of a display can be increased, and its power to attract considerably enhanced, by the use of strip or other form of spot lighting. The effect of the use of an individual light will achieve the first requirement of the medium; that is, to attract attention and to create interest. This will be of momentary duration, naturally, but the opportunity will have been created for the material on view to perform its function.

In other words, special lighting, even on a small scale, creates special and favourable conditions and gives the maximum advantage to the display itself. It is, therefore, a very useful auxiliary for consideration, not only for displays, but also for other features, such as exhibitions, show cases and poster boards.

The use of illustrations, wherever possible, can be recommended, as performing a similar function in attracting interest. Such interest is likely to be sustained, since the illustration will have appeal of its own. Too often, however, pictures which are relevant to the books featured are not readily available, but use can be made of the Illustrations Collection, which justifies its existence here, as in many other ways.

The display which can be doubled with another form of publicity has obvious advantages. The following notice, displayed in the entrance hall, contains reviews and press-cuttings concerning the latest books, films and plays. People are attracted to the library in order to read these reviews. That this is so has been established, and the reason is not difficult to find.

The publication of a book review does not often coincide

with the opportunity to read the book and the same can be said with regard to plays and films. Moreover, it is not certain that the reviews in newspapers and magazines will be seen by library readers. This projection of various opinions in a single place is, therefore, a worth-while aid.

The books themselves may also be displayed. At first sight this would not appear to be possible, since the number of reviews on the poster would be small, and the publicity provided would cause the books concerned to be issued without possibility of replacement. Initially this is so, but, in the course of a few weeks, when new reviews displace the old, the reserve of books which have been "spotlighted" by review grows, and there is no danger of the display running short of material. The fact that the books have been included on the review board gives them a permanent interest even when the review is no longer present. The following notice serves for the reviews:

<b>WHAT THE CRITICS SAY</b>		
<b>ABOUT FILMS</b>	<b>ABOUT BOOKS</b>	<b>ABOUT PLAYS</b>

A smaller edition of this, suitably adapted, makes a good heading for the actual display.

In some cases the reviews are filed for a certain period. Where this is so, care is necessary to ensure that they are not damaged by paste during display. A note to the effect that reviews are filed and may be referred to should be included.

A similar combination is the utilization of the B.C.A. wall-maps with book displays. The topical map is received fortnightly and displayed prominently, with a book list dealing with the subject of the map, reference being made to the display of the books. The "Current Affairs" display is thus a permanent feature, the material being changed fortnightly according to the map provided.

The display of books serialized by the B.B.C. would, at first sight, appear to be energy misplaced. Such books are always in great demand during the life of the serial and it would appear to be unwise to attempt to stimulate a demand which is already greater than available resources.

In practice, however, the display justifies itself. While the current serial is always in great demand, the display tends to widen the field. It reduces the disappointment of those unable to get the book of the moment, for it offers the second choice of those books previously serialized during the interim period of waiting. Interest in such works is maintained over a longer period, so that, instead of a sudden blaze of interest in a particular work, there is substituted a reasonable interest in a series over a longer period. The fact that it is over a longer period means, too, that the reader is held in contact with first-class literature for that much longer and this will improve taste, if improvement is to be obtained. Books dramatized for broadcast performances, or featured in any other way, may be included in the series or displayed as a separate venture.

A popular feature that deserves mention here consists of the display of holiday literature in library buildings. Some apology is necessary for the inclusion of such an item in this section because, in actual fact, the holiday guide medium is, basically, more directly related to the exhibition than to the display.

It is included here because, to achieve full results, from the librarian's point of view, this feature must take on the function of the display as far as possible. As an exhibition an attempt

is made to present information concerning holiday resorts; as a display-cum-exhibition the function is widened and the interest utilized in order to direct attention towards the book stock in the appropriate sections.

For this reason the material for inclusion should not be limited to holiday brochures but should include time-tables, maps, guide-books, works of topography and other material relating to specific localities. Local interest should also attract other works normally arranged by prime subject, such as that found in the archaeological, architectural and sociological sections. Fiction, too, often has topographical interest and should be included.

This development is to be welcomed and encouraged in view of the increase in the number of people receiving holidays with pay and who are, therefore, interested in vacation facilities. The importance of the medium has been swiftly recognized by the British Tourist and Holidays Board which arranges to organize the supply of holiday resort brochures to public libraries. This assistance includes also the provision of posters that are bright, attractive and informative.

At the time of writing these facilities are confined to London libraries but forthcoming plans are expected to include coverage of the larger towns throughout the country. There seems to be no reason why the service should not, eventually, spread wider still.

A large amount of staff time, previously expended in circularizing, is saved by this scheme. Moreover, the selection is balanced, and duplication can be obtained where required. An economical instrument has been presented to us. It needs only a little imaginative supplementation to transform it into a publicity medium that will attract both readers and non-readers. Its success as effective publicity can be confidently predicted for it is based on an appeal that never fails; the appeal of self-interest.

Methods suggested here and in the previous chapter, will all help towards the wider use of stock if applied with due consideration of readers' needs and local circumstances. But if it is found that publicity does not achieve the results expected, the reason may lie in faulty application. Is the aim too high

or too low? Is there provided the efficient personal service without which all publicity is useless? Books may be unread because people do not want them or simply because they are unsuitable or not made fully available. The answers to the questions posed cannot be gauged unless direct contact is maintained with the public as individuals. If the publicity of personal service is applied many of the librarian's problems will be solved.

Downloaded from [www.dbraulibrary.org.in](http://www.dbraulibrary.org.in)



## CHAPTER IV

### BULLETINS AND BOOK-LISTS

THE book-list covers all forms from the simple list of additions to the selective list on a particular subject. The majority of libraries provide monthly lists of additions, sometimes printed in a bulletin, sometimes in the duplicated form, but in all cases the list is selective to the extent that it comprises only part of the additions. The Library Association book lists are a welcome form of co-operative planning for the provision of select lists on popular subjects for general libraries, while the ASLIB and National Book League publications in this field are more specialized.

By its very nature the select subject list suffers from its limited appeal. Because of this, attempts have been made to broaden the base of the appeal and to provide lists covering a wider group of related subjects. This is combined with novelty of form, as the diagram on page 42 illustrates.

The appeal is to a wider public. Each heading covers a list of related books so that the reader simply turns back the leaf in which he is interested. In practice the novelty of the publication invites "dipping" here and there. Then, again, it is likely to be passed around in the home. The busy housewife who never visits the library is thereby given the opportunity to see book-lists such as "KNITTING" and "COOKING", likely to be of interest to her. Had these been printed separately, the male of the species would probably have ignored them. Attached to "ODD JOBS" and "HOBBIES" they reach their goal.

The section "DID YOU KNOW?" contains a reminder that "while books can't do the job for you they can show you how to do it". Also included are notes on facilities, addresses and telephone numbers.

The cost of printing this effort on cover paper is approx-

**YOU** *and your* **HOME**

PUBLIC LIBRARIES

HANDYMAN IN THE HOME

NEEDLEWORK

BRINGING UP BABY

COOKING AND PRESERVING

HOBBIES

IN THE GARDEN

CATS, DOGS AND POULTRY

DID YOU KNOW?

imately £40 per 5,000 for a publication containing nine sheets. Titles are included together with accompanying text.

The work of stock exploitation is being increasingly developed through the readers' advisers and the bulletins. There are many disadvantages attendant upon the role of adviser; so many people object to the intrusion of another into their private meandering in a library. Others, too, will not confess to an ignorance of book-knowledge or to the fact that they are not sure what they really want.

Then there are the very large numbers of samplers, a happy breed of men, who pluck delight from innumerable corners. Pity the readers' adviser who intrudes! But how is he to know? Intuition? Trial and error? The adviser who can thread his way successfully past all pitfalls is indeed a valuable rarity!

This seems to be one of the reasons for the popularity of the written advisory service, the printed sheet that varies from the single folded leaflet to the elaborately produced booklet. Being more general in nature and addressed to a wider circle it has a greater chance of success in its own field. The measure of its achievement is limited by its nature, but while the adviser may inadvertently intrude, the bulletin is taken by choice.

It is, of course, obvious that these two methods are complementary; one cannot take the place of the other, although financial restrictions often compel one or the other to be discarded. The printed sheet is limited to its own message, and its eventual value is determined by that appeal plus any effect this may have had in inducing the reader to search and experiment for himself.

The adviser is not so limited; he may test and probe, give a lead here and a suggestion there, suiting his methods to the ascertained interests of the reader. The adviser is, therefore, to be preferred if a choice has to be made, and every competent librarian should be able to attempt the work.

In itself it is an education, revealing as it does the opinions and prejudices, desires and limitations of the public. Its value to the book selector needs to be stressed; far too often we find stocks built up without regard to the needs of the public to be

served. In cases where the advisory service is not possible the bulletin can help as far as its natural limitations permit.

The main features vary little; lists of the recently added books, both fiction and non-fiction. Non-fiction is arranged in wide subject groups according to popular appeal, such as, "Ventures", "The English Spirit", "Your Hobby" and so on.

Secondary features now enter and these show great diversity, as may be expected. These features represent the effort of the librarian to exploit his stock, to interest his readers in new fields and to lead them towards a better standard of reading. In some cases the factual works are annotated, sometimes by the addition of a section of the publisher's "blurb", in fewer cases by an original paragraph which adds life and tone to the whole effort.

Fiction, too, is often split up into broad groups: general, humorous, historical and so on.

More than half of the bulletins issued consist of the above items with slight variations. More elaborate efforts are designed, not only to provide information of latest additions, but also to make the reader a working partner in the life of the system. Islington's monthly bulletin contains the usual book news with such additional regular features as: (a) a list of novels dealing with a particular subject, such as doctors, childhood, negroes and so on; (b) items of interest, such as library news and Borough Council notes; (c) suggestions concerning the care of books and use of the facilities.

The first feature has obviously proved popular for it has since been expanded into a separate publication: "Fact and Fiction". As the title implies, the subjects are designated and works of fiction and non-fiction dealing with those subjects are listed. This is real exploitation of stock, and as such, is refreshing.

A separate quarterly bulletin is published for the children. This follows the lines of the adult publication, a specially valuable feature being "Books to Read Next", a list of recommended books with descriptive notes, graded for ages and interests.

The "St. Pancras Journal" is more conservative but far from being dull. The cover carries a rather heavy design but the

contents are first class: book items, articles on the locality, and a special effort to cater for the children in the shape of a children's section. This would, perhaps, be improved if issued separately, but this slight defect is outweighed by the quality of the section. Here is writing with understanding! No talking down or patronizing tone, but a straightforward exposition of stock at the level of the junior readers.

Bethnal Green are in the habit of issuing surprise booklets which must delight their patrons. Typographical layout is always excellent and the contents never fail to interest. The subjects may have been dealt with before but rarely exploited so well.

Shoreditch contributes two useful features in its bulletin in addition to normal book items. The first is "Straight from the Shelves", and consists of a list of six or eight factual works of proved worth which, through oversight or neglect, have fallen into disuse. Works such as *Rats, Lice and History* and *The English Eccentrics* need only a few words of recommendation to establish an appeal. The feature attempts to achieve this by giving each book a descriptive paragraph so as to bring out its characteristic features. This method can be varied to suit the likes and dislikes of the public at different systems.

A second item consists of a short note of the work of a selected author. Details of his life and work are given, sufficient to arouse the interest of readers. Thus the fact that Somerset Maugham studied and wrote in Lambeth during his early years gives the local inhabitants a feeling of fellowship and tends to encourage a reading of the author, which it is hoped may be extended.

Leyton's activities are numerous in the field of extension and their publications tend to stress this side of their work. The printed material issued should be studied for its variety and excellence of design. Each activity is introduced by a few paragraphs and followed, where applicable, by a selective list. The printing is excellent and achieves harmony and emphasis which demands close study. At first sight the layout appeals for its neatness and clean-cut effect. Closer study brings an appreciation of the work involved to achieve this result.

Very few library publications reach a high standard of typographical excellence. This is an old fault regularly bemoaned in the professional journals. The fault is sometimes with the librarian but perhaps more often with the financial difficulties under which he labours. Good printing costs money!

It is easy to say, as has been said, that given two examples of printing, good and bad, a Council will choose the good and willingly pay for their choice. It is not true!! The many badly-produced publications prove this. Too many are crippled by meagre allocation, too low to permit of good printing. The most knowledgeable librarian cannot cope with a poor jobbing printer.

Having said that, it must be confessed that every example of poor library printing jars. Perhaps fewer and better bulletins might provide the answer. The question is important, not only because the bulletin is intrinsically valuable, but because it can be made to serve as an introduction to hosts of non-library users. As in other spheres, a bad introduction is worse than none.

It might be helpful if an advisory panel on publications could be formed. It is true that the professional journals undertake to review such publications, but space is so limited that an adequate comment is impossible. The panel visualized would undertake to examine bulletins and give advice on possible improvements in layout, printing, presentation, style and material.

Bearing in mind the cost allowed for the effort, such a body could well prove helpful to many systems understaffed and ill-equipped to deal with printed material. It may be objected that understaffed and ill-equipped systems would do well to improve their arrangements before branching out into print. This is undoubtedly true, but unfortunately we are not usually masters of our budget; an allocation for printing can rarely, if ever, be diverted to other purposes. Under such circumstances advice on the difficulties of production might well be welcomed.

Material for inclusion may be suggested, features such as "Fact and Fiction" and "Straight from the Shelves" could be

adopted by other libraries with official blessing. Such pooling of ideas would probably lead to an all-round increase in efficiency and service.

Items such as\* "Books into Films" is a similar case in point. A display of such books, *and other works related*, would prove an undoubted draw.

Duplication of lists is practised where cost of printing is prohibitive, but these are often marred by their shoddy and amateurish appearance. Much can be done to improve them by careful layout and intelligent use of space.

Islington's experiment with the *Reggie Reader* series should be watched with interest. This post-war successor of *Billy Brown of London Town* wends his way through successive duplicated book-lists so successfully that imitators can confidently be predicted. The danger here is that such lists, unless produced by a first-class operator working a good machine, tend to become heavy and blotched or faint and spindly.

Lay-out must be very good to balance the disadvantage of lack of variety in type face, and bad lay-out appears to be one of the chief faults in library printing. The plain drab appearance of headings, titles and notes in a continuous 12 pt. gives a monotonous, flat appearance to the page, and these factors cannot ever be completely compensated, no matter how good production and lay-out may be. Duplicated lists must, therefore, be of the highest quality to withstand criticism. Average and poor lists are frequently encountered and these make bad publicity.

On the whole, it may be said that a first-class duplicated list is a cheap and passable substitute for printing. It is a medium we are often forced to adopt because of financial pressure but it should not be undertaken lightly or without due care and application.

Duplicating paper with letter heading can be obtained, the result being to give the finished sheet a much smarter and professional appearance. Such letter heading can be obtained for approximately £14 per 10,000 sheets and can be used for many types of lists. A typical example follows:

\* *Library World* (January, 1949)



*By Courtesy of the Borough Librarian, Battersea  
Grand publicity. Attracts both sides in the modern  
art controversy.*



# LECTURES



1  
9  
4  
8  
9

*By Courtesy of the Borough Librarian, Battersea  
Battersea Lecture Handbook: an original cover design.*

Another method sometimes encountered is the use of type-litho work in bulletins. This method has little to recommend it. As a specimen of publicity the facsimile type face cannot compare with letterpress. There can be little variation or emphasis, while the resulting copy is pedestrian and dull. A run of 5,000 copies is about the maximum possible with any degree of clarity.

For short runs the method is cheaper than letterpress, but on a maximum run of 5,000 this advantage is greatly reduced. The reason for this is that by far the heaviest cost of letterpress lies in the cost of the initial setting-up; the length of the run is a secondary factor. For a long run the high, initial setting cost is spread over, so that the cost of each individual item decreases with the length of the run.

This is not the case with type-litho. The copy has to be typed and reproduced photographically, yet initial costs are lower than for letterpress. These costs are similarly spread over the run but, as already noted, the length of run is limited to approximately 5,000 copies. Above that number, therefore, letterpress has the advantage.

The following table gives a comparison of the cost of type-litho and letterpress:

			Type-litho	Letterpress
8pp.	Bulletin	8vo. 2,500 copies	£20	£30
"	"	" 5,000 "	36	42
12pp.	"	" 2,500 "	27	40
"	"	" 5,000 "	46	55

It can be seen, therefore, that the process is useful for reports required in short runs, but is unsuitable for bulletins which demand a run of 5,000 or more copies. Moreover, the better appearance of letterpress, and its possibilities for type variation, make it very much more suitable as a medium for publicity.

Incidentally, printing costs can be reduced considerably by the insertion of advertising matter. An 8vo. bulletin with a circulation of 5,000 copies would produce revenue at the rate of approximately £12 per page. If such material is

included, it should be kept to the minimum in order not to swamp the text. This expedient should be adopted only as a last resort.

It has already been suggested that a bulletin could be used for the purpose of contacting library non-users, and these consist of up to 75 per cent. of the population. There are several ways of achieving this. The mailing method is straightforward, even obvious, yet it is not regularly practised. It has been proved that a copy of the library bulletin mailed to non-users produces considerable returns in the form of new readers. A marked enrolment card, inserted in the bulletin, provides an easy check.

In some cases where this method has been tried, the mailing list has been limited to non-borrowers. This, however, seems to be a wrong policy for two reasons: (1) the time involved in checking the readers' register against the electoral roll, and (2) the fact that practically every reader belongs to a family in which there is a non-library member.

Librarians are apt to assume that readers act as ambassadors, crying the virtues of the library service to all members of their families. This is not generally so, as the register proves. The credited virtue of sharing a good thing does not, apparently, apply in the library sphere, how else is it possible to account for the low registration tally? It is, therefore, good policy to send the bulletin to all residences, hoping that it will be read by some member of the family. This is not such a formidable task as it appears. The work can be spread over a period of twelve months or more. A regular two-yearly rota would contact, not only non-users, but also those aggravating people who allow their tickets to lapse!

A mailing list for publicity material should be maintained and regularly revised to include new groups and individuals. Included in this list will be the secretaries of local societies, editors, clergy, school teachers and other individuals who, from time to time, are found to be interested in the spread of the service.

It is suggested that all doctors and dentists should be circularized as well as the proprietors of concerns, such as hair-dressers and cafés, where people congregate.

An initiatory letter should be sent in order to obtain permission for the bulletin to be left in the waiting room or in the shop so that clients may be able to thumb the pages while waiting for attention.

A point that arises here concerns the advisability of including classification numbers in a bulletin. Most lists include notation, but the experiment has been tried of omitting the book location in order to induce readers to use the catalogue to find the books they want. This experiment forms a further use for the bulletin.

In practice, many readers ask the staff for the books required rather than use the catalogue, but even this is an advantage since it paves the way for a lesson in book tracing. Such an opportunity would not otherwise have occurred and is, therefore, to be welcomed.

When a request for a listed book is made, there is a natural temptation for the staff to produce it, since this is the easiest and quickest method. But if the temptation is resisted, as it should be, and the reader shown "how to find it", then something definite has been gained.

The method has been tried, and it works. More readers use the catalogues, more readers ask for assistance and, later, are able to search for themselves. This would appear to be a complete justification for the practice.

These are not the only functions of the bulletin. It has its use, not only for the existing readers and for the residential non-users, but also for the day-time business population. For this purpose it should be combined with "book-list posters", later to be described and, if possible, with an appeal of direct local interest.

A method which promises to be successful owes its origin to the tenets of elementary psychology. All libraries have information which is of use to local industry but the material is, normally, scattered and often hidden except to the practised eye. We know that local business executives would be agreeably surprised could we persuade them to visit the library, but they do not come! We can however take the library to them, or, at least, a sample of it most likely to appeal.

Most districts contain one or more industries which predominate. It is the practice to concentrate the stock on these specialities, and often to produce a subject list. It is suggested that this list should be extended to include a directory of the trade concerned. A subject list sent to a manufacturer might or might not be appreciated. Such a list, which contained also a directory of his trade, giving names of suppliers, retailers, agents and other relevant information, would be welcomed and constantly used.

It is essential that this publication should be free. In the first place, only a free copy can ensure adequate circulation; secondly, the receipt of a free gift of undoubted value places the trader under an obligation, small materially, but large psychologically. He is placed in the mood to accept the further publications of the library and to co-operate in its work; to display posters in his work-shops and canteen; to allow bulletins and application forms to lie on canteen counters for the use of his staff. A whole new field is opened, a field in which technical lists can be varied with lists on hobbies, sports, literature and general subjects.

The following has proved its worth for the display of bulletins in commercial premises. A small tray, 10 ins. wide and 11 ins. long, is provided with a 15-in. back-board to take a 15 ins.  $\times$  10 in. poster. The back-board has a 10° backwards slope to facilitate reading. The tray itself holds two piles of bulletins and two piles of application forms. The poster at the back contains a message referring to the bulletins and to the library facilities, and records also the addresses of the branches.

With the goodwill of the executives, this tray could be placed on a convenient ledge in works and factories, thus ensuring that the library message penetrates throughout the business quarter. Moreover, the use of this tray is not confined to factories. It may be placed, by arrangement, in clinics, showrooms, physicians' and dentists' waiting rooms, clubs, evening institutes, employment exchanges and shops; anywhere, in fact, where people congregate and where space can be obtained.

The effect of the tray is to draw attention to the bulletins

and forms, to keep them in tidy heaps and to focus the eye on the poster, which has its own resting place. Although prominent, it is not unsightly; it is dignified and effective. Yet withal it is simple and can be manufactured for a few shillings. The novelty of the idea will attract attention. Is there a better way of obtaining widespread publicity?

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## CHAPTER V

### THE PREPARATION OF BULLETINS

IT is not proposed to deal with the question of selection of material for bulletins. The crux of the problem is to know what to leave out, and how to trim the residue in order to get the maximum material into the minimum space without destroying the value of the entries. Training and practice provide the solution, and here every librarian is his own teacher.

But certain factors do emerge; certain principles of mechanical arrangement, layout and type, can be suggested, and it might perhaps be useful if brief mention is made of these.

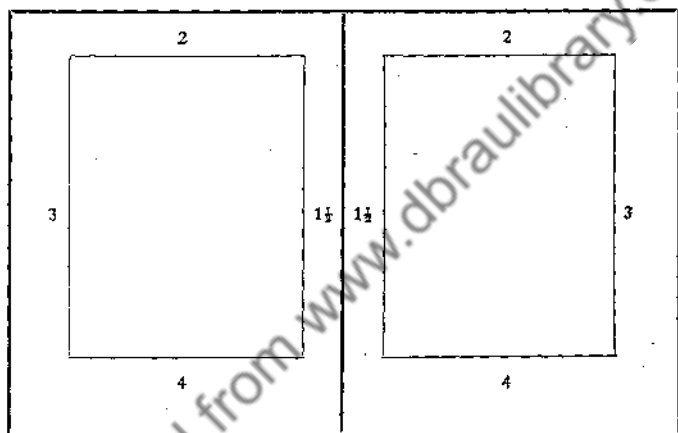
Experience has shown that type areas should contrast with and balance areas of white space. Words and phrases should not be scattered, neither should they be crowded unduly. Space should be manipulated by the use of paragraphs, leading where necessary, and ample margins. Space is as vital to effective display as the text itself.

It is useless to attempt to get more information on to a page than it will comfortably carry. A crowded page will not be read. Compare the use of shop windows for advertising purposes. The amateur puts everything into his window, so that the result resembles a scrap-heap, with adverse publicity value. The professional window dresser, on the other hand, severely restricts his display, with admirable, pointed results. Compare too, the use of space and position; note the balance and contrast. In such a way should type balance and contrast. Before its matter can or will be read, a page of type should attract by its appearance.

In order to test type lay-out, place the proposed setting at a distance from the eye so that the individual words are just not legible. Look at the page as a whole. Does it look a solid lump? If so, scrap it and recast. Are there "rivers"

of space, i.e. connected space lines running down the page? If so, substitute or delete words in the text and move up in order to "break space". Does the page have an harmonious effect, does it present a balanced aspect? If so, you can be satisfied with the lay-out and will have avoided some common mistakes in pamphlet composition.

The printer will be responsible for the margin proportion, but it is as well to check that the standard ratios are maintained 2; 3; 4; for head, fore-edge and tail margins respectively, with the centre visible margins together equal to one of the fore-edge margins.



The area of the margin will be decided by the printer unless definite instructions are given.

Matters concerning lay-out and paper are too often left undecided, with the result that a good type design fails in its purpose through a faulty medium.

Length of line should not much exceed 4 in. A longer line tends to tire the eyes and is dreary. A short line lends itself better to "splash" display and is economical for that purpose. Spot lighting a heading by spacing means a serious loss of type area in a wide page but is inconsiderable in a narrower column. Naturally, the size of type must be considered. A good average is twice the length of the complete lower case alphabet (a-z length).



*What is a Good Type?*

The most important feature of any type face is that, when set in page form, it must present an appearance that allows non-tiring and easy reading. A good type is, therefore, one that achieves this purpose. This apparent simplicity needs to be stressed, it involves the important factors of harmony and legibility.

Harmony depends, to a very great extent, on experience spiced with common sense. The suitability of the face for the effect intended enters into this. Type for book work, intended for continuous reading, would be unsuitable if used for display purposes. It is worth remembering that the appearance of a face can be changed completely by leading. A type that has been leaded appears to be lighter in shade than the same face set solid.

Legibility depends upon the design, size, inking, leading, margin proportion and paper. The choice of face must rest with the individual; no one face can be said to be better than the rest, so much depends upon the purpose in view and the opinion, taste and experience of the user. But certain characteristics may be stressed since the possession of these, by conferring legibility and grace, raises certain designs above the general standards. Neither can the face be considered alone. Faces must not only be satisfactory in themselves but must also combine well to form words, lines and pages which are themselves satisfactory. Such designs retain their popularity because of their great value, either for general or special uses. The designs which follow have all stood the test of time and usage and are included in an order of preference which is personal and in no way conclusive:

<i>Old Face</i>	<i>Modern</i>
Times New Roman	Perpetua
Garamond	Bodoni Book
Caslon Old Style	
Imprint	
Bembo	
Plantin	
<i>Transitional</i>	<i>Sanserif</i>
Baskerville	Gill Sans

### *Old Face*

The old face group is characterized by a diagonal stress, sloping serifs and by a gradual transition from thick to thin strokes, resulting in a legible and non-tiring text.

### *Times New Roman*

Was designed in 1931 for *The Times*, being specially created to suit the needs of modern presses, thin ink and high-speed printing. Its fine qualities for book printing were discovered later and these advantages have speedily thrust it into a position of popularity. The face is large on the body and it is, therefore, improved by leading. It is legible, clean in appearance and dignified. A further great virtue is that it can be used to good effect on both coated and uncoated paper.

### *Garamond*

A standard type of neat and clean appearance which, however, demands careful press-work. Exact inking is essential, since the small counters, typical of this design, fill in readily if over-inked; while under-inking gives a pale spindly effect. Being narrow set, it is economical of paper and can be used unleaded without loss of legibility. Does not take kindly to coated paper.

### *Caslon Old Style*

A type which has deservedly held its popularity for over 200 years. Often suffers to-day from bad preparation and press-work. It is not seen at its best on modern, smooth, dry paper since it was designed for use on the damp, rough paper made by hand. A coarse, preferably damp, paper is still essential to take up a good impression and to give the necessary thickening of the letter.

These conditions are rarely to be found in modern commercial work except where fine printing is the objective. The Caslon characteristics, adapted for use on dry, smooth machine-made paper are reproduced in the Imprint design. This design compensates for the weakness of Caslon by an increased weight of face.

*Bembo*

One of the best of the old-face designs because of its grace and dignity. It is condensed and economical of space and may be set solid without loss of legibility. The long descending letters contribute to the clarity of this type.

In common with most of the old face designs, Bembo shows to advantage on a rough paper.

*Plantin*

A general purposes type which is not in the front rank. It is not greatly distinguished in any particular feature but retains its place because of its versatility. It can be used on any kind of paper and for any type of work, the result being a competent but uninspiring page. The chief reason for this defect, or lack of virtue, is the absence of effective contrast between thick and thin strokes and a consequent heaviness of appearance. It takes well on coated paper with half-tone illustrations.

*Modern Faces*

These designs reveal a vertical stress, horizontal serifs and an abrupt transition from thick to thin strokes. They take easily to machine-made, smooth papers, but their chief disadvantage is their inferior legibility when compared with the old faces. This is especially noticeable in the smaller sizes and is due to the weakening of the serifs and to the rapid transition from thick to thin strokes.

*Perpetua*

Designed by Eric Gill and cut in 1929 by the Monotype Corporation. It is neat and outstanding in appearance and may be set solid because the face is small on the body. This practice is usually adopted, since leading gives the type a lighter appearance and reduces the appeal of the design. A smooth paper brings out its best qualities but it is not suitable for use with art paper.

Perpetua is noted for the fineness of its hairlines and serifs.

The older types, designed originally for the clumsy and non-discriminating movements of the hand press, needed braced serifs to sustain the wear and shock of repeated impressions. Modern machinery, being more delicate of operation, makes less demand upon a type face.

For this reason Eric Gill was able to strip the Perpetua design of utilitarian appendages, that were no longer essential. Hairlines and serifs were refined, so much so that they became ultra sensitive to the type of paper used. Most type faces react to the paper and demand the correct medium for the best results, but none react so violently and so noticeably as Perpetua.

Note this type on smooth paper, which reveals it in all its delicacy. Then compare with Perpetua on antique and mark the blunt effect and loss of detail. The two specimens might almost be the result of different faces. Perpetua with its true medium is airily graceful; with antique it is pedestrian and commonplace.

### *Bodoni Book*

Is a lighter version of Bodoni and is very suitable for pamphlets and bulletins. It is graceful and delicate, of fairly narrow set and therefore economical of space. A smooth uncoated paper is its best medium. The face is small on the body and can readily be set solid or with the minimum of leading, while retaining full legibility.

### *Transitional*

#### *Baskerville*

Usually classed as an old-face but it is, in reality, an old face with modern features. The present-day design was based on the letter cut by John Baskerville in 1760. It is a wide set type, not economical of space but having a dignified and clean-cut appearance. Clarity and legibility are improved by leading and, when thus treated, it is not tiring to the eyes. A 10 point face on 12 point body is a good standard for continuous text. Smooth, non-absorbent paper is the best medium.

The type used in this book is Baskerville, 11 point on 12.

## *Sansserif*

### *Gill Sans*

Probably the finest of the Sansserif group for bulletin work. These types are not suitable for continuous text, but the Gill version, because of its close adherence to the original Roman letter, is less tiring than other forms. Where text is short and the mass broken by titles and notes, as in library bulletins, Gill Sans can be recommended.

One of its useful features is the fact that it can be used with good effect on most kinds of paper, coated and uncoated. It is clear, legible and of wide set. The slight variation in thickness of stroke sets it apart from other faces of the group.

### *Choice of Type Face*

The average size of face should not fall below 10 point for continuous text, though notes and annotation may be set in 8 point, or even 6 point, if restricted in length. Much depends upon the design chosen. An 8 point face of one design can be quite as legible as a 10 point face of another. The size of type in points does not indicate the amount of space it will occupy unless the actual design is taken into consideration. The length of the alphabet of Times New Roman, for example, is greater than that of the Perpetua of the same point size. When a type is referred to as being of 10 point, it is the dimension of the body, from front to back, not the size of the face, that is being described.

This fact needs emphasis, since the size of a face of given point size, i.e. the area it occupies on its body, varies in different designs. There is appreciable difference in size of face between Bembo and Plantin of equal point size. Therefore, to gauge the size of a type, and to estimate the amount of space it will require, it is necessary to consider both the point size and the type design. The practical value of this becomes apparent when economy of paper necessitates the use of a face of narrow set in order to get as much text as possible in a given space. A further expedient, introduced in order to save leading, is to use a type of given size face on a body of larger size. Thus a 10 point face on a 12 point body is frequently used, giving the expression: "printed in 10 point on 12".

*Paper*

After type face and lay-out have been chosen, the question of paper becomes important. The best possible paper is required, bearing in mind the purpose of the publication. It would, naturally, be wasteful to use the best quality paper on an ephemeral leaflet, yet even here care is required. There is a certain standard below which librarians must not fall. Ephemeral pamphlets can be printed on cheap paper, but is it worth while to issue a shoddy article in order to save on paper costs? The answer is emphatically, no! Paper, therefore, should be the best that can be justified by the nature of the publication.

Many experiments have been made with coloured paper and coloured inks. Black ink on white paper is a conservative choice but still probably the best for general work and certainly for sustained reading. But it should be real black on real white. Nothing could be worse than off-black on off-white, a combination seen so often in publishers' wartime products. Paradoxically enough, the best white is that which contains a faint tinge of blue, imperceptible except under close scrutiny.

Shorter lists and bulletins may well be printed with coloured ink on coloured paper. For covers, black on yellow contrasts well. In fact, since the cover must attract, the colours specified in the section on posters are here applicable. But for covers only! For the main body of the text such vivid contrasts would be tiring and completely out of place. Pale, coloured, paper with an ink of harmonious shade is useful. Good results can be achieved with a pale paper and ink of a darker shade.

A rough, finished paper is kinder to the eye than the coated variety since it does not reflect, but the latter is necessary if photographic work is to be included. Paper finish can also influence the choice of type, since certain types and papers are incompatible. Thus Caslon does not take kindly to art paper although others, such as Times New Roman and Gill Sans can be used on either matt or coated paper.

These points are small in themselves yet so vitally important in building up good relations. Hurried, careless work is just as expensive and much less productive than conscientious.

tious craftsmanship. It is necessary, too, to remember that when any leaflet leaves the library it is representative of the System. The contents may be ephemeral, but while it is current, it is an agent of the service and, as such, should maintain the standard you have set out to achieve. That, in fact, is the crux of the publicity problem. It is necessary to set a standard of service and of production and nothing that is produced in search of this ideal must be allowed to fall below the desired level. It is better not to publicize than to peddle the second-rate.

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## CHAPTER VI

### THE CHILDREN'S LIBRARY

NO apology is needed for the inclusion of a chapter on the Children's Library in a discussion on publicity since, from the long-term point of view, work among children is likely to be one of the finest investments.

The complaint is often heard that adult readers come to the library without knowing what they want. This is not strictly true, because they all want books; it is the particular work that eludes them. Children are, naturally, even more uncertain; a large proportion visit the library with no definite requirement. Perhaps they will see a book that catches their interest, but as often as not they "make-do" with whatever may be available. When this is so there is no achievement, no community of feeling between the child and the library; there is, in fact, a definite loss of opportunity. How much better it is when the library goes out to attract the children, to awaken and encourage their interests and to lead them, via those interests, to books!

The danger here is that the child, undecided and uncertain, may tend to choose the easiest reading and so be satisfied with one of the ephemeral atrocities that shame the shelves of many juvenile libraries. This ghastly flood of rubbish constitutes a disgrace to its authors and a menace to its readers. Works of this kind require no effort to read; they demand nothing from the reader and provide nothing except an easy method of wasting time.

There can be no achievement in such reading; the only result can be the inculcation of bad habits, a limited and slangy vocabulary and a disregard for construction, phrasing and the tone of good literature. These formless potboilers are no substitute for the books that require the exercise of thought and which thereby serve to develop imagination and mental flexibility.



Especially to be deprecated is the fact that this evil influence is inflicted at an age, the critical formative period, when reliable standards and the appreciation of style should gradually be introduced to the attention of the child. We admit the effect of environment upon character, habit and personality, why then do we not also admit the influence of environmental reading upon the character and development of youth? Further, if we are aware of the enervating influence of poor literature, why do we connive at its perpetuation? Why marvel at the low standard of adult taste and deplore the prevalence of trash readers when we do nothing to encourage appreciation in the young?

Sitters in the ivory castles of culture do nothing to remedy this situation; faith without works is futile. What an indictment can be levelled against librarians when they allow such works to be represented in their stock and neglect their allotted function of literary advisers!

Some excuse can be submitted for the inclusion of the lightest fiction in the adult range. Such stock must provide accommodation for readers whose intelligence and experience is limited, whose background knowledge is inadequate and who cannot, therefore, grapple with anything more advanced. Their minds, tired perhaps, and certainly without the marvellous flexibility of the child's, are unable to rise to the task of struggling with the unaccustomed difficulties of style, word and phrase. They have neither the equipment nor the inclination to tackle new problems. It is not their fault, it is a personal tragedy that we should attempt to understand and to alleviate.

The danger of provision for such readers is apparent. The low standard offers a temptation to those capable of better things. The inducement is not always resisted and is often accepted as an easy method of escape from reality.

This slight digression serves a purpose for comparison, for no plea of inadequacy is valid in the juvenile section. Here, there is no great disparity of experience. Young minds are agile, fresh, alert and eager to pit themselves against suitable problems. Intelligence, though varied, is not vastly different in degree of acuteness.

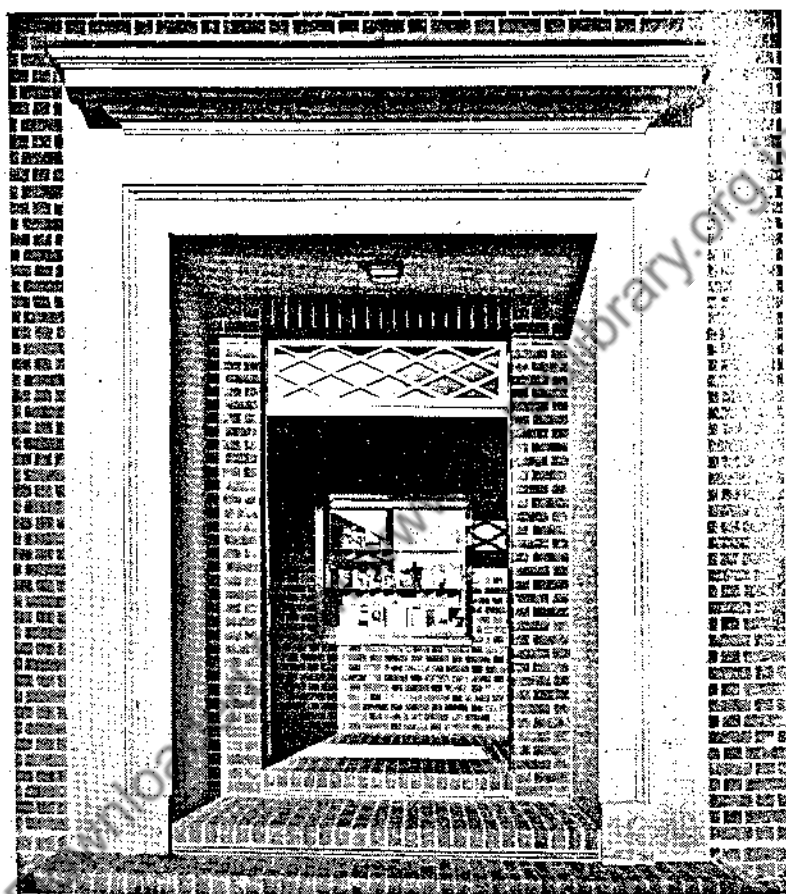
## Battersea Public Libraries



# What's going on?

*By Courtesy of the Borough Librarian, Battersea*

*Children's Handbook, Battersea. Colour, design and interest well combined in this striking cover.*



By Courtesy of the City Librarian, Bristol  
*Bristol's well situated showcase forms a unit of immense possibilities.*

There can, therefore, be no excuse here for opiates, the spirit of enquiry has not been dulled by daily cares and years of neglect; the range of opportunity represents an adventure to be accepted rather than a task to be shunned. It is the duty of the Children's Librarian to harness these forces, to guide, advise and train the children in the literature suitable for their age and ability.

These factors should be sufficient to overcome the lure of high and easy issues and to ensure that the temptation of ephemeral reading is removed from the path of the child. It is no bad thing that a child should have to strive to attain his pleasures; good authors demand the tribute of attention and some endeavour from their readers, yet the rewards are correspondingly high.

In order to reap such benefits training should begin at an early age. The child should be encouraged to accustom itself to the co-operative process in reading, the only satisfactory method, that requires a contribution from both author and reader. The librarian should here complete the trilogy by adopting the legitimate role of adviser and guide.

These considerations must affect all work performed with children, and especially those schemes adopted in order to attract children to the library and encourage them to remain. Some of these projects are described and commended in the pages that follow and others are suggested as being worthy of adoption. But, throughout, the reservation is maintained that the purpose of each activity must be towards developing the use of books. Such development may take the form of training in the use of books as tools or in actual reading and appreciation. The actual form and method matters little provided the valid end is attained.

It is vitally important, however, to ensure that a project is never adopted, or allowed to develop, for its own sake. Only those activities that can be related to books should be considered. Features, such as Punch and Judy shows, are excellent in their own way but should find no place in a public library. The drift from Brown to Barnum has accelerated alarmingly in the adult section; let it not be augmented in the children's room.

A popular method of attracting children and directing their interests is the making of scrap books. Illustrations from discarded periodicals and books are made available. Children cut out the pictures and paste them into the scrap books, together with short essays or commentaries on the pictures. Information for this is obtained by the use of reference books. The scrap-books can be home-made, again by the children themselves, and there should be at least one for each class of Dewey. Some classes will need more than one. So an early start is made on the appreciation of the classification scheme and the method of searching for information.

Similarly, a stamp collection could be formed and perhaps, in the future, a collection of cigarette cards. All of this material lends itself to the use of books, catalogue and the classification scheme.

An advance on the scrap book method is the compilation by the children of their own illustrations collection. Illustrations are collected in the usual way and pasted on manilla sheets, one picture to a sheet. Information on the subject is compiled from reference books and a brief digest written at the foot of the sheet. This is then broadly classified, and filed in a box. One box to each class is enough for a beginning and, if the box is filed on the shelves, it is of permanent use and interest as well as being a source of pride. In fact, this project is one of the most useful that can be performed in the Children's Library.

Is this work worth while? Experience has shown it to be so. It does not bump up issues, but are issues to be the criterion? What it does do is to teach the youngsters to use books as tools, and to understand that when information is required the library is the obvious source. It creates a link that is unlikely to be forgotten. All this is worth while, and it is good publicity!

The question of story hours must, of course, be considered, if only because they are such a popular feature in most libraries. It is not difficult to understand why these efforts appeal to children, every child enjoys listening to a story. But why librarians should be content to accept the passive role of story-tellers is beyond comprehension!

It is not the telling, as such, to which objection is raised, it is the purpose of the activity that jars. For the narration is often given as an entertaining interlude, presumably to keep the children quiet and reasonably contented.

Yet this project could be developed into an instrument of great potency in the training and developing of literary taste. These periods should be conducted with a purpose other than that of pure entertainment.

Consider the proposed method. There should first be the reading selected from a source of known worth. This should be followed by elucidation and explanation. It could be shown how the author has blended his phrases and chosen his words to build up a situation; how he has developed his situations and combined them in order to build a plot; how individual actions are governed and described in order to portray character.

Differences in style between authors could be compared as well as those variations demanded by changing situations. Alternation between the cumulative language of description and the more terse and staccato demands of dialogue should be noted. The essential fact should be demonstrated that reading is the sharing of experience and that literature of value therefore demands an effort from the reader, a contribution that is repaid abundantly.

Difficult work? Of course it is! But valuable, lasting and very essential. Few assistants are capable of tackling the job? Very true, and a perpetual disgrace it is. But our training should provide for it. Library Schools should prepare for it and Chief Librarians insist upon its performance. Where else is raw material so badly handled, where is essential preparation so sadly neglected? Better by far to spend time in this way than in the endless routine of soulless processes.

Objections will inevitably arise that this programme is too formidable for juvenile readers, that such provision will drive children away or even induce a reactionary bias against the literature we are trying to encourage. It might even be said that we are trying to usurp the function of the teacher.

Such arguments are specious but will not withstand examination. Our function is concerned with the use of books and

it is our duty to teach appreciation of such material. We show how books are written in order to demonstrate how they should be read. Literary appreciation is our business.

It is reasonable to expect that the experiment would be introduced gradually over a period, and in a carefully graduated selection, so that the child would not be overburdened or afflicted with mental nausea. In fact, it is a task that every parent should be prepared to undertake for his own children, a task which, unfortunately, is one of the first to be evaded.

A more direct form of publicity, for which the good offices of the children's librarian is needed, is the organization of competitions for enrolling readers. Most of the children have friends and relatives, old and young, who do not belong to the library. Suppose a point is awarded for each new enrolment, and scores posted conspicuously in the library? Or would that be undignified?

Many children have access to sites for poster display—in the ground floor windows of houses, in shops, and so on. Suppose a point is given for every poster displayed? At the end of the month the winners would be announced in the library bulletin. These are only suggestions. The whole subject would have to be worked up to suit local needs and prejudices, but it is a form of publicity that has immense possibilities if expertly and tactfully organized.

A more orthodox project is the "quiz" or "book-hunt" which, like the scrap book and illustrations collection, forms both an attraction and a lesson in the use of books.

A number of general knowledge questions are written on cards, one of which is given to every child taking part. Before the hunt commences, a short talk is given explaining the use of the catalogue and the method of finding subjects and books. The game then begins, a certain time being given for answering the questions. If the answer cannot be found a request is made for a clue. This usually takes the form of a hint from the librarian, just sufficient to put the child on the right track. Care is taken to balance interest with instruction. Deftly handled, these games can be a source of vast profit to the children and to the library.

The problem game is another worth-while effort. Illustrations of buildings, places or things are displayed and the children invited to name the objects and to provide information concerning them. It is surprising how quickly children learn to use books as tools when their interest is aroused in this way.

Work with schools is a usual form of co-operation, but too often it is concerned only with the provision of books, varied by occasional visits. These aspects are most essential, but it is also important to provide regular talks on the library service generally, and on the co-operative process whereby books can be obtained even though not stocked by the local library. The network of contacts is fascinating to most juvenile minds and the knowledge is likely to remain when ordinary school visits are forgotten.

It would be a great advantage to the library service generally if borrowers could be transferred from the junior department with a knowledge of the working of the classification, catalogues and schemes of co-operation. They would be better equipped to make the most of the stock, while the library would be seen in its true perspective as a logical array of books, rather than as a frightening mass, as is now so often the case. The library film would be of great value here. Its use as an instrument for teaching the correct use of library facilities makes it worthy of serious consideration.

This is publicity of enduring character. It is not showy, and it is difficult, calling for careful, painstaking effort continuously. But the dividends are sure, being represented by an appreciative, enlightened body of readers.

Also in this category, may be included the letter to school-leavers.

Every child likes to receive a letter, and such a communication from the Chief Librarian is bound to be treated with respect. The following has proved useful:

Dear Mr. \_\_\_\_\_

Miss \_\_\_\_\_

May I be allowed to congratulate you on the start you are making in the world of commerce and



to bring to your notice the facilities provided for your use?

The stock of the public libraries has been carefully selected to include books on the trades and professions. Perhaps you would care to call to see the Readers' Adviser and examine the material we have on your chosen career?

If you have not made a final choice we can recommend our full selection of books and pamphlets that set out the details and prospects of the many careers open to you.

In addition to this material we have a large stock of books on hobbies, sports, travel and most other subjects including, of course, fiction.

I enclose a form of application which you may care to complete and return.

Yours truly,

There should be no difficulty in arranging with the Heads of local schools for the names and addresses of school-leavers to be communicated to the librarian; this could be included as part of the regular method of co-operation.

Any activity that assists in preventing the loss of Juvenile Readers should be carefully considered before it is rejected. The letter here suggested, or its equivalent, is a potent factor in this problem. Some hard thinking on these lines by the rapidly increasing body of Children's Librarians is urgently called for.

An extension of this scheme would be outside of the scope of this work but it is capable of wide expansion. Development might proceed in the direction of obtaining particulars of the personal tastes of certain individuals. This is not such a huge or difficult problem as it may sound; most school teachers have their bright pupils whom they are sorry to lose. Such teachers would be extremely willing to pass on the future care of their pupils to the librarian, knowing that the alternative may well be the possible loss of the child to the attractions of the cinema and the street.

A letter to these selected pupils, couched in personal terms, mentioning known hobbies or interests, cannot fail to make an appeal and, possibly, attract a recruit. Such material cannot be allowed to pass out of our hands without strong efforts at retention.

The supply of books to boys and girls of school-leaving age has always been a weak link in the chain of library service. The attempt to overcome this defect by the provision of special adolescent libraries has not been completely successful. The initial costs and the extra space required place the scheme out of reach of many systems, but a still greater obstacle is the fact that the use of such a department brands a boy as an adolescent just at the time when he feels that at last he is a man. Yet there is a danger that the young reader will feel lost in the adult section, take unsuitable books, or perhaps lose interest and relinquish his membership. This danger has to be faced, but it is reduced if a proper grounding has been given in the junior library. In order to avoid a sudden break it should be possible for the adolescent to return to the junior library if the inclination is there.

The difficulty could be mitigated by the provision of lists of books that can be recommended for adolescent reading. No child should be catapulted into the medley of the adult section without some guidance of this kind.

It might also be beneficial to allot a portion of the adult lending library to adolescents and to allow them to choose their books either from their own section or from that of the senior's according to choice. These expedients will lessen the strangeness experienced by the sudden transference from junior to adult selection in a sudden impetuous step and reduce the attendant confusion to manageable proportions.

By co-operation with schools, classes of school-leavers should visit the library for a talk by a member of the staff. The essential likeness of arrangement and aids between the senior and junior libraries should be stressed. The assistance to be obtained from books when launching out into the business world, and the use of the information service would follow. Finally, a visit to the adult library, where, if desired, juvenile tickets could be exchanged for the senior issue.

These methods should be co-ordinated with work in the school itself. The Ministry of Labour pamphlets on Careers lend themselves admirably as the nucleus for a display on trades and professions. It would be a good plan to set up a display that should run at each school for the last three weeks of each term. Alternatively, a selected display should be sent round the schools. A planned rota could ensure that it would appear at each school for at least one period of three weeks during each term.

The cost would be negligible. The Careers Series would form the basis of the display, and these would be supplemented by other books from stock. These, of course, should be duplicated as far as necessary. Other material for inclusion would consist of representative books that are of use to beginners, such as the elementary primers recommended by the various trades and professions.

It is obvious that this material should be supplemented by lists, posters and talks in which the value of the library service to the budding citizen would be stressed.

By these methods the break would not be immediately decisive, both departments would be available for use. The change should be represented as a widening of facilities rather than as an abrupt transference. In addition, if it is possible for the adolescents to help in the junior extension work, so much the better. This is the publicity that pays, the publicity of personal service to the individual. Perhaps there has been, in the past, too great a tendency to think of readers in the mass rather than as individuals, each with his own problems, requirements, tastes and biases.

This attention to individual needs is especially important where work with children is concerned. It is, perhaps, difficult to view library provision from the point of view of the child, but the attempt must necessarily be made. Catalogues must be simplified, classification schemes limited to broad headings, and popular terms used wherever possible. This has been said before. These provisions are, of course, essential but are not, in themselves, sufficient.

The child must be taught to understand the facilities. Through the medium of library games and similar activities

of interest he must be induced to *want* to understand for his own benefit. Thus, in the making of the juvenile illustrations collection previously noted, the children should be encouraged not only to search for, and compile, the descriptive notes but also to classify the pictures. Does it matter if mistakes are made? They can be corrected.

An element of competition can be introduced into "book-hunts" as an incentive to learning. If the children are allowed to compete among themselves they will *want* to find out. The question of self-interest plays as large a part with children as it does with adults.

The basic fact, which must be appreciated, is that the child wants to be amused, he is not interested in improvement, as such, and is not concerned to understand catalogues and classification unless he has some good reason for wanting to do so. Unless the reason is supplied the attempt will not be made, and the child will reach the adolescent stage without a knowledge of library processes or possibilities. At this period, as is well known, many surrender their tickets because the library has nothing to offer them which they can appreciate.

The fact that the library service, under those circumstances, has not been given a fair trial, is neither here nor there. That is not the fault of the youth, it is the fault of the service that neglects to provide adequate guidance. As a result the adolescent leaves the library with a feeling of dissatisfaction and this general impression is retained long after the specific reasons have been forgotten. May not this be a contributory reason why a large proportion of the adult population make no use of library provisions?

No librarian can ever feel satisfied when he considers the fact that 75 per cent. of the population are not registered as library users.

The root of the problem, as stated, probably lies in the Juvenile library, for it is there that contact is made with budding citizens, many of whom are likely to lose the library habit during adolescence and to form part of the future army of non-users.

It would be revealing if it were possible to take a census of the 75 per cent. How many of them have been borrowers

at some time? We do not know, yet it is probable that there are comparatively few people who have never, at any time, registered as readers.

Without the benefit of an enquiry it is impossible to be certain, yet it is known that some, and perhaps a large, proportion of the 75 per cent. have used the library at some time and have failed to maintain contact. Why? Obviously because, *in their opinion*, the public library has not been able to satisfy their needs. The fault might have been with the library service. On the other hand, it is possible that the opinion of the user was based upon ignorance of the scope of the service offered.

It is known that this factor does operate. Many present day readers are content to use a small part of the service only, to refuse every opportunity to widen their scope and to remain in serene ignorance of the full provisions offered. It is not surprising that other attractions are able to entice them away from an interest so lightly esteemed.

The conclusion to be drawn from this is that a more thorough grounding in the extent of library provision is a task that demands high priority in the children's library. More thorough preparation in the past, had this been possible, might have increased the percentage of readers with us to-day.

Conditions of the past no longer operate; there is now no excuse for neglecting this duty, certainly none for seeking secondary functions when this primary need is left unsatisfied. First things must come first; this job must be tackled now, before extra activities are considered. Attempts are made, here and there; intelligent use of the medium of publicity has resulted in slight gains. Yet the effort is difficult, the adult reader is set in his habits and resentful of change or interference; there are strong counter-attractions to be overcome.

For these reasons, the work of teaching library practice is better performed at an early age. Children are more receptive, willing to try experiments and to listen if their interest can be gained. Library games, films and displays can attract and sustain this interest; by these means children can be taught.

Such grounding in library habits will not be wasted. Children and adolescents will still leave the library as other

attractions prevail, in spite of all efforts. But early training will tell with many of them. When other influences pall, when the need for books is felt, then the library habit is likely to reassert itself. The chance of a final and complete break away will be much reduced. When the need finally arises, the library will present itself as a familiar place of known resources rather than as a formidable institution of unknown potentialities.

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## CHAPTER VII

### LECTURES, OUTDOOR DISPLAYS AND EXHIBITIONS

THE lecture is one of the oldest forms of extra-library activity and, although less popular to-day than formerly, is still regarded as a legitimate form of library work. The present intention is not to question the validity of lectures, nor to discuss their organization. At this stage in our progress that is no longer necessary. But there is necessity for an enquiry concerning the decline of the popularity of lectures, a decline that has led to their abandonment in some cases and to their reorganization in others.

Lectures were originally developed as an attempt to exploit books. Experts were induced to talk on given subjects, book lists were prepared, exhibitions arranged and, sometimes, the lecturers were persuaded to refer to specific books during the course of their talks.

The success of the venture was everywhere assured. A solid core of people could be expected to attend regularly and these were reinforced by others whenever the popularity of lecturer or subject gave cause. The lecture appeared to be a solid feature. Of its value there could be no doubt. Books were exploited, it could be proved that this activity did have an effect on the issues. After a period of steady progression the lectures declined in popularity, slowly at first then, with the coming of the war, suddenly. The popularity has not been regained in the same form.

What was the reason for the decline? A reasonable case could be put forward to show that this activity was not able to hold its own in the face of increasing competition from other forms of amusement; radio, theatre and cinema.

This development was not unforeseen. In the face of the gradual decline, attempts were made to revive the lecture

by increasing its entertainment value, so as to allow it to compete on more equal terms with its competitors. The efforts failed and the question arises: should such methods have been tried?

It is submitted here that the popularization should not have been attempted since it necessitated the sacrifice of the real value of the lecture, the informational aspect. The wrong direction was taken, and it might be advisable to reconsider the purpose of this form of extension.

The audience deserted because they were attracted by other forms of entertainment, but a residue remained. These people, presumably, were interested still in the informational aspect and should, therefore, have been considered. It may be, of course, that the number of adherents did not justify the time and expense required but the answer, surely, was to recast the form of lecture rather than to change the whole aspect?

Looking afresh at the problem, perhaps it might be worth while to arrange for the field to be more specialized and localized, limited to the interests of known, particular groups. A small, select and appreciative audience would thus be assured, with the added advantage that the work of the library could be incorporated with the lecture with a fair chance of success. There is also the further possibility that the audience attracted might include a goodly proportion of those who do not normally use the library service.

It will probably be objected that specialized lectures are not new, that they have been tried before in the form of W.E.A. and University Extension series. This is so, but it is the purpose of lectures as a whole that is the immediate concern and, whereas libraries formerly included some specialized lectures, the number now provided is decreasing in favour of the more popular general form.

The two forms are different in appeal, obviously, and should therefore be differently assessed. A popular lecture might attract two hundred people with little benefit to the library through the medium of book provision. The specialized lecture, on the other hand, cannot be expected to attract a comparable number. Attendance figures cannot, with justice,



be compared, yet they sometimes are. Only the results can be compared and the balance here would appear to be well on the side of the specialized lecture.

The story of the decline of outdoor displays and exhibitions resembles that of lectures. The reasons are similar and the remedy may likewise be found in a form of specialization. Outdoor displays must differ from those provided within the library premises because of the difference in the audience at which the display is directed. The library user, within the library, is already interested in books. The first function of the internal display, therefore, is to attract attention to a particular subject. The display set up outside the library premises has a different function. It has first to attract attention to books and, only afterwards, to subject.

For convenience, it is possible to divide outdoor displays into two groups: (1) those set up for a particular purpose and for a given period, and (2) those arranged as permanent features.

The first class includes displays at fêtes, exhibitions and similar functions. The main purpose is to advertise the work of the library and this task can be achieved by this medium as well as by another. It can stand alone but is much more effective when combined with additional features.

The second class covers displays in show-cases, shop windows, if available, and any similar space. The chief objection to this form has been pointed out frequently, the fact that the books are not available for loan. This is a disadvantage that appears to rob this medium of much of its value. A display that serves only to arouse a feeling of frustration in the on-lookers is not a useful tool to employ.

It has been suggested in the past that shopkeepers could be persuaded to give up the whole or part of their shop window space for the display of library books. It is not known whether this idea was ever put into practice or whether it remained a pious hope! There seems to be no reason why a shopkeeper should be so altruistic as to sacrifice valuable window space, certainly nothing within the library's disposal could serve as an effective inducement.

The suggestion is raised here however, not in any spirit of denigration, but in order to introduce an idea that is well

worth adopting wherever possible. One of the finest outdoor displays seen in recent years consisted of the above idea in reverse. A library show window was given up to a display of cricketing equipment, bat, pads, stumps and so on. The base consisted of green matting and the backcloth of a large posed photograph of a famous batsman. Here and there were a few books on cricket, not more than half a dozen altogether, while a little card in the corner stated that the equipment had been loaned by the courtesy of Messrs. —, a local sports outfitter.

The effect of the combination was remarkable. Amid the busy traffic of the main road, the splash of colour and the originality of the plan compelled attention. Judging from the number of people who stopped to look, it was obvious that the display had achieved its purpose. It was topical, apt and forceful and, as such, to be commended.

The method could be adopted for use in other connections wherever a library show window is available. As a novel means of attracting attention it should commend itself to those branch librarians whose libraries are situated in shop premises. The disadvantage of permanent outdoor displays, that of causing frustration in the onlookers, is obviated where the display is sited in a library window, as in the case stated above.

Many of the factors which limit the use of outdoor displays are applicable to exhibitions. At one time the exhibition was a very popular form of activity but this is no longer the case; this medium has lost much of its appeal. The reason probably lies in the fact that an exhibition, to be effective, needs to be very well organized and to possess a deep and real interest if it is to overcome the appeal of other attractions. At one time, when competition for public interest was less severe, an exhibition put on by a local library could be assured of a tolerable success, sufficient to make the venture worth while.

That is no longer so. Exhibitions, as continuous publicity, do not now show a good return for the time and trouble that they demand, since the resources in the material for exhibits of an individual system are not sufficient to carry such a medium over an extended period. The wide-flung net of the

National Book League is able to achieve success, but which library system has this power to attract material?

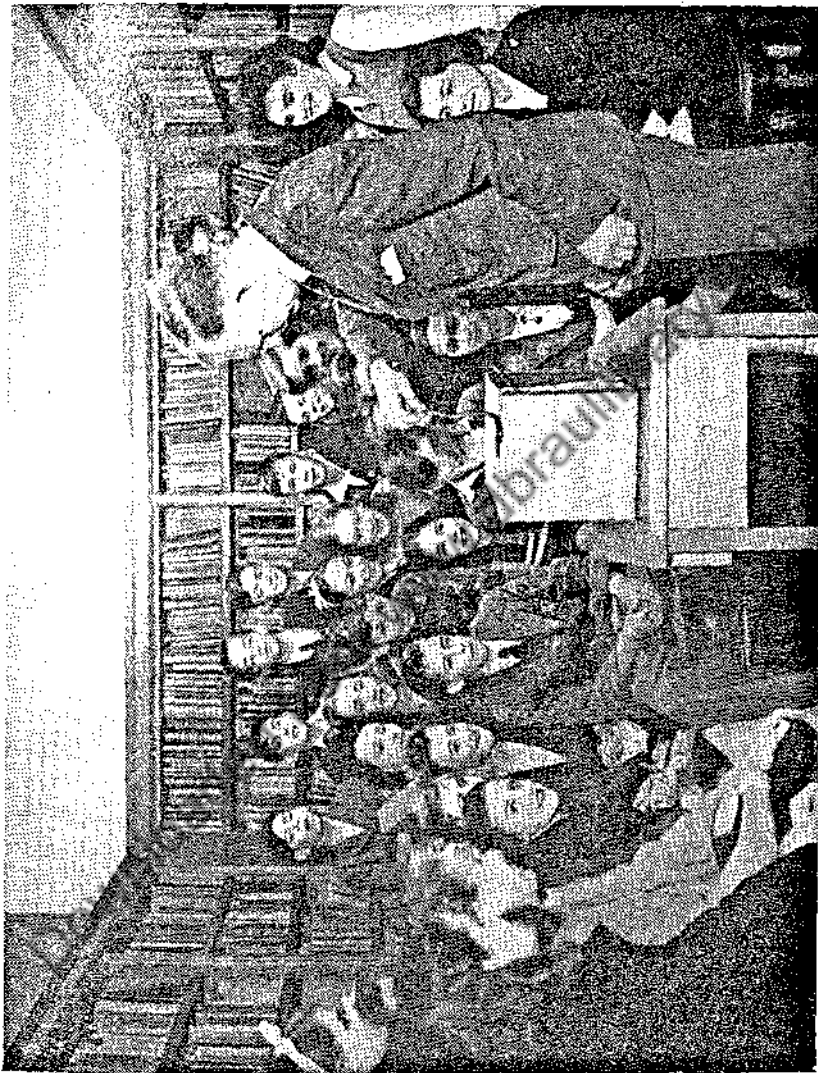
These factors, of course, apply only to exhibitions designed as a regular medium or as a series. An infrequent attempt, put on to cover a particular event or subject of topical interest, will still appeal to a limited circle.

The fact that the appeal is to a limited circle gives a clue for the use of exhibitions to-day. It might be possible for local librarians to co-operate with industrial concerns of their districts in order to present exhibitions showing the development of those industries. The chief limiting factors, material for display and interest appeal, would be overcome. Exhibits would be supplied by the trades concerned with, naturally, books and illustrations from the stock of the library.

Interest would be assured, as much as it ever can be, since the project would be concerned with a subject of direct, daily importance in the lives of local people. The workers themselves would be attracted in order to see their daily processes displayed and to discover how these details are carried out in factories and shops other than their own; their families might be interested to learn something of the work which occupied the time of the bread-winner.

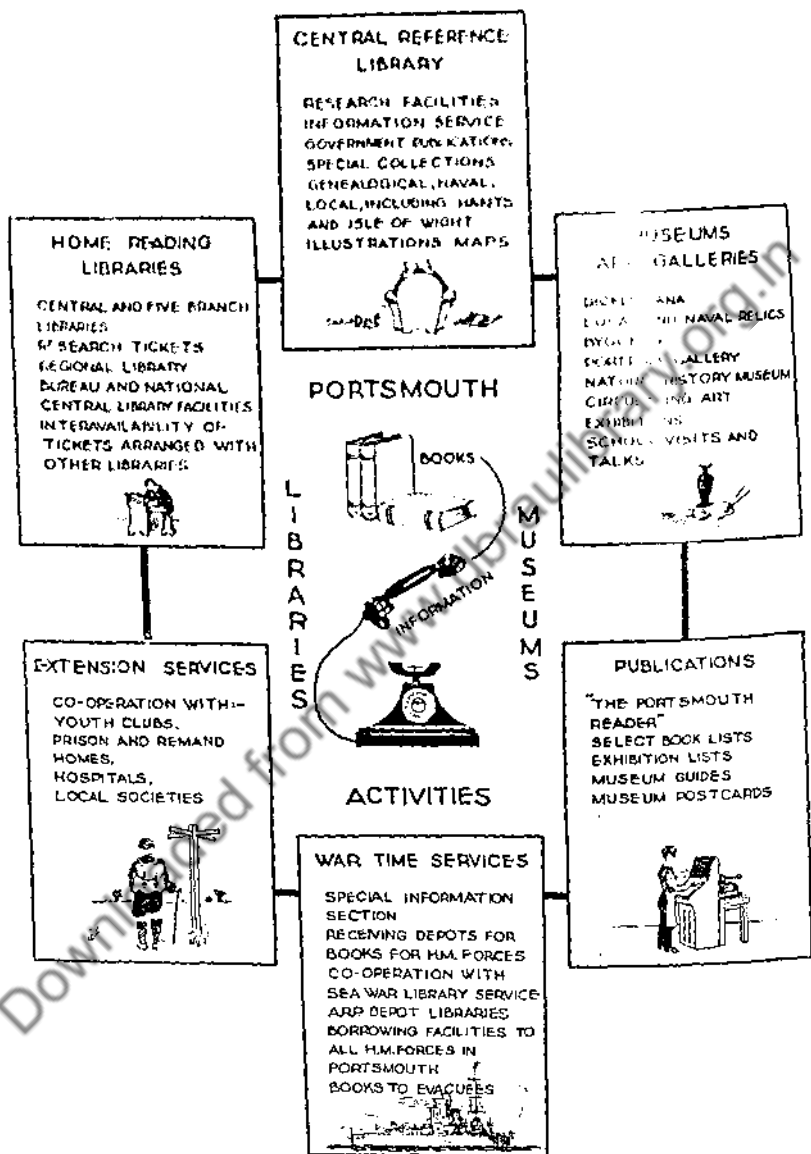
The effort, in itself, would be worth attempting because the development of local industries should be recorded as forming part of local history. But, in addition, other advantages would accrue, of direct and immediate concern to the library system. For example, the workers of the industries would be brought into contact with the books of their trade. Incentive may be created for an attempt to learn more about their own branch of their trade or to investigate other branches or processes. If a book list is produced, as it should be, it would serve as a record for future reading.

The amount of benefit to be obtained depends on the effectiveness of the "follow-through". Every effort should be made to exploit the advantages obtained. An added feature would be the introduction effected to the managements concerned. The possibility of future co-operation in the shape of the distribution of book lists and bulletins, and the display of posters, need not be stressed.



By Courtesy of the City Librarian, Rochester and "Kent Messenger"

A group lecturer and juvenile audience, Rochester.



*By Courtesy of the City Librarian, Portsmouth*

*Simple but very effective. This factual presentation compels attention.*

The Council of Industrial Design supplies publications and visual aids to libraries for public exhibitions. The service includes the loan of exhibits, films, wall-cards, and sets of photographs. Appropriate booklets are issued for each venture. The subjects covered are those likely to have general appeal and include such items as Furnishing Fabrics, Design in Pottery, Textiles and Furniture. All material lends itself to co-operative treatment with book-lists.

Attempts at extension, such as those here suggested, can have remarkable results affecting the spread of the service. Although it is probably true that workers in industries are aware of the existence of the public library's lending service, comparatively few are aware of the bibliography of their trade.

This information is, normally, difficult to disseminate since it is impossible to force a man to take notice where self-interest plays no part. An exhibition, by showing the way towards self-interest, prepares the path for the distribution and use of subject lists.

It is a remarkable fact, which should influence our actions, that some men will not bother to search for books on their trades but will use such books if they are displayed before them. This is certainly true of a large number. They hold the opinion that books can teach them nothing; they are practical men and scornful of theory.

Such opinions are based on prejudice not on fact but, nevertheless, they comprise an operative factor and must be considered. Since this prejudice has no solid basis of reason, one of the best methods towards its disposal is by the production of the right book at the right time. It is the psychological harmony produced by the fortunate juxtaposition of the theory of the book and the practical nature of the exhibits that forms such a strong feature of the exhibition.

There is nothing new in this. These facts have been known for a long time and efforts have been made, with varying success, to arrange for the artisan to become accustomed to the use of books as tools. As a weapon in this fight, the exhibition has its use, not least because the books appear to be a secondary feature, the main emphasis being placed on the practical aspect of tools, materials, processes and products.

The specialized form of lectures, displays and exhibitions will appeal particularly to the sections and groups that exist in the community. These units constitute promising material, but full results cannot be expected unless the location of such groups has been recorded in order that full co-operation can be arranged.

How many librarians can say, with any degree of confidence, that they are aware of every society in their district? There must always be some doubt and this is more pronounced in the case of individual specialists, not forming part of a group. These people are more numerous than is generally supposed. They can be labelled as experts, for the sake of convenience, but they are not experts in the true sense of the term. They consist of men and women who have a particular hobby or interest, and who have taken pains to increase their knowledge concerning this interest.

It would not be difficult to contact such people. A note in the bulletin and a slide in the local cinema suggest themselves as obvious methods. Those who respond will themselves be able to suggest others. The effect is cumulative and subsequent activities of individuals attract others interested.

A register of societies should be compiled for every system and this is probably done in most places. A register of individuals with specialized knowledge would be a useful addition. Such people can be of great assistance. They can give lectures themselves or recommend lecturers, give advice on stock weaknesses in their own sphere of interest and suggest provisions which could usefully be made to increase the appeal of the library.

An advantage which might accrue lies in the formation of groups. Individuals can be put in touch with one another and, if a group should develop, the system can expect to reap solid benefits. It is definitely the function of the library to encourage groups and provide facilities, though not, in the view of the writer, to form such societies. As indicated elsewhere, this opinion arises, not from an aversion to the formation of societies as such, but from a belief that the librarian has sufficient to occupy his time in his own sphere. The organization and running of groups is not librarianship and

time spent on it is time filched from the librarian's true vocation.

If a separate organizer can be found, well and good, because the more groups there are attracted within the library orbit, the better it is for the service. Members of such bodies, brought into being by contact through the library, have a personal stake in the system, much greater than that of the ordinary reader.

Normally, borrowers are not ambassadors, but group members are likely to take on this function. At the worst, such people are destructively critical; at the best, constructive and appreciative. Taking an active part in the life of the system, they are likely to be watchful of their privileges, jealous of any encroachments and to form, on the whole, a solid core of informed opinion on which the librarian can rely when developments and extensions are projected.

The importance of groups for the purpose of providing lectures has been referred to. Not less important, but less often mentioned, is the value of such people for work with adolescents.

The adolescent question is still with us, but the adolescent is not. The problem of retaining the child of fourteen, and of attracting the youth of eighteen, has not yet been satisfactorily solved. Group lecturers could probably help here.

An immediate objection arises that the adolescent poses a special problem and therefore demands special treatment. This is perfectly true, but it is obviously the statement of an ideal, something towards which we should constantly strive. It must be accepted that we have not yet reached the ideal state where adolescents can be given separate expert attention. Until that state is reached, the difficulty remains. Something, surely, is better than nothing; the provision of group lecturers is a method of providing a measure of assistance during an interim period.

The person visualised as lecturer would be a member of a group and therefore a local man, having an awareness of local conditions and difficulties. He would have a particular hobby or interest, concerning which he would possess knowledge above the average. No difficulty should be obtained



with regard to volunteers, since most men who have a hobby are usually keen to gain converts, and are prepared to devote time and trouble to the task of expounding the mysteries of their pastime to the layman.

Here then, ready to hand, is an opportunity for providing an attraction for adolescents; one, moreover, likely to be of value to them and which might result in their enrolment as readers with a purpose. It is not difficult to imagine the breeder of racing pigeons or the keen modeller devoting an hour for the purpose of expounding his art. Likewise, it is not difficult to imagine adolescents being attracted to such talks and subsequently using the library stock to increase their knowledge. The scope is wide, most of the sports and hobbies lend themselves to this treatment, which is limited only by the supply of lecturers.

The usual methods of publicity should be brought to bear; notices, posters, book-lists, exhibitions, displays and references in the press and in the clubs. No difficulty should be experienced here; the secret of success lies in following the tenet of all good advertising: to attract by concentrating on the interest that most appeals to the audience. The adolescent ignores the library because of greater attraction elsewhere. If this attraction is to be overcome, and the youth's allegiance secured for the library, his attention must first be gained by an appeal to his self-interest.

The value of such work is obvious, it does not represent perfection but it does provide a useful beginning. A youth attracted by the means suggested is a potential reader, a potential member of a group and, therefore, a potential close supporter of the library service.

The methods of lectures, displays and exhibitions are all used in the organization of the comparatively recent activity known as Book Weeks. These events arranged by many Public Library Authorities in co-operation with the National Book League, are an admirable form of publicity. Their success can be assured and perpetuated after the flare and bang of many functions have petered out and the pressure of associated personalities has been withdrawn.

The most essential feature of a book week lies in careful

preparation, the building up of stock and the training of staff to ensure that maximum benefit is obtained. Like every other form of publicity, this venture, an example of high pressure inducement packed into the limit of a single week, can become a boomerang of a potency in direct relation to its undoubted force. The precept therefore, that the library house should be put in order, applies here as elsewhere.

Assuming that this has been achieved, the actual arrangement of a book week presents few difficulties. Indeed, to the harassed librarian, accustomed to attempting the almost impossible with negligible materials, the wealth of talent and material available through the National Book League, and the warm co-operation of that body, come as veritable manna.

Organization and details are by no means stereotyped. Although the ground plan usually follows a set course in its outline, using the well-tried methods that have been built up, variational details are possible to an unlimited extent. So far as possible the *motif* of the drive is attuned to local appeal, and special interests and particular strengths can be incorporated or used as the central core of the venture.

Book weeks as such, do not fail. But the library system may fail to make the most of the opportunities presented. Just as careful preparation is essential, so also is the energetic "follow through" required, in order that gains may be sustained and incorporated as integral parts of the system.

Enquiries should be encouraged and investigated since they are a fruitful source of developments. Questions asked at lectures and quizzes tend to show the interest of the public. All enquiries, therefore, should be collected and analyzed. As spontaneous efforts they prove a far more reliable guide to reader interest than an organized poll, which tends to be formalized. A reader confronted with an investigator, armed with a notebook, is apt to give the answers expected of him. How much truth is contained in a "scientific" poll? The answer cannot be given, but everyday observation leads to the conclusion that a man's pretensions are coloured by what he would like to be rather than by what he is.

Given an awareness of the potentialities of a book week it can be affirmed that untouched sources will be opened for

the use of the librarian. The freshness of the appeal, and the glamour of those taking part, attract to the library many who would not otherwise appear.

This is the opportunity for normal publicity. By displays, lists and tactful personal help, the library can be exhibited as a centre for progressive action. The formidable and stodgy institution of the past is so no longer; instead the system is revealed as an instrument for social service and intellectual welfare.

Nor is it necessary to confine this medium to the adult library. Children's weeks are held and their success is self-evident. Not only are the junior members encouraged in their reading but they have facilities for viewing books from fresh angles. Exhibitions of the development of printing, of illustrations and binding bring home the fact that books have a history, that a book can be a thing of beauty that should not be mishandled. How much better is this method of teaching than a selection of prohibitive notices?

Talks by children's authors bring books to life. What normal boy or girl could fail to be impressed by the creator of fictional heroes? Imagine the fillip to reading given by a series of talks by children's authors!

An additional advantage which accrues is in the closer co-operation with school teachers. School teachers and librarians do sometimes co-operate, but often they seem to be driving at a tangent. Perhaps it should be conceded that the respective aims are different. The teachers try to teach, to instil knowledge. They work to a syllabus and a set time-table, and the ideal method of helping the child to learn must often be sacrificed, to a greater or lesser degree, by the exigencies of their circumstances.

Librarians are not so circumscribed. We do not pretend to teach, except incidentally, as when we demonstrate literary appreciation. But, on the whole, we recognize that teaching is not our function. We attempt to provide the materials and resources so that a child can learn if he so wishes. Children cannot be forced without harm, efforts should be concentrated on the role of helper rather than that of teacher. Scope should be allowed for sampling in the realm of literature.

The function of the librarian and teacher are therefore different but not conflicting. It is often difficult to emphasize this and the spirit of co-operation is sometimes lacking. Book weeks, by taking the function of both out of their normal setting, and exhibiting them side by side under novel conditions, can act in the form of a catalyst in order to release and blend the function of each, as far as it is required, to ensure benefits for both.

The accumulated advantage of such endeavours goes beyond the effect on reading, it accrues to the benefit of the system itself. Municipal prestige is gained and the library retains or improves its position in the eyes of residents, business concerns and societies as the natural centre of educational activities.

Downloaded from www.dbraulib.org.in

## GRAMOPHONE RECORD COLLECTIONS

THE collection and loan of gramophone records to individual members of the public for home use and to societies for recitals is a recent development that is spreading throughout the country. It requires an effort of imagination to correlate such an activity with the known purpose and scope of the library service. The difficulty may lie in the definition of scope and function; this, apparently, is still fluid, for who is there to define?

Any discussion concerning the validity of such provision at this stage is likely to be of theoretic value only, if not definitely sterile. For the essential fact is that gramophone loan collections have arrived and will probably stay. Consequently, any work that attempts to review the area of extension must take account of this venture which has already struck such deep roots.

The following section is therefore intended only as an outline of current practice. No attempt has been made to delve deeply into any particular aspect; the facts, as such, are recorded as a concession to the realistic view that a librarian is not entirely the master of his own budget. An experiment in record collections decided upon by a governing committee cannot well be resisted. A librarian instructed to proceed with this new form can only submit and, with good grace, attempt to link the provision, as far as possible, with book exploitation while making some effort to gain material and use for his primary function.

No Canute-like effort will hinder this progress which must, perhaps, be accepted as the inevitable, though unwelcome, consequence of expanding interests. Awareness of the factors governing the experiment and a knowledge of past efforts are, therefore, necessary.

Methods of dealing with these collections have been worked out empirically during recent years and, while they vary in

detail according to local preference, routines have been largely standardized.

Records when received are checked for defects and are accessioned. The library stamp is used on the record label, where also is printed the accessions number. An electric stylus and tape may be used for this, but in some cases a small label, on which is printed the name of the system, is gummed over part of the maker's label. This acts as an ownership plate and allows the accessions number to be printed in ink.

It is advisable to play over each record before adding accessions numbers or ownership stamps to the maker's labels since faulty records cannot be exchanged after the labels have been defaced. Where this cannot be effected the choice lies between accepting the loss of faulty records or of issuing records without a mark of ownership. The latter alternative is unlikely to meet with the approval of the auditor.

Records are housed in manilla covers which may be purchased at £2 per 100. Vertical storage in racks of 3 in. horizontal section is favoured. This is economical of space, reduces the harbouring of dust to a minimum, allows free access for insertions and withdrawals, and limits the danger of warping. The difficulty of access, collection of dust and the weight on the lower records are the chief drawbacks to horizontal storing. There is no standard rate of discount on the purchase of records, but 15 per cent. off purchase price, exclusive of purchase tax, may be obtained by public libraries as educational institutions.

### *STOCKING AND CATALOGUING*

The stock register is on cards in broad classified order. "Classified" is here a misnomer for several examples examined. Such headings as "Sacred Music" and "Jazz" are obvious sources of cross-division. One card is made for each record or set of records.

Catalogues issued consist mainly of duplicated lists of works arranged under the names of composers. An index of titles is sometimes included. This method has the advantage of simplicity and should present no difficulty for the users, especially if a printed form of catalogue is adopted.

Those people, and there are a number of them, who are interested in types of compositions, such as Opera, Chamber Music and Orchestral Music, will have to search through the catalogue, but this would form no great hardship. Their queries can be readily answered by the staff who would have such material gathered under relevant headings in the stock register if a classified form is used, as later suggested.

A classified catalogue would probably not be justified for small collections, since composer and title indices would be required. The main interest is the art of the composer rather than the form of composition.

The problem depends upon the nature of the demand: is the demand usually for a particular form or for a certain composer? The broadly classified stock register answers both types of enquiry; the catalogue arrangement under composer gives information concerning forms of music less readily, but sufficient for the purpose.

A possible arrangement for stock registers might be:

#### Vocal Music

A	Solo	G	Septet
B	Duet	H	Octet
C	Trio	I	Other Vocal Groups
D	Quartet	IA	Opera (Subdivided by language, then by composer)
E	Quintet	IB	Oratorios
F	Sextet	IC	Choral Symphonies

*Instrumental* (For use when one instrument is the sole or predominant feature. For instrument plus one or more individual instruments *see* Chamber Music. For instrument plus orchestra *see* Concertos).

J	Pianoforte	N	Brass
JA	Other forms, harpsichord, clavicorn, spinet, virginal.	NA	Trumpet
K	String, bowed	NB	Cornet
KA	Violin	NC	Horn
KB	Viola	ND	Trombone
KC	'Cello	NE	Other
KD	Double Bass	O	Wood-wind
KE	Other	OA	Piccolo
L	String, plucked	OB	Flute
LA	Harp	OC	Fife
LB	Banjo	OD	Flageolet
LC	Guitar	OE	Oboe
LD	Other	OF	Clarinet
M	Organ	OG	Bassoon
		OH	Other (Bagpipes, etc.)

*Orchestral*

- |    |   |    |   |
|----|---|----|---|
| P  | Symphonies  | U  | Chamber Music   |
| Q  | Orchestra with voices   | UA | Duet  |
| R  | Ballet  | UB | Trio  |
| S  | Overtures   | UC | Quartet   |
|    | (Overtures to operas are<br>classd with operas.   | UD | Quintet   |
|    | Overtures to oratorios are<br>classd with oratorios.)   | UE | Sextet  |
| SA | Preludes  | UF | Septet  |
| SB | Tone poems  | UG | Octet   |
| T  | Concertos   | UH | Other groupings   |
| TA | Pianoforte  |    | Arrangement is by composer<br>A—Z, then by title.   |
| TB | Other forms, harpsichord,<br>etc.   | V  | Country and folk dances.  |
| TC | Violin  | W  | Other Instrumental en-<br>semble  |
| TD | Viola   | X  | Educational   |
| TE | 'Cello  | XA | Musical appreciation and<br>study   |
| TF | Double Bass   | XB | Language (Linguaphone)  |
| TG | Other string, bowed   | XC | Poetry  |
| TH | Harp  | XD | Drama   |
| TI | Other string, plucked   | XE | Fiction   |
| TL | Organ   | XF | Essays  |
| TM | Trumpet   | XG | Other   |
| TN | Horn  |    | Arranged first by language,<br>secondly by author and<br>then by title.   |
| TO | Other brass, wind   | Y  | By subject  |
| TR | Flute   |    | Division as Dewey.  |
| TS | Oboe  |    | (For records such as bird-<br>songs, stage effects and<br>so on)  |
| TT | Clarinet  | Z  | Jazz  |
| TU | Bassoon   |    | (This heading is provided in<br>case it should be needed<br>for the purpose of con-<br>venient grouping. It is<br>better left unused and<br>the records distributed<br>according to the main<br>form headings. Use of<br>this heading will involve<br>cross division and will<br>necessitate decisions con-<br>cerning the dividing line<br>between Jazz and Clas-<br>sical Music.) |
| TV | Other wood, wind  |    |   |
| TZ | Concertos for two or more<br>instruments may be<br>placed here, but material<br>belonging under this<br>heading would be better<br>arranged with other ma-<br>terial for the instruments<br>concerned. Thus a con-<br>certo for pianoforte and<br>violin would be better<br>entered under TA piano-<br>forte with a referenc<br>under TC violin.<br>Under each heading ar-<br>rangement is by composer<br>A—Z, then by title. |    |   |

It will be seen that the scheme is divided into the three convenient groups of Vocal, Instrumental and Orchestral. Jazz if included at Z would make a fourth group. If used for the arrangement of a stock register, it will allow a swift survey of the balance of stock, indicating immediately its strength



and weakness in particular sections. If used for the arrangement of a catalogue it will allow the parts to be issued separately as they become out of date, and avoid the tiresome business of issuing a main composer list plus periodical supplements.

Even where the main entry is under the composer, sub-arrangement could usefully be in classified order. This would mean a rearrangement, e.g. instead of

- (1) by form
- (2) by composer
- (3) by title

the arrangement would be

- (1) by composer
- (2) by form
- (3) by title.

The scheme is not intended for the arrangement of records on the racks. The best filing method here is numerical arrangement by accessions number or, if preferred, makers' catalogue number.

### *ACCESS TO RECORDS*

The public are not allowed access to the record racks. No reproach need be felt because of this, there is no parallel between records and books as far as access is concerned. Books should be available for handling and sampling. Records should be handled as little as possible because of their fragility, and sampling is not yet practicable. There appears to be no intrinsic reason against sampling. Cost and convenience are deterrent factors at present but, if facilities are ever provided, the value of the service would be greatly increased. It would be a simple matter of organization to issue half a dozen records for sampling purposes on the premises. The records chosen for home use would then be issued in the usual way. The public interest can, therefore, be well served by a closed collection, especially since a catalogue entry can be as complete as a record label. Perhaps the catalogue can be made to give even more information. It should not be difficult to co-ordinate the book and record collections by indicating the discs for which scores can be provided.

Walthamstow use an indicator to indicate stock position. This method is to be replaced by the use of an adaptation of the Roneodex visible card recording equipment. Both methods are described.

The following is taken from the article by Mr. C. D. Overton\*: "—As the library is on a closed access basis, an indicator has been made, consisting of a number of pockets  $1\frac{1}{2}$  in.  $\times$   $1\frac{1}{2}$  in. into which are placed white cards 2 in.  $\times$   $1\frac{1}{2}$  in. The pockets are labelled with a brief composer-title entry. The cards have the accession number of the records written in large figures on both sides (for purpose of checking, this number is also written in small figures on the top left hand corner of the pocket). When the record is available for loan the plain black number on the white card is shown. When the record is out, the card is reversed, and the same number is shown having two red lines drawn through it. The indicator board is arranged in accession order."

Material for the following description of the Roneodex Visible Card Recording Equipment as adapted for use for Loan Collections has been kindly contributed by Mr. C. D. Overton.

The equipment consists of a series of trays, each being 21 in. in length and each holding seventy-four cards. Approximately  $\frac{1}{4}$  in. of each card is visible as they are suspended one above the other. Each card forms a unit in two parts and consists of a detachable portion (B) which fits into the main manilla card (A).

On the visible  $\frac{1}{4}$  in. of (A) are written details of the recording. A small hole,  $\frac{3}{16}$  in. in diameter, is punched in the left-hand side of this portion. The detachable portion (B) can be seen through this hole since (A) and (B) are different in colour.

Card (B) also bears details of the recording and has space for the date of issue, a note on defects, if any, signature of borrower as receipt for the loan and initials of checking staff. Each card will serve for approximately twenty issues.

When a user requires a record he refers to the file for the appropriate card and ensures that card (B) is visible through the hole in card (A). The presence of (B) indicates that the

\* Overton, C.D. *L.A.R.* September, 1947, pp 224-5

record is available. (B) is then extracted and the details concerning faults, etc., compared with the records themselves. Being assured that the statement on (B) is in conformity with the condition of the records, he signs in the allotted space and hands the card to the assistant, receiving the records in return. Card (B) is then separately filed to serve as an indicator card, as evidence of issue, as a statement of faults and as a record of past borrowers. Card (A) standing alone, gives evidence that the record it represents is not available.

### *ISSUE METHODS*

Methods are basically similar to those of book issue. The record card is housed in a pocket gummed to the manilla holder; here also is affixed the date label. Record cards and borrowers tickets are "married", a receipt for the record is signed, defects are noted, and the issue is complete. The user must examine for defects at the time of issue and report any discovered. Such defects are recorded in a book kept for the purpose. The borrower is held to be responsible for defects not reported.

### *ENROLMENT*

Residents of the Borough of sixteen years of age and over are eligible for enrolment. The system of guarantors is, normally, similar to that in force in the Lending Library. Persons under the age of 16 may be enrolled at the discretion of the Librarian. Heads of schools and institutes may act as guarantors for their pupils.

The system of deposit varies. In some cases there is no deposit; in others, a sum ranging up to 10s. is levied. In favour of a deposit, it is stated that the sum charged, though returnable, acts as a deterrent to those only casually interested, and restricts the use of the collection to the genuine music lover. The deposit ensures a measure of security for the stock but may also serve to prohibit its use to a section of the population. It therefore creates a privileged class. Is this justified or desirable? Moreover is it wise to keep away the casually interested; are not these people likely to develop an interest by

their participation? Modern tendency in librarianship is towards the abolition of unnecessary restrictions, and it would appear to be desirable not to impose deposit charges.

It is fairly common practice to insist that users of the record collection should also be members of the library. This is very reasonable and, besides acting as an additional surety method, allows the general system to reap occasional benefit in the form of new readers. Each user is allowed two tickets and allowed to borrow two records at a time. This rule is varied in the case of sets which are issued as an entity.

In some systems the practice has been adopted of issuing one ticket only. Those systems which issue two tickets do so because the normal loan is of two records and it is, therefore, possible to arrange for the card of each disc to be filed with a separate ticket. But since sets of records are issued, the advantage of separate filing is lost, and a single ticket to cover the whole needs of a borrower would appear to be preferable. In order to reduce wear on any particular record of a set, individual discs, forming part of a set, are not separately issued. To the same end, borrowers are requested not to play any one part of a set disproportionately.

Period of loan is one week. Renewal is permitted provided that the record is not wanted by another user. Reservations may be made for single records or for sets. Practice with regard to fines varies considerably. The favourite charges appear to be  $\frac{1}{2}d.$  or  $1d.$  per day for each record.

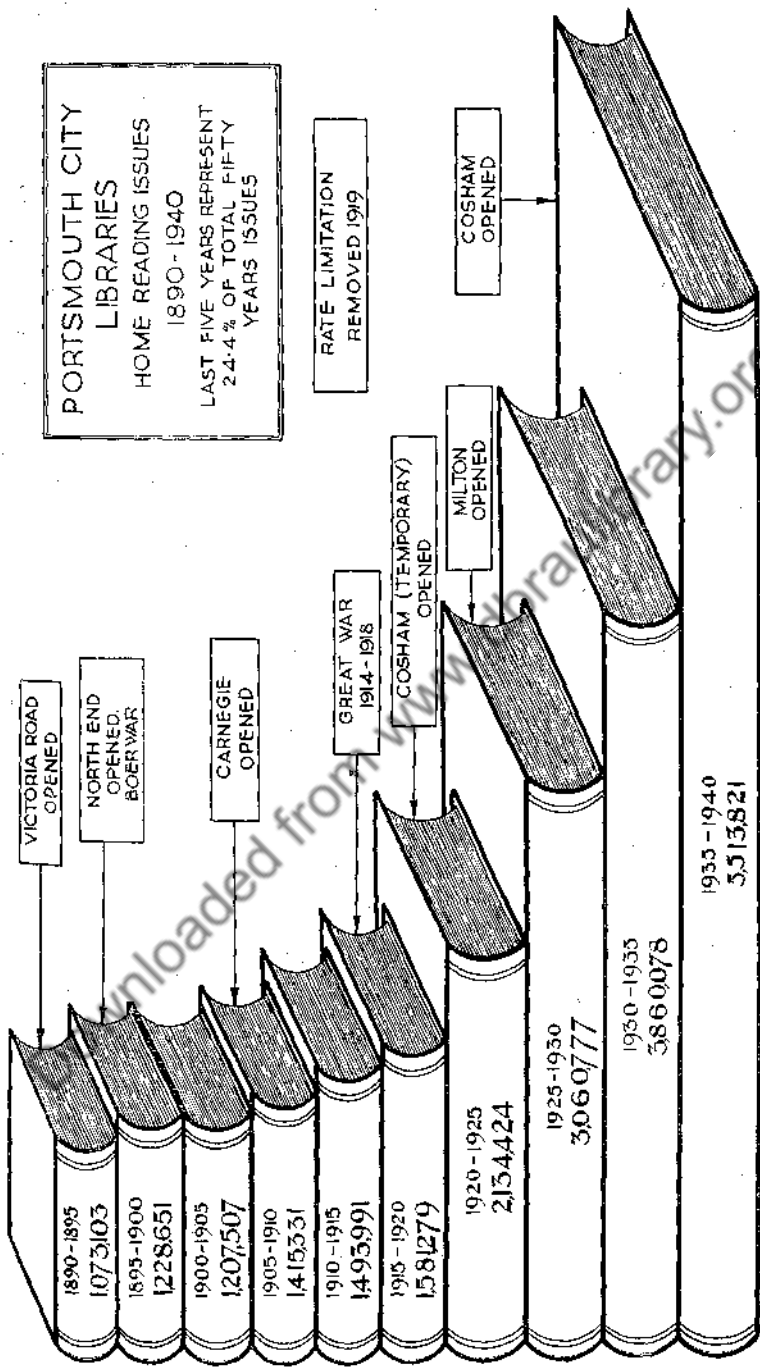
Advantage could be taken, considering the newness of the service, to dispense with fines altogether. Sets of records are customarily issued as a unit and cannot be split. Yet it must often happen that a user actually requires only one record of a series, and is required to take the whole set in order to conform with the regulations. In view of this it seems hardly fair to levy fines on each record when, in actual fact, only one record has been used.

Walthamstow charge no fines and report no snags. There seems to be no reason why this practice should not be extended. Any regulation that can be abolished without harmful effect is obviously redundant.

At the time of enrolment the borrower is given a pamphlet

which sets out the terms of loan and gives hints on the care of records. The following items are normally included:

- (1) Membership—whether available to residents only or also to those attending educational institutes or who are employed in the Borough. Whether limited to Societies or available for individual users.
- (2) Guarantors—in some cases *every* prospective user, ratepayers as well as others, are required to obtain the signature of one, and sometimes of two ratepayers.
- (3) Age limitation.
- (4) Membership of library an essential qualification.
- (5) Number of tickets issued.
- (6) Number of records available at any one time.
- (7) Period of loan.
- (8) Fines.
- (9) Renewal facilities.
- (10) Reservations.
- (11) Deposits.
- (12) Damage to records.
- (13) Use of catalogue and indicator (if used).
- (14) Reference to music book stock and periodicals.
- (15) Access not allowed to record stacks.
- (16) Special facilities for societies.
- (17) Type of needle to be used.
- (18) Care of records—handling, dusting, carriage between library and home. Effect of heat and damp. Provision of record carriers.
- (19) Copyright—the following note, or its equivalent, is sometimes inserted in order to absolve the library authority from claims for breach of copyright or in respect of public performance: "Records are issued for private use and on the understanding that the loan does not confer on the user any rights or licence in respect of copyright or public performance."
- (20) Reservation of right by the authority to refuse the loan of records or to suspend or cancel tickets of those not complying with the regulations.



PORTSMOUTH CITY LIBRARIES  
HOME READING ISSUES  
1890-1940  
LAST FIVE YEARS REPRESENT 24.4% OF TOTAL FIFTY YEARS ISSUES

RATE LIMITATION REMOVED 1919

COSHAM OPENED

MILTON OPENED

COSHAM (TEMPORARY) OPENED

GREAT WAR 1914-1918

CARNEGIE OPENED

NORTH END OPENED. BOER WAR

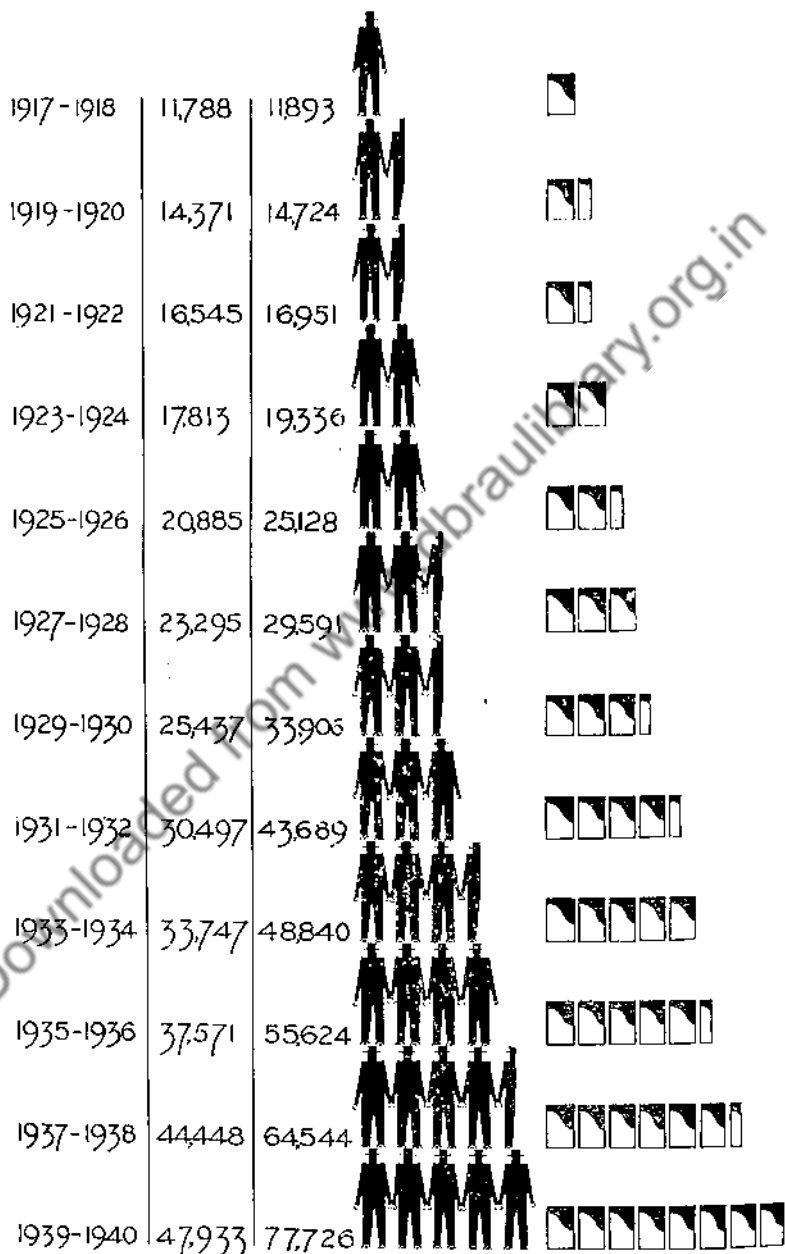
VICTORIA ROAD OPENED

By Courtesy of the City Librarian, Portsmouth

This Progress Report from Portsmouth is sufficiently unusual to secure free press space.

# READERS AND TICKETS 1917-1940

EACH FIGURE REPRESENTS A UNIT OF 10,000



By Courtesy of the City Librarian, Portsmouth

*Facts that strike home. More detail can be presented in this way.*

## NEEDLES

Opinions differ concerning the merits of the different types of needles. Steel, fibre, thorn and sapphire, all have their adherents, and unanimity on the answer to the problem appears to be impossible to achieve. Without entering the lists of this perennial controversy it may be stated that, according to experience, fibre and thorn needles cause less wear on records than the steel equivalent with little, if any, loss of tone fidelity. The amount of tone loss is problematical and a matter of acute controversy. Many, though not all, of the thorn and fibre enthusiasts will agree that their choice involves some loss of volume.

### *Thorn, fibre, steel or sapphire?*

A needle travelling along the groove of a record engenders friction and consequent wear. Does the wear reveal itself on needle, on disc or on both?

A sapphire is hard and does not wear easily. It is usually guaranteed to play 2,000 records, and may often play even more. The wear here is, obviously, on the record.

Steel needles will wear much more easily than sapphires, as may be proved by an examination of the record after playing. If the disc is carefully brushed and the deposit examined under a glass, a fine powder of metal dust will be discovered. During the playing this dust acts as a grinding powder and increases the scouring effect of normal friction. This can easily be overlooked. The metal dust deposited is minute, and is not visible to the unaided eye; it is, therefore, often ignored. For this reason, when steel is used, the discs must be very carefully brushed before and after use. If this is not done, and the granulated steel dust allowed to lie in the grooves, it will be collected by the needle on the next playing. The cutting edge which tends to develop on the needle, is a frequent cause of damage in the grooves.

If the needle used for the subsequent performance is of fibre, its tip is likely to collect a plug or sheath of steel dust which will plough its way along the grooves and so cause damage.



The thorn or fibre needle avoids most of the faults of the steel or sapphire. The needle itself wears without the deposit of granulated dust. A record restricted to fibre or thorn will show much less deterioration over a given period, than one used with steel or sapphire.

With these reservations, it is probably true to say that the fibre needles cause least wear, and are, therefore, usually specified. In some cases they are supplied in order to ensure their use. But such needles need frequent sharpening. Correct sharpening is essential otherwise true reproduction will not be obtained. It is probable that incorrect sharpening is responsible for much of the bias against fibre.

It is, of course, true that a "fibred" record commands a higher price in the second-hand market than a disc used with steel or sapphire needles. This is sometimes taken as evidence of the superiority of fibre over other forms. But the opinion of a dealer was to the effect that a "fibred" record gave evidence only of care in playing and maintenance. A person sufficiently concerned to play his recordings with fibre needles only would almost certainly also be sufficiently concerned to care for his property in other ways. Therefore, regular dusting, waxing and correct storage could probably be taken for granted.

This is a debatable point and is opinion rather than evidence. Satisfaction can only be assured by experiment and experience. But until we have a measure of control over the type of needle to be used, any controversy concerning the best type must be ineffectual.

When steel needles are permitted, it is usual to stipulate that each needle shall be used for one side only. But such stipulations cannot be enforced, whether they concern the type of needle or the amount of use. The problem admits of no easy solution. The only hope is to trust in the good sense of the users and to persuade them to appreciate the value of the service and the necessity for care of public property. To the librarian, fingering his mutilated volumes, this may appear to be a pious hope, but, is there an alternative?

The difficulty applies chiefly where the records are loaned directly to individual members of the public. Where the loan

is restricted to societies, the position may be regularised. The regulations can be enforced to a greater extent. Secretaries of societies have a stake in the collection and are obviously concerned to maintain the physical standard of the records. They will be lovers of music, interested in the best possible reproduction, and can be trusted to ensure a fair measure of appreciation for the well being of equipment.

Some librarians make a practice of examining the playing equipment of societies before the initial loan and periodically afterwards in order to test for suitability. This is an excellent idea if staff are available for the purpose.

Where records are lent both to societies and to individuals it would appear to be desirable to maintain two separate collections. It is hardly fair, and it is certainly bad policy, to loan to societies for recitals those records which have been manhandled by careless individuals.

That is one viewpoint, but there is another. The position with regard to discrimination in favour of societies needs to be clarified. To restrict the use of a collection in this way is to create a privileged section. It may be possible to evade the legal provisions but it would not appear to be a wise practice. Staff requirements are increased by individual lending and the cost may be a factor to be considered. But the real point is that the cost of staff is part of the cost of the collection, and the original estimate should take account of this charge.

Another factor concerns the care of records. It is generally held that individual loan causes greater damage, but this view must be treated with caution. It may not be true; no evidence has been produced in its support. Records loaned to a society may be handled by several individuals, only one of whom is responsible to the library authority. The many arguments put forward in favour of discrimination may be specious, only a determined investigation can be decisive.

The claims of the individual are many. If records are provided from the public purse it should be possible for a citizen to use them in his own home, in his own time and to suit his own convenience. It should not be necessary to insist that he should congregate with others, at a fixed time and place, before his civic rights may be enjoyed.

Periodical treatment of records with wax dressing can be recommended. A slight rub with a dressing stick causes the wax to be rubbed into the grooves. The needle removes most of the wax on subsequent playings and, with it, any grit which may be in the grooves. The small amount of wax that remains acts as a lubricant.

### *GRAMOPHONE SOCIETIES*

The National Federation of Gramophone Societies supply a pamphlet containing useful hints on procedure for those proposing to inaugurate Gramophone Societies.

The Performing Right Society's fees for gramophone societies affiliated to the N.F.G.S. vary between one and five guineas per annum according to the membership of the club and the number of recitals given.

These terms do not apply to societies unaffiliated to the N.F.G.S. Affiliation to this society costs 10s. 6d. per annum. The subscription list is from September to August and the fee confers automatic cover for Phonographic Performance fees.

### *FURTHER ASPECTS*

Co-ordination between the use of the book stock and of the discs by means of entries in the catalogues has already been mentioned. Other methods adopted consist of the use, in the selection room, of the vertical file containing reviews of recordings. These are abstracted from the musical and the relevant literary periodicals and made available for reference by record users. There seems to be no reason why the musical magazines should not be displayed near record service points, together with details of forthcoming recitals and lists of additions to record and music libraries.

A slip calling attention to the printed score and to the composer, could usefully be affixed to record holders. Another label attached to the works in the music stock could be used to advertise the record collection.

There is, as yet, no provision for co-operation between systems or for the interloaning of records. Agreement with

regard to the purchase of rare items or alternative recordings is an event for the future. These things will come, the comparatively short "life" of recordings will make them essential.

## JAZZ

The provision of jazz records is not an immediate worry. In the present unformed stage of collections, the problem can be shelved, quite legitimately, since the prime duty is obviously towards a minimum basic stock. The question will arise at a later date and will need to be solved by each Librarian and his committee. In order to come to terms with the problem it is necessary to accept the fact that jazz is music and, as such, deserves a place in a balanced collection.

"Jazz", however, is an amorphous term, covering the good and the bad. Are we to include a selection from every type of jazz, or can we discriminate? Can we, in effect, draw a line and say: "This is good jazz, and worthy of our collection; the remainder is bad and must be omitted?"

A parallel may, perhaps, be drawn with the provision of fiction in the general book stock. Here, in effect, we do draw such a line. Each librarian, in his role of selector, sets himself up as an arbiter of reading. Some fiction is provided; other is not. The librarian is entitled to assume his role; he is a professional, coping with a task for which he is adequately trained. But to continue the parallel with reference to records. Can the librarian set up a barrier of value and worth? Is he competent to separate good from bad? The answer is, "no"! He is not competent, he is an amateur dabbling in an alien field. And though he may, and does, rely upon the experience of professional critics of music, he can never carry out these new duties with the sureness of touch, the deftness born of experience, with which his bibliographical activities are connected. His administration will be at second-hand, he will not truly be the master in this house. To such passes are we led when we stray from our own set course.

## CHAPTER IX

### DIRECT PUBLICITY

**PUBLICITY** for public libraries has been viewed with deep suspicion in this country, and for a long period the use of any form of direct advertisement was regarded as being unnecessary and undignified. This view has been largely superseded nowadays by a more realistic conception and understanding of modern advertising practice. Publicity need not be vulgar; the last twenty years have seen tremendous growth in advertising by the world of commerce, and the medium has been adapted in many places to fit it to specialized needs and usages.

Fervent admirers of advertising seem to regard it as a sort of secret and all-powerful influence, able to cover and atone for all sorts of shoddiness. Some, at the other extreme, seek only to detract from its uses, and assert that advertising and swindling are, more or less, synonymous. Both views are wrong. As is so often the case, the truth lies between the extremes. Advertising is capable of much more than is often realized, yet it must be planned; misdirected advertising is wasteful and usually futile.

The necessity for a plan is particularly important in view of the spate of advertising with which the individual has to contend. Any appeal launched aimlessly into this flood is sure to be engulfed and its message lost. Libraries cannot, and should not, compete in this way. But if there is an aim, if it is remembered that an appeal should contain what the reader wants to know, then we have an advantage. Given the right sphere, the work can proceed with expectations of results good enough to justify the cost.

"Publicity pays" has become a phrase commonly accepted, and it is a truth that cannot be denied, so long as the publicity is well conceived and executed, and directed to the right

quarters. To-day, publicity is an accepted legitimate form of the librarian's craft, and properly covers all forms of his extension work and service, as well as individualized forms such as posters, exhibitions, bulletins, magazines, displays, press reports and similar matter.

Indirect publicity is provided by every library system in the form of service, and this is good or bad advertisement according to the quality of the facilities offered and the civility and training of the staff.

Direct, persuasive publicity is undertaken in many cases in the form of posters, bulletins, pamphlets, book lists, etc. Many excellent examples of this form of advertising have appeared, but in far too many cases efforts have been cramped or stunted by reason of financial restrictions and spasmodic application.

Direct advertising is often regarded with suspicion by local authorities, who do not like to speculate on schemes which, apparently, show no tangible return. On the other hand, general agreement exists among librarians on the need for publicity, but the extent to which it should be applied will always be the subject of controversy.

A public library depends on the goodwill and co-operation of the public for its well being, and will prosper accordingly as its services are appreciated and used by that public. The attitude of the community to the library is determined: (1) by the service offered, and (2) by the extent to which those services are known, made available, and used. Hence the need for publicity. Each condition is dependent on the other; a good service being necessary before publicity can be undertaken with any prospect of permanent results, and publicity being necessary before a service can be fully utilized and appreciated. These elementary facts may seem so obvious as to need no emphasis, yet how often do we find good advertising marred by slack "follow-up" at the counter!

Publicity enters into our everyday affairs whether we realize it or not. Every contact made with a reader, every service offered or not offered, is publicity, good or bad. This fact is noted and made use of in the world of commerce, and a greater appreciation of it would work to advantage in

many libraries. Young assistants should be taught when to handle a query and when to pass it on; over-enthusiasm may be creditable, but is bad policy when it leads to bad service. Bad service from one new assistant often becomes, to the public mind, bad service from the library.

For librarians to-day publicity is both a duty and a necessity. It is a duty to ensure that the widest possible use is made of services provided. At the same time it is necessary to make the public realize the value of the library habit as an aid to education, information and recreation.

If we regard libraries as social institutions provided for those who want them, then we have no need for direct publicity. But if we regard libraries as having a definite educational purpose, and ourselves as having been entrusted with the accomplishment of that purpose, then we are logically and morally bound to use worthwhile means to further our ends, to increase the efficiency of the service and to make it better known. If people are allowed to remain in ignorance of our facilities we are, in effect, denying them the use of the libraries, and so violating our creed.

Assuming, however, that the decision is taken to publicize the services, there are still many obstacles to overcome. A publicity campaign is not an isolated act, but a continuous performance. It is therefore expensive, and difficulty always arises with regard to ways and means. Who is going to be responsible, how far shall it go, and for how long? The ideal is for each system to have a publicity agent who understands something of the aims and problems, but the expense involved puts this out of the question. Yet all public libraries have a common ideal and a common purpose, so that publicity for one is publicity for all. Co-operative methods are indicated and the cost, prohibitive to a single system, would be shared among the contributing bodies with beneficial results for all.

The standardization which would result would be beneficial rather than detrimental. The Library Association book lists are a step in the right direction. Posters could be printed by co-operative effort, giving a much wider range than is possible to any individual system, with reduced costs.

The first step towards such co-operation would be the

promotion of an exhibition of publicity material. Opinions could then be obtained regarding the suitability of certain forms of media and the amount of support likely to be obtained. This cannot be gauged accurately without an exhibition, since support pledged would not be for a particular form such as posters, but for particular specimens of that form.

Direct publicity, or advertising, is a field in itself, and needs a new approach. Library advertising differs from the commercial variety in many respects. We are not competing for the consumer's favours; we have a case to present and, having done that, we are concerned with offering a service, not with guarding against rival concerns. It follows that the presentation should always deal with available facilities, and never with the merits of the service with reference to any other agency or institution.

A point which has often been stated, but which needs emphasis, is that the first part of a publicity campaign should begin in the library itself. No business man would advertise goods that he could not supply, and in the same way it is necessary to ensure that we are able to cope with any demand that might arise as a result of publicity efforts. To create a demand that cannot be met is the worst kind of advertisement, and detrimental to good relations. It is necessary to analyse the scope and function of the service, and to enquire into means for improvement.

The scope and function of the service must be clearly defined, publicity must be purposeful and directed. Before any method of publicity can be put into force, the individuals to whom it is directed must be considered. Generalized publicity has its uses. In its own sphere it is valuable, but it cannot stand alone; it must be supported by appeals addressed to specialized sections. The requirements and prejudices of these sections should be studied as an aid in the compilation of copy.

Experience gained from the commercial advertiser can be used here. He has to contend with a variety of people of different classes, tastes and mental capacities; he has to persuade as many as possible to purchase a various assortment



of commodities. Note the variation in method and copy designed for each group; note the appeal to self-interest, vanity, sophistry and such values. His methods need not be copied, but much can be learned by an examination of the reasons for the methods and of the layout and design.

Vague generalizations are therefore useless. The message must be about something definite, preferably specific and addressed to a particular class or group. It must be beamed rather than diffused!

Any weaknesses found in the initial survey must be made good, and throughout, the service must be maintained at the highest possible peak of efficiency. Unless this can be achieved, and in practice it is difficult, then all efforts at publicity will fail, the effort expended will be wasted and good relations between public and system will be jeopardized rather than harmonized.

All unnecessary hindrances and barriers between readers and books must be removed. Petty restrictions which may once have been useful, but which are now pointless and obsolete, must go. The only justification for a regulation is that it operates for the benefit of the majority. If this fact no longer applies, then the rule is no longer necessary.

Having provided a good service and decided on plans for publicity, steps must be taken to ensure that all of the local populace are aware of the location of the library buildings and the extent of the facilities offered. Buildings are often in inaccessible and inconspicuous places, and their existence may be unknown except to those in the immediate vicinity. An attractive sketch map, showing the library buildings in relation to well known landmarks, buildings and streets, will be informative and profitable. A note of the transport services and hours of opening should be included, as well as a brief summary of departments, e.g. whether there is a full reference library or quick reference section, the provision of lecture halls, reading, periodicals or study rooms. The existence of material of special local or historical interest in a building should be starred, as well as details of conveniences such as telephone reference service, commercial and technical sections.

The information could be set up in poster form for display in windows, clubs, clinics and elsewhere where space can be provided. It could also be provided in pamphlet form as standing publicity literature, and for issue through the post. In this connection, a few words on postal publicity may not be out of place. The desirability of sending out such material with the rate demand has often been debated. There is nothing to commend this practice. The actual cash saving is small, since a pamphlet can be posted for a penny. Labour costs for addressing is a larger item, but if the despatch of material is spread through the whole system over a period of weeks, the work can be blended with routine duties, and special labour costs avoided.

The greatest drawback to the method is from the psychological stand-point. Nobody welcomes a rate demand, and any pamphlet included is unlikely to receive fair treatment. Library publicity is not likely to be sufficiently acceptable to override this prejudice.

If a library bulletin or magazine is published, this will form an admirable companion for the pamphlet. Standing alone, a four-page pamphlet is a skimpy thing. It has little dignity or apparent value and is assessed accordingly; it usually receives the same treatment as other "hand-outs". But included with a bulletin, it shares the prestige of the more ambitious publication. It may not achieve sensational results, but it will probably not be entirely ignored.

It is also necessary to decide whether to circularize the whole district, or to restrict efforts to those people not already enrolled. The former method would appear to be preferable. It is true that circularization of existing readers appears to be wasteful, but against this must be placed the facts: (a) that time necessary to compare voters' and borrowers' register is saved, (b) many people are enrolled as readers but are not aware of all the facilities available; a concise statement might not be entirely wasted, (c) in every household there are usually some people who do not use the library, (d) some people obtain their books by proxy, as when one member of the family pays a periodical visit for the whole group. In such cases little is known of library activities. A "general purposes"

pamphlet, a copy of the bulletin or magazine, and a list of recent additions would ensure that every person has the opportunity to learn of the service available.

The greater part of outdoor advertising will be directed at the non-users of the libraries. In order to make an intelligent appeal, it is first necessary to discover why these people do not use the facilities offered. In addition, since the aim is not only to extend the practice of reading, but to raise the standard where possible, it follows that our task is not only to distribute books, but to ensure that the use made of those books is such as to secure advantage to the community.

Before a satisfactory service can be presented, something must be known about the potential readers and their requirements. Time and expense operate against the detail and the work required for such a method in a local campaign, but for a large scale national effort much preparation is essential. Our work does not end with the registration of more readers; when they have been enrolled their needs must be satisfied!

What are those needs? It is known that they vary from place to place and from time to time. Determining factors include standard of education, amount of leisure, other attractions, and available sources of supply. Analysis and selection is indicated, deficiencies must be eliminated, and the stock balanced to serve local requirements and prejudices.

Assuming that preliminary details concerning stock have been settled, and that a satisfactory service has been assured, the question of suitable media must be considered. The press, one of the most satisfactory vehicles for commercial advertisers, need not be considered because of the expense involved. This restriction applies only to the press regarded as a medium for paid advertisements. Its use, by arrangement, in the way noted in the section on local collections, falls into a different category.

Posters on hoardings have their uses, but here again, the factor of expense operates. Space on recognized hoardings for anything above double crown size is prohibitive, and even the regular rental of a double crown site will constitute a large outgoing, the value of which cannot easily be assessed.

Fly-posting is illegal, fortunately so. This has always been

an undignified method of gaining space, a method moreover, which it is unnecessary to adopt, since other free space is available in the various departments of a municipality and on council vehicles and hoardings.

A poster can be made into a very potent form of advertising. This statement may appear to be labouring the obvious, since every library uses the medium at some time. Emphasis, however, should be placed on the word *potent*, for many posters represent a sheer waste of time, labour and money.

There is an art in poster work and the librarian cannot expect to produce, in his spare time, an effort comparable with that of an expert. But straightforward designs are well within the scope of the layman. Some attention to detail and to the commonly accepted standards of layout, material and design can enable him to produce a poster of good quality and appeal.

A common fault in poster advertising, as practised by many public libraries, is that of including too much detail. A poster is most effective when it consists of a headline, short and specific, calculated to attract the readers' attention and to hold it. The body of the text should be clear, pithy and to the point. Words should be short and simple, so as to be grasped quickly, all unnecessary matter being rigorously excluded. Variety may be introduced, and attention directed, by differentiation in size and style of lettering, use of colour contrast, and manipulation of blank spaces and borders.

Posters must be repetitive, achieving their ends by an impression gradually built up over a period of time. In order to avoid monotony, it is useful to have several posters presenting the same message from different angles. It is impossible to give a full account of facilities on a single sheet, the lengthy appeal defeats its own ends. A single impression or idea should be conveyed each time, a cumulative effect thus being produced. These facts, illustrated so well by commercial usage, are generally accepted but not always practised. There is always a temptation to say a little more, but every addition detracts from the appeal, and reduces the general usefulness of the whole.

People rarely stop to read posters. They look at them,

if at all, while passing by, so that the design must be striking enough to compel immediate attention, and the idea presented must be sufficiently simple and brief to be appreciated in a very short space of time. Such an appeal is likely to strike home and linger in the memory, achieving results impossible to posters of greater detail.

Illustrations, when properly used, are valuable, for a good picture will convey an impression in a fraction of the time needed to read a paragraph. Moreover, the photographic effect is likely to remain longer than the message of the printed text. Illustrations that suggest action are most useful; the lines should be co-ordinated and designed so as to guide the eye naturally to the gist of the printed message.

The use of colour is a natural development, and this important feature can make or mar a poster. Colour alone can produce the first requirements of the poster—that it should attract attention. No useful purpose is served by revolting contrasts, and colours used should combine legibility with aesthetic appeal. Many tests have been made and, as a result of these, it has been estimated that the most effective colour combinations are, in order of preference:

- (1) Black on yellow;
- (2) Green on pale buff or white;
- (3) Black on white.

For the purpose of library publicity it is seldom necessary to use more than two or three colours. Anything more ambitious is likely to add to the cost of the reproduction without greatly increasing the value of the finished article.

Faulty display causes loss of effectiveness. A poster should appear prominently among its surroundings; it is poorly placed when situated parallel with the line of vision; it should be at an angle so that the reader can see it without turning his head. Similarly, it should be at a comfortable height for reading, the vision falling upon it without effort.

Bills and notices designed for display within the library building are in a separate class. The requirements of colour, legibility and design still apply but, in addition, the text of the notice should be designed to appeal to the special class of people to whom it is addressed.

Out-door notices are seen by all and sundry, observers who may or may not be interested. In order to obtain the widest appeal, the text is general in nature, and sparse in detail. Such posters, therefore, are designed to catch the attention and deliver a message in a fraction of time. Copious text is out of place here, and defeats its own purpose, but posters and bills designed for use in library buildings have a different function and may be fuller in text. Readers even read the text if this is not too long! In this connection, it is found that two or three posters, each with a different message, are more useful than a single notice with a composite message. A person who will not read a long text on a single poster will read the same appeal if it is split up on several posters, since the interest is stimulated each time, provided that lay-out, colour and style are varied.

The greatest cost in poster advertising is for hire of hoardings, and here we are very fortunate in having access to a good deal of free space. Most libraries have space of this kind, and usually there is more available at the disposal of the local authority.

So far as printing is concerned, the most expensive item is the cost of the original design, and for re-drawing for reproduction. Ample talent is usually available for the production of a design, thus cheapening the process, but most designs are re-drawn or re-touched by the printer. It is impossible to give an accurate estimate of costs, these are governed by so many factors, not the least being the complexity of design and the number of colours.

It is, however, debatable, whether the high cost of pictorial posters can be justified, except on a co-operative basis. Where, as is usual, finances are limited, there seems no reason why posters should not be limited to a printed text. If colour is desired, the lay-out can be so adjusted as to leave space for the addition of a book jacket and/or book-list. Admittedly, this form is unsuitable for general poster work, but it is in a more specialized field that the finest opportunities lie.

This point is debatable, but it has not been submitted without full consideration. The greatest drawback to the use of posters is that people have become so accustomed to them

that they are often ignored. This is so true that commercial advertisers are forced to repeat themselves at great expense in order to force their message into the sub-conscious minds of the people.

Library advertising in this style is not possible. It is not desirable—certainly it is too expensive. In order to pin-point his posters, and make them stand out among the welter of rival notices, the commercial advertiser tries to be different by means of catchy headings and apt slogans, striking lay-out, colour, contrast, illustration and exaggeration. Here again we cannot compete, neither should we try.

## **SWIMMING**

### **BOOKS on your HOBBY**

(and most other subjects)

may be obtained

**FREE of CHARGE**

from your

**PUBLIC LIBRARY**

If you **LIVE** or **WORK** in the Borough

(Tickets from other public libraries may be used here)

**AUTHOR**

**TITLE**

(A typed or printed list of books is here super-imposed)

*Here are your Libraries;*

**A— Branch, High Street EXC. 4189**

Open daily 9 a.m. to 8 p.m.

etc., etc.

Is it possible to be "different" without the use of the methods of commerce? Yes, it is possible, because of the specialized appeal. A poster built round a book-list is different and will achieve the desired result. It is specific, referring to a specific subject or class of related subjects, and thus to a particular group. It appeals to the interest of that group, it has something for each member. Every man with a hobby or interest likes to match his knowledge and skill, so that a "poster-list" will attract and will be read. The book-list will challenge his knowledge, and excite his interest as no general poster can do.

Apart from its intrinsic value as publicity, the "poster-list" achieves considerable economy in printing costs. The posters can be printed in bulk, with a space for list and subject heading, the remainder of the text being the same for all subjects. The book-lists must be printed separately for each subject or group of subjects, but this is not an added cost, since they can be used in the normal manner apart from their use on posters.

It is obvious that co-operation between libraries would reduce costs considerably.



## CHAPTER X

### SPECIAL GROUPS

#### (a) TRADES

HAVING prepared material for poster-lists, the way is now open for the extension of the publicity drive to include the business interests. The first step is to go through the local directory and list the firms under the appropriate trades. The best approach to the non-resident borrowers is through the medium of the employers, so that the initial appeal must be through the business or trade interest. But before that stage is reached, good-will must be established and the respect and co-operation of the employers gained. The obvious way is through the information service, as well as through the commercial and technical sections if these are provided. Other methods, such as personal contact and by the methods described in the chapter on bulletins, readily suggest themselves. The following letter has been found useful:

Dear Sir,

Please excuse this encroachment on your time. I enclose herewith publicity material designed to increase the use made of the public libraries for those who live or work in the Borough.

The libraries contain the latest works, and most books not already in stock can be obtained. There is no charge for any of the services.

The opportunity for your employees to widen their interests, and to make good use of their leisure hours will, if accepted, benefit them as citizens, while the use they make of our technical sections to increase their theoretical knowledge of

their work should make their services more valuable to you.

I sincerely hope that you will co-operate by displaying the posters and by making the accompanying literature freely available to your staff. If you have any suggestions to make, or if there is any service the library could render to you, please call, write or 'phone. Our telephone information service is freely available every week-day between 9 a.m. and 8 p.m.

Yours faithfully,

(Signed)

BOROUGH LIBRARIAN.

This letter cannot stand alone and should be accompanied by poster-lists, separate lists appertaining to the work of the business and a number of pamphlets and applications forms. If bulletins and magazines are available these, too, should be supplied.

Information concerning any service offered by the library which would prove of interest to the business man should figure prominently in the initial approach, since permission to publicize the service within a business house will not usually be given unless the request bears with it some form of inducement.

Services should be mentioned specifically rather than generally. A vague reference to the commercial section conveys little information and may be ignored, whereas a specific note concerning government and trade reports and indexes might prove of interest and lead to the action required. If these services are noted in the annual report, the method of "spotlighting", advocated in a later section, will be appropriate.

Where one or more trades predominate in a district, the task is easier. In such cases the library specializes in the appropriate material, so that it is a simple matter to put on an exhibition relating to the local industry. Under these

circumstances, there are usually local groups concerned with the trade, e.g. Trade Union Branch, Technical Institute, Masters' Federation and so on. These groups could help by the loan of material for the exhibition, by their advice and by publicizing the event.

Rotary Clubs, Chambers of Commerce and Trades Councils afford an excellent opportunity for publicizing the service. The Local Collection forms a valuable means of introduction here, because the members of such groups are usually interested in the history of the buildings, places and concerns with which they are connected.

Use made of such local records is intrinsically valuable but, in addition, this development can smooth the path for exploitation of the technical resources. The technical sections of our libraries are usually well-equipped with valuable material that is used much less frequently than is desirable in an educated community. Any attempt to further the use made of this material must take into account the vagaries of the potential users and many of these are to be found, not among the existing readers, but among those who are not registered as borrowers.

Talks given to Rotary Clubs, personal contact with members, and informational services provided for such individuals, can serve as the basis for co-operation, which may result in the extension of the library service to include employees of the concerns with which club members are associated. It is so difficult to get the right of entry into business houses and factories, that such opportunities cannot be ignored.

All the media of publicity can usefully be employed; posters, bulletins, exhibitions, lists and displays come readily to mind. Once the right of entry has been granted, a new field lies open offering scope for concerted and co-ordinated action.

Publicity in this field should be focused at first on the speciality of the business house, in order to arouse interest. It should be purposive, leading to a definite conclusion, not general and aimless. Thus posters and lists should stress the resources of the library in the relevant sections. A broadening of the field, to include the whole resources of the stock, should follow as a later development.

It is useful, too, to arrange for enrolment forms to be readily available. A poster that offers facilities, and instructs the reader to call for a form, will lead to less certain results than a similar poster accompanied by forms. The display tray mentioned in Chapter IV is useful here, for it comprises poster, lists and forms in one unit.

An organized approach is most essential. Vital, too, is the necessity for continued application. Results are not achieved immediately, but only as the result of careful nursing of industries. Material must be placed and its freshness retained by constant renewal; it must be the business of some member of the staff to pay a regular visit to ensure a constant and varying supply of literature. Nothing could create a worse impression than a display tray standing empty through lack of attention, a torn poster, or a batch of bulletins, months out of date. Methodical organization and the planning of a routine will avoid such errors.

As a permanent heading to which can be affixed lists that are changed periodically, Finsbury use that shown on page 118.

This is wide enough to accommodate two quarto typewritten sheets side by side. It is eyeleted at the top. Besides the variety and the obvious value of changing lists, there is the added advantage that arrangements are made for enrolment forms to be issued by a member of the works' staff.

Shoreditch use the notice shown on page 119.

These are attached to the display trays, previously mentioned, and form a compact unit, together with application forms and bulletins.

Business contacts that develop with these methods are very valuable to a system and well repay intensive cultivation. However, a return must be made, both to retain goodwill and also to ensure that the benefits of the service are spread as widely as possible. Thus to the managers and organizers of industry can be offered trade catalogues, the facilities of references libraries, commercial and technical sections, as well as illustrations and pamphlet sections. There are many executives who know nothing of the facilities for the use of trade directories, technical journals, trade papers, economic reports and Government returns. Provision of such material,

## FINSBURY PUBLIC LIBRARIES

### AN INVITATION

The Borough Librarian presents his compliments and has pleasure in inviting you to become a member of the Lending Libraries at Skinner Street or at 106 Old Street. The Library service is absolutely free.

Every important new book—fiction and non-fiction—is bought on publication.

Readers' suggestions and special requirements are always given immediate attention.

Forms of application for membership may be had at the Libraries or from

.....

# BOOKS

THE SHOREDITCH PUBLIC LIBRARIES  
offer a reading service . . .

FREE OF CHARGE

if you \_\_\_\_\_

LIVE OR WORK

in the Borough or hold a ticket  
issued by any other Public Library

Fill in the form below and leave it at one of the  
following branches:

1. HAGGERSTON 236, Kingsland Road, E.2.

Open Monday - 9 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Tuesday to Friday - 9 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Saturday - - 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.

2. BRANCH LIBRARY 167, New North Rd.,  
N.1.

Open Monday - 9 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Tuesday, Thursday,

Friday - - 9 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Saturday - - 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.

=====CLOSED ON WEDNESDAY=====

3. BRANCH LIBRARY Town Hall, Old St.,  
E.C.1.

Open as New North Road Branch

4. BRANCH LIBRARY Goldsmith's Row,  
E.2.

Open as New North Road Branch

15 ins.

and expert assistance in its use, will be appreciated. On this basis of mutual assistance can be founded the means of continued and helpful co-operation.

### (b) *SCHOOLS*

Co-operation and publicity with schools and evening institutes is best effected through the teachers' committees. In this way there is more possibility of effectively presenting the special services, school visits, letters to school-leavers, illustrations collection and so on.

There is no doubt that work with schools is one of the surest methods of publicizing the service. It should not be neglected, but often is. It is true that special qualifications are needed to present the library case to children; it is a most difficult task but it must be attempted. A sympathetic attitude, avoidance of "talking down", an attempt to view the problem through the eyes of the child and with his background; all of these attributes must be considered.

A common fault, difficult to explain when rationally considered, is the use by adults of emotive language when talking to children. Such a habit may appear to present an easy way of arousing enthusiasm and interest but, in the long run, it is not effective and does not pay. These methods have a tendency to recoil and this is especially so in the case of children, whose confidence can easily be forfeited.

The library story needs no bolstering. It can be made interesting and is sufficiently colourful when properly presented. But, as already stressed, it calls for the expert touch and should not be attempted without careful preparation.

Adult students at evening institutes can be reached by poster-lists. It should be possible to arrange for such lists to be exhibited according to the subjects in the syllabus and these are likely to be more effective than general posters.

There is scope for extensive co-operation in connection with the many extra activities in which adult students indulge. Chess, swimming and other sports sections; dramatic, debating, literary and musical circles; all of these present opportunities for the presentation of subject lists.

### (c) PUBLIC DEPARTMENTS

A vast amount of free space exists in the local authority and public departments such as clinics, baths, electricity showrooms and so on. Crowds gather here for all purposes, and use can, usually, be made of the opportunity for the display of suitable posters:

*Clinics:* Poster-list and separate lists on personal hygiene, care of children and the domestic arts.

*Public Baths:* Swimming and diving, hobbies and sports.

*Electricity Showrooms:* Electricity, radio, electrical apparatus, domestic arts, handyman in the home, hobbies.

The display rack, previously described for use with bulletins, can usefully be employed here.

### (d) CLUBS AND COMMUNITY CENTRES

Centres are now being established as part of the local authority social service, and form a good point of contact with potential readers. Contact should be made with group leaders and welfare organizers to discuss methods of co-operation. The various activities arranged should be covered by the appropriate poster-lists, separate lists and general publicity. If space could be given in the library magazine for a "write up" of each group in turn, there is no doubt that the magazine would enjoy an increased circle of readers.

There are two further points to be considered. Firstly, it might be a good advertisement to allocate about fifty titles of light fiction for use in the centre or community rest room. These books would be for use on the premises only, and would not be available for home reading. A slip inside the cover would draw attention to the library service proper.

This facility should not be confused with bulk loans to clubs, to which objection is rightly maintained. The books would not be drawn from stock, but would be purchased separately to serve as a form of advertisement to attract people who do not, normally, use the library.

Secondly, it is worth while to pin-point the sites of the community centres on a map, and note their position with regard to the service "black spots" in the district. Every



system has these "black spots", areas which show a paucity of readers. Reasons are various, and usually fairly obvious: interference by main roads, dark, unlighted streets or lanes, lack of transport, distance between home and service points, and so on. These factors operate particularly against the children.

It is not always possible to arrange for a branch to serve such areas, so that there are, in some cases, groups of people who have little or no opportunity for using the service. It should be possible to arrange for a room to be used as a library for the children, if only for a few hours on alternate evenings. Lock-up cases could be provided to ensure safety of stock.

This method could hardly be used for the adult population, since a representative and balanced selection could not be provided because of the shelving space required. It would, however, answer a real need for children, and would be excellent publicity. Moreover, the use of such a station would form a guide to the needs of the district, and would constitute a powerful argument in favour of more adequate facilities.

#### (e) SHOPS

The display of general posters in shop windows will be severely limited to those few friends of the library who are willing to sacrifice their space. Too much assistance cannot be expected here, owing to the high value placed on window display space. A specialized poster-list is more likely to be successful, since it might be accepted on its merits as a novelty. The subject list would, of course, be related to the business of the shop; clothes and fashions for milliners, cooking and domestic arts for grocers, radio and television for the radio dealer, sports and hobbies for the sports outfitter, handyman in the home and odd-jobbing for the ironmonger, and so on.

#### (f) CHURCHES

Almost every church has its own circle of activities, and, given necessary co-operation, the service of the library can easily be orientated to the particular use of each group. The

sewing and literary circles, boy scouts, girl guides and other youth sections, form excellent fields for the extension of the service.

(g) *CINEMAS*

Advertising in cinemas does not appear to have been exploited to its fullest extent. Slides, advertising the library, could be shown at those cinemas which make a feature of such displays. This method has been tried, and it has not been particularly successful, according to reports, although it is rather difficult to assess the value of such a medium. The result may be shown indirectly, so that, while there is no immediate response, the library service is "fixed" in the mind of the populace.\*

There would appear to be room for variety in this form of slide publicity. The slide need not consist of a bald statement of address, telephone number and times of opening. Slides are not expensive, and variation is advisable in order to retain interest. It should be possible to flash a select list of books on the screen, the slide being changed weekly. If the lists are general in character, some interest is sure to be aroused, while even among those who are not concerned with the subject, there will be implanted the knowledge that, if at any time books on subjects are wanted, the library will be the place to go for them. This surely, is worth achieving!

Many well known books have been adapted for the screen, and after the presentation of such a film, an opportunity for linking book and film is presented. The slide would record the title of the book and its location; perhaps the titles of other books that have been adapted might be included. Historical films and films of exploration and travel also offer scope for slide publicity. The increasing popularity of documentaries is significant, and the opportunities presented should be accepted. Each film in the documentary, travel and historical group offers scope for a short book-list.

It is worth while to calculate the number of people who

\* Film strips are now taking the place of slides.

can be expected to see a slide in a cinema. A capacity of 1,000 is a low estimate but, on the basis of three daily performances for seven days, the number of the total audience reaches the figure of 21,000 per week. How many of these will be sufficiently concerned to act upon the message of the appeal depends upon the force with which it is presented and the attractions offered. No amount of speculation can take the place of experimentation; that figure of 21,000 per week should be a highly attractive bait to every librarian.

The chief objection to publicity in connection with films based on books rests upon the fact that sudden demand is created for a single title of which there may be one copy only to serve the needs of several people. It is stated that a person visiting the library for the first time on such an errand will get a bad impression.

This objection is valid if the enquirer is met at the counter with a bald statement that the book is not available. The fault here lies with the staff rather than with the medium. If the assistants are keen, the prospective reader will be informed that so many people have enquired for the book since the showing of the film that demand has exceeded the supply. A commonsense explanation, pleasantly given, is always acceptable.

In an event of this kind the reader's name should be put on the waiting list, while he himself might be persuaded to read other books by the same author, or on the same subject, during the waiting period. A good readers' adviser could interest any enquirer in a conversation on the influence of the film on book demand. Previous films would probably be quoted, and the relevant books produced, many of the library facilities would be mentioned in passing, and the result would, usually, be a new reader.

In this connection, a suitable display suggests itself. Take any film which has aroused interest or special comment; whether or not it is based on a book does not matter for the purpose. It will be found that such films almost always have a wide basis of appeal, and that it is possible to link a variety of books with them. If we put ourselves in the position of the scriptwriter, and imagine the various sources used, we will

get a good selection of material for a display that might be entitled:

“NAME OF FILM”

You may be interested in the following books, which cover the field of the film.

(Here follows the list of books)

-----  
 -----  
 -----  
 -----

All books may be reserved on request.

The books are displayed beneath this notice. If separate lists for distribution are provided, the value of the display is enhanced and sustained reading encouraged.

A natural development of the cinema slide is the use of library films. The method of advertising by means of the film has great advantages over most other forms. The audience is in an appreciative mood, is comfortably seated, and has leisure in which to view the presentation. Furthermore, of all forms of advertising, only the film can guarantee that it will be seen. By press, poster and pamphlet a message may be placed before thousands of people, yet it is not known how many will read the appeal. But, having attended the cinema for the purpose of seeing films, there are very few people who would refuse to look at a library film.

This is not to suggest that such a venture should be presented or accepted on sufferance. It would be necessary to make it

interesting, but that should not be difficult. We have something to offer the public that it is in their interest to accept, and this is the finest basis of any medium and a certain way to stimulate attention. Present day reluctance of cinema proprietors to adopt co-operative methods with the Library Service is based on the fact that early efforts in this direction lacked popular appeal and were not, therefore, a commercial proposition.

As much detail as desired may be presented, and processes and techniques demonstrated that would be far too lengthy and complicated for any printed sheet to attempt. A film will strike home where a printed page will be skipped.

Once again co-operation is necessary. A national library film or series of films could do much to advance our cause with the general public.

The use of films does not automatically commit us to a full-length feature. There is wide scope for ten-minute films, and these could be pressed into use at various occasions, such as at the beginning of lectures and demonstrations. Such a "quickie" should preferably be devoted to a single aspect of the library service and may usefully cover such phases as "how to find a book", "the inter-library loan service", "how to get information" and so on.

A useful feature would be to pose the problems in the form of questions on every-day affairs with which all are concerned at some time. "Tommy wants to be a doctor. How can we get information with regard to cost and facilities for training?" Questions of this kind are being asked every day, but how many people ever think of going to the Public Library for the answer?

We protest that the public neglect our proffered services, but are we entirely blameless? Should not we put ourselves in the place of the public, visualize their needs and attempt to supply the deficiency? A passive attitude is not sufficient, we really must come down to earth!

A library film of a different kind could be attempted on a co-operative basis for use with juvenile audiences in the library. One of the most urgent and difficult problems confronting the children's librarian is that of teaching juvenile

readers the correct use of the catalogue and classification scheme and the method of tracing information.

Material of this kind is ideally suited for presentation in the form of a film and the novelty of this method would ensure an appreciative audience. A lesson is likely to be learned when the message is projected on a screen, whereas time spent in instruction to groups of children might have considerably less effect.

A film of this kind would not be difficult to make, nor would it be costly if attempted on a national scale. Hiring fees should effectively cover the cost of production and, as an example of publicity, and as a medium of value for the instruction of children, such an effort would be likely to prove a good investment.

Downloaded from www.dbraulib.org.in

## THE USE OF EXISTING PROVISIONS

MUCH criticism has been levied against advertising as an instrument for library use because of its undoubted expense. It has been stated that the cost is not balanced by results achieved, and this may very well be the case for particular examples. Yet it is not always wise to blame the medium; sometimes the operator is at fault, sometimes the effort is not sufficiently long sustained.

The issue is a very difficult one to decide; the success of any particular effort or campaign may not be immediately obvious, it may show itself after a period or not at all for any particular item, only by a general increase of public appreciation. Always in such cases, there remains the feeling that the campaign might not have been correctly formulated, that it might not have been sufficiently sustained, or that it might have been misdirected or of too vague an appeal.

Such doubts do occur, and they can only be avoided or overcome as the result of experience in the preparation and direction of publicity. But experience in this medium is costly to procure, and it is therefore suggested that ambition should be curbed and the attention confined at first to those forms, such as specialized lectures, displays, exhibitions and book-list-posters which are readily available and inexpensive to operate.

It is suggested, too, that librarians should periodically take mental stock of their resources and facilities and should ask themselves:

- (1) Are the available services being fully utilized and, if not, is it possible to extend their use without great expenditure?
- (2) Are there any agencies, groups or local experts who can be called upon to offer services that would be of benefit to the system as a whole?

- (3) Are there any services now offered that can be utilized as a vehicle for one or more of the other facilities?

Sections (1) and (2) are considered in other parts of this book, section (3) is the immediate concern. A service which comes to mind in this connection is that of the local collection. Most libraries have such a collection. In some cases it is an admirably arranged repository of local records and provides the basic material for the history of the district. In other cases it is less admirable but, whether good or bad, it is usually little publicized.

Publicity for this section is not difficult to procure, because the first requirement, interest, is already present. Every locality has its proportion of people interested in the past and, even those who are not, can usually be attracted to a temporary interest in the collection by linking it with known features within their lifetime or concerned with their immediate locality. Every new development means a break with the past and can be compared with preceding events; every new building means the destruction of older structures, each of which has a story; every well-known figure is connected with some one or more districts, and celebrity stories can be made of interest to the inhabitants of those districts.

The advertising of the local collection, therefore, will present no special worries and will proceed on normal lines. Indeed, the success achieved may well be embarrassing unless staff are available to cope with the demand for local information. Research in local records must devolve on the staff owing to the unique character of much of the stock, and the time spent in answering enquiries will create a very real staff problem. This, however, is the concern of the local librarian and is a matter for internal arrangement. The point to be made here is that the popularity of the collection can be made to carry an appeal for other services of the library.

An example of this can be given by supposing that the librarian decides to publicize his collection by writing a series of articles on the history of the district for the local newspaper. This is not a difficult feat given an interest in the art of writing. The materials are readily available for him and the finished article is sure of an appreciative editor.



Having reached this stage, the librarian is able to go a step further and include in his articles references to books in current stock, additions, services and facilities, anything, in fact, that needs publicity. This can be effected quite legitimately and in an interesting manner, without straining the patience of the editor or overstepping the bounds of ethical privilege. For example, mention of an old theatre leads easily to a reference to a recent addition concerning the theatre; mention of community life in the past can provide a reason for a sentence or two about the latest library contribution towards community service; these examples are limited only by the ingenuity of the librarian. Common sense suggests that the librarian should play fair and not attempt to insert too much advertisement, but a little is valid and cannot be the cause of objection.

A point arises here that requires attention. It is often said that use should be made of the local newspaper for the provision of free space. This statement has often been made; always by librarians, never by editors; the performance is not so easy of execution. If it can be accomplished, well and good, but, as a rule, editors are jealous of their space and ask, naturally enough, for a fair return in reader interest.

The article on local history provides this return. It is a fair deal, a section on the past full of interest to readers in exchange for free space for book news. Many a librarian to-day is gaining free advertising space for his authority by the use of his pen, his brains and the local collection.

Reference has already been made to the value of the Illustrations Collection for the purpose of enforcing the appeal of other publicity ventures, and for display and exhibition work both inside and outside of the library premises. Especially to be considered in this connection is the use of pictorial decoration in the Children's Room. Carefully selected and periodically varied illustrations can help considerably in maintaining brightness and interest while, at the same time, adding their own unique contribution in the special field of visual education.

The reference department can aid the lending and vice-versa. Stocks of these departments are being increasingly

regarded as forming a single whole. This is a fortunate development that should be encouraged as far as practicable, not only because the resources of each are thereby increased, but also because the use of each can be extended in this way. By spreading the use made of these sections, the clientèle of each are introduced to the often unsuspected benefits of the other. No barriers should be placed in the path of such a progressive movement.

The following notice tipped in opposite the last page of lending library books might produce results:

*Have You Enjoyed This Book?*

Share your pleasure with your friends  
and relatives by inviting them to join  
the library.

Tear off the portion below:

.....  
Please enrol me as a member of the  
Library.

A. . . Branch,  
High Street. EXC. 4189.  
Open daily 9 a.m. to 8 p.m.  
etc., etc.

This method is included because of several recommendations but it would appear to be too weak and inconclusive to be of much value.

The possibilities of news and magazine rooms for advertising purposes must not be disregarded, since many people confine their use of the library to these particular sections. Posters and lists may be displayed in both rooms, while in the magazine room a book-list, pasted to the inside cover of appropriate

magazine cases, can be a fruitful source of enquiry. The following cover slip has proved useful:

### SOME OF THE BOOKS

on your subject contained in the Lending Library for Home Reading are listed below.

You may use the Libraries  
Free of Charge if you Live or Work in the Borough.  
(Tickets from other Libraries are accepted here)

*Author*

*Title*

*Ask for an Application Form at the Counter.*

Another existing provision, to which some reference should be made, is the Annual Report which has undoubted publicity value, either realized or potential. It is this aspect of the publication which has significance here.

The presentation of the report will vary according to the body to which it is addressed. Thus a report compiled as a survey, written by the Librarian to his Committee, will differ from one presented as coming from the Committee to the Council.

There is yet a third type, different again in make-up and style. This may ostensibly belong to either of the first two groups, but actually it is written in a popular form for the benefit of the general public.

The fact that there are three different forms does not matter in the least. Standardization is to be recommended when it serves a useful purpose, but in the case of annual reports no such benefit can be derived. Furthermore, there is the question of previous publications to be considered; a report addressed

from Librarian to Committee in one year cannot be presented as from Committee to Council in the next.

Each form has its uses and in each the individuality of the writer and of the system can be expressed. One general factor that could, with advantage, be applied to all types is the relegation of statistics to the end of the report. There they can be presented in the form recommended by the Library Association, leaving the main body of the text free for a descriptive analysis of the work of the departments.

As far as publicity value is concerned, reports that fall within the first two groups are useful as revealing the amount and type of work done, the scope of the system and of each department, the services available and future plans of extension. Such publications are necessarily solid, dignified and restrained as befits official accounts, but this does not automatically imply that they should be stodgy or pompous. The publicity value is limited by these factors, but is real enough if the report is sufficiently well written and interesting to compel perusal. Consideration of the groups concerned during the writing of each section will add to its value. This point is later considered in more detail.

Reports covered by the third group have a great advantage from the aspect of publicity. Incidentally, although publicity value alone concerns us here, it should not be forgotten that publicity is not the primary purpose of the annual report. Advertising return is a minor factor, the main purpose being to serve as a record of stewardship. Certain powers and duties devolve upon the librarian and his committee, and the report serves to show how these responsibilities have been carried out and how it is hoped that they will be performed in the future. The publicity value, being a useful, added feature of secondary importance, should obviously not be confused with the primary function.

The popularized version, coming within the third group, designed and written for general public use, must be lighter in tone and more easily digested than either of the previous groups. Since it is lighter and more popular its circle of readers is sure to be wider, with a corresponding increase in publicity value.

Such reports are most difficult to compile because the margin

between the humorous and the ridiculous is so narrow. Publications of this kind sometimes appear presented with a skill that demands admiration; they are witty and sometimes facetious. The form appeals to many, perhaps because of its originality, but the conviction remains that too light an approach, though admirable in general publicity, is out of place in an official record.

Perhaps the difficulty might be circumvented by means of a double report; a straightforward, factual account from Committee to Council and a separate popularized version for the public. Having suggested that compromise, the thought occurs that it is by no means new. It follows the lines of governmental procedure in issuing White Papers in both primary and popularized versions.

Recommendations are usually made that the report should be circulated as widely as possible, especially among the business concerns in the district. No fault can be found with this injunction which is wholly admirable. It might be possible to improve upon the method in order to ensure that the utmost value is derived from the process.

Reports may be circulated widely but there can be no guarantee that they will be read. It is possible to go even further and to state that few reports, delivered outside of a limited circle, will receive more than a brief glance, and even fewer will be studied closely. This applies particularly to publications sent to business houses. Yet in every report there is something that would interest the commercial user; for example, items concerning the reference, information, technical and commercial sections, and it would be useful if the pages on which these services are reported could be spotlighted on the cover of the report.

A business man, receiving a report, is likely to flick through the pages and then to cast the work, unread, into the wastepaper basket. But if, on the front cover, is written: "see pages 7-9", or something similar, then natural curiosity would compel him to turn to those pages. Even this minor advance does not guarantee that he will be interested in whatever he reads or that he will act upon the information gained but, at least, the text will have been read. The importance of writing the text

so that it will encourage action is clear enough in this connection.

From the points raised here the conclusion can be drawn that a report should be written, not as a single document with a standardized style, nor as a continuous narrative, but as a series of separate items, each written with the knowledge that it is virtually addressed to a separate group. The fact that the overall report is nominally from the Committee to the Council will serve as a unifying feature and will prevent too great a discrepancy between individual parts.

If this method is practised, it follows automatically that the items spotlighted should be exploited as far as possible. The reader, turning to the pages noted, should find a section which has been written with his special needs in mind. Information given there should be presented in such a manner as to appeal to him immediately, to persuade him to read on and to encourage him to make use of the resources described. In other words, the report will be performing useful work.

From the annual report to the Illustrations Collection is not such a large step. They have this in common, that each can be made the vehicle for an astonishing amount of useful publicity if correct methods are employed.

The value of the Illustrations Collection for the purpose of supplementing the general book stock would appear to be self evident, but the number of such collections compared with the number of library systems is surprisingly small. Yet its value should give this form of extension a high degree of priority, being closely linked, as it is, with the use of books by all sections of the community. Its publicity value is correspondingly high.

The Illustrations Collection is a form of activity designed to supplement the stock of a library by collecting, on a parallel classified basis, illustrations and graphic material on all subjects. There seems to be no reason why pamphlets should not be included in this sequence. The value of a library to a community is thus developed to a point far beyond the cost of the collection. Chief advantages to be derived are:

- (1) The latest technical information appears in pamphlet and pictorial form. Its collection and presentation thus

provides essential, and often unique, information a year or more before it is available in book form.

- (2) Visual representation is an important feature of education. Verbal description is in many cases inadequate, while children, and many adults, find serious difficulty in visualizing an object from verbal description.
- (3) The arrangement together of pamphlets and illustrations in moderately-sized collections is likely to increase the scope and the value of each form. But where each is large in size, the arrangement of the two forms in a single sequence will increase the bulk so much as to make the collection unwieldy. Separate sequences would therefore be preferable in these circumstances.

Pamphlets visualized for inclusion would be those having descriptive subject interest, such as extracts from magazines. Trade reports and other material of greater value in the commercial file would, naturally, not be considered for inclusion.

- (4) The collection is used:

- (a) *By Children in the Library.*

Sets of pictures on subjects such as Geography, General Knowledge, Citizenship, Economics and so on may be displayed.

- (b) *By Teachers in the Schools.*

Contact with schools may be effected so that batches of pictures, on subjects selected by the teachers, may be used to supplement class lessons. Thus a lesson on botany could be illustrated by a selection of pictures showing the stages of fertilization and growth. Many schools now possess epidiascopes of their own, but illustrations of subject interest are scarce. The lack of a source of graphic material for demonstration purposes has often been noted.

- (c) *By Adults in the Library.*

The method of display could be similar to that used in the Juvenile Department. In addition, it should be noted that difficult and abstruse subjects, such as economic cycles, can readily be presented in

pictorial form and will attract an audience who would not otherwise attempt to read on the subject. The success of the B.C.A. wall maps is an interesting example. Simpler subjects, such as the method of repairing a fuse or replacing a faulty tap washer, can also be easily represented.

Incidentally, such pictorial displays will serve to drive home the force of the library appeal in another direction. The public are constantly told to come to the library for information, but it is better to show them how, rather than to tell them to search. A regularly changing series of displayed pictures, dealing with the problems of every day life, will serve to inculcate into the minds of readers the fact that the library can help them in practical matters. Concrete examples are better than vague slogans. It is obvious, too, that an interest aroused by pictorial display may develop into sustained reading.

(d) *By Local Business Houses.*

Commercial houses often turn to the collection for ideas in design, for catalogue covers, models and so on. Many details such as style, fashion, make-up and design can only be represented pictorially.

(e) *By Societies, Groups and Local Experts.*

In the section devoted to Societies and Groups stress is laid upon the fact that members of these bodies, and individuals who are not formed into groups, can assist the library by giving lectures and talks to adults and adolescents. Their task can be made much easier if there is available a fund of pictorial material on which they can draw.

Many useful technical diagrams and illustrations do not find their way into books. Many useful processes, hints and tips are not to be found in diagrammatic form. In such cases, it is often possible to persuade group members to fill the blanks by the provision of diagrams of their own design or of photographs of their own work. The Illustrations



Collection is noted for this, that it assists materially in linking together and co-ordinating the work of the different departments of a system and of the outside agencies and individuals connected with the system. It is a "maid-of-all-work" which amply repays the cost and labour of initiation.

(f) *In the Library as an Auxiliary to Other Activities.*

The Illustrations Collection proves its worth in many ways, not least by its use to increase the effectiveness of exhibitions and displays in other departments. A picture of any kind attracts attention, thus performing the first function of an advertising medium. It is therefore able to enhance the value of many other efforts of publicity in Lending, Reference and Junior Departments.

Sufficient material is here provided to indicate the value of an Illustrations Collection. More detailed information may be obtained from the work by E. V. Corbett,\* while a first-class section in action may be seen at the Bermondsey Public Libraries. This collection, comprising nearly 100,000 items, forms a valuable study for any interested librarian.

The method of collaboration with schools has there been fully exploited and serves a necessary purpose, while the whole section forms a useful collection of pictorial record parallel with that of the book stock.

\* Corbett E. V., *The Illustrations Collection*, Grafton, 1941.

## CO-OPERATION IN PUBLICITY

ANY plan of publicity is restricted by the question of cost and staff time, and for this reason alone co-operation in library advertising is desirable. All public libraries have common aims and ideals. They exist for social service, for the advancement and distribution of knowledge, and for the promotion of the library habit, the habit of regular reading. Their object is to be of use for the satisfaction of day-by-day informational and educational requirements. There is, therefore, much common ground. There is opportunity and necessity for publicity on a national scale, and this being so, the question of cost, which is usually prohibitive for a small area, becomes less formidable.

The arrangement of a national or regional scheme for publicity would make it possible to promote a planned campaign of ensured continuity. The necessity for this has been proved by the commercial experts, and it applies equally well to libraries, since our position makes it imperative that the appeal should be non-sensational. Without descending to scarifying tactics, it should be possible to make the public library a part of the everyday life and habit of the community.

Backward authorities have always been an obstacle to library progress. Governmental grants in various forms have been suggested to enable a more uniform service to be extended over the country, and development in this direction does appear to be inevitable if library provision is regarded as a national service. If plans of social service are to be put into effect in every part of the country, then financial aid, directly or indirectly, will be necessary.

However, the fact that a system of uniform excellence cannot be presented immediately should not prevent the publicizing of facilities that already exist. The story of the

service that could be is the most powerful weapon in the fight against apathy and materialism.

Much as we may deplore our status and the economies forcibly imposed upon us by local authorities, we must realize that, from the point of view of many authorities in their capacity of holders of the public purse, expenditure on libraries is expenditure on a service in which only a minority of the rate-payers are interested.

National figures show that approximately 25 per cent. of the population are registered as readers. We may deplore such matter-of-fact reasoning, and urge that figures cannot assess the final value of a service. But the facts as they are must be faced and events show that to many authorities, the library service is of less vital importance than other day-to-day services that show more tangible results.

The remedy is obvious; to spread the knowledge of facilities as widely as possible, to persuade the populace that libraries are essential to their well-being and advancement, and to make plain to the mass of the people what a good system could and should be.

There are, in this country, services of which we may be proud. It would be to our advantage to make these widely known, and so to establish a standard of excellence against which ratepayers may measure their local service. People are apathetic, often not deliberately, but because they are not aware of what can be achieved.

We know that some authorities are not able to spend more on their libraries, we also know that some authorities are not willing to spend more. Many librarians expend much time and energy fighting to increase their book funds to an adequate figure, others must limit their efforts to that of preventing encroachments. This should not be. It is not fair to the service or to the public.

Nationalization or supervision by a Ministry have been advocated as remedies. Both of these alternatives have their dangers. The third method is by pressure from within—pressure from ratepayers who know what a service should be, and who are determined that their own local system should approximate to this standard. The task is to spread this in-

formation, to make our contribution to the national welfare sufficiently desirable so that its provision and extension will be demanded as a necessity in every locality.

This end can be achieved partly by example, and partly by national publicity, to make the facts known.

Publicity directed towards such ends must be national. The local librarian cannot compare his own system with another, whether to prove that his own is above or below the general average. He cannot criticize his own authority or publish any material that can be suspected of showing criticism.

These restrictions do not apply to a central body. True, a particular authority cannot be criticized, but a standard can be set and the difference between the provisions of the standard and that of the local system will, in itself, constitute a valid and pertinent criticism. The way would be open for action by local residents, they would be made aware of the discrepancy between the service supplied to them and that supplied elsewhere.

A possible method would be the production of a monthly magazine of general interest. Such a publication, direct from the central body to the individual, would, in itself, be an excellent advertisement. It would record the standard with which local services could be compared. It would form a guide to reading and give information on available facilities. A magazine of this kind would underline the fact that public libraries exist for social service, and would show the forms in which that service is presented.

Other material for inclusion might well be a selection of recent books, with comments on the books themselves and related works. Reviews are common in literary magazines, but discussion of a work with relation to other works in the same field is less often attempted and is equally valuable. There is a gap here that the magazine could fill.

Most librarians who have issued bulletins have, at some time or another, been forced to cut short promising material because of printing costs. The welfare of the system has had to be sacrificed upon the altar of economy. A national magazine would be above such difficulties, the material to be included and its purpose would be the chief factor.

Older works of value that have fallen into disuse could well be discussed and reviewed, just as recent publications are treated. This work is worth-while in itself and should be part of the regular service. Topical articles, library news and features, notes of books and pamphlets on current affairs would all find a place.

So many items now attempted locally could be treated better and more effectively in a national magazine, which would be an admirable medium for keeping the public in touch with library activities. It should be possible to arouse public interest and, by opening the columns to outside contributors, that interest could be maintained and ideas obtained for improvements to the service as a whole.

Part or all of the cost could be defrayed by selling advertising space, for a large circulation would be guaranteed. Such a publication would reach existing readers and a large class of non-readers, since distribution could be effected through societies and organizations as well as through libraries. Very few readers know the full facilities of the library service, or know how to use books to the best advantage. An opportunity is here to remedy these omissions. The subject can be tackled from many angles and cannot fail to have beneficial results.

And why not a national library magazine for the children? Juvenile taste in literature is frequently deplored; here is a chance to improve it! The effect of the war years on the lives of the children can never be fully estimated. Separated from access to libraries by evacuation, they lost the opportunity to become familiar with standard and classical literature. The scarcity of books in the immediate post-war years allowed little to be done to remedy these omissions. It has truly been said that the children of those years grew up without having been in contact with the works that should be the common heritage of every child.

The effect on the future can only be imagined. One thing is certain, any factor that operates to lower the standard of public taste should be resisted, while any instrument that can be devised to bring about improvements should be implemented.

The influence of literature on the youthful mind during

the formative years is retained throughout life, and no introduction to the classics at a later date will give the same glow or produce such active stimulation and imaginative tumult.

Nothing can be done to replace lost years, but although the evil cannot be remedied, it can be alleviated. No effort spent in training and filling the "background gaps" of future citizens can be called wasted; with a magazine available, much valuable work is possible.

Material for a children's magazine is plentiful, so that no difficulty should be experienced in producing a good class-monthly journal for free distribution. Short stories, a serial, book chats, competitions, puzzles, articles, and so on will all find their place. Distributed through the libraries, schools and clubs, it would be sure of reaching the majority of the juvenile population. What better medium could there be!

Close co-operation between systems is essential to progress. While each system is content to work singly, to develop along separate lines, with no attempt at co-ordination, the service as a whole cannot possibly be fully expanded and made completely accessible. With so much duplication of effort there must necessarily be an overlapping of functions, resulting in waste and inefficiency.

Central guidance of publicity would produce canalization of effort, but need not involve stultification of initiative. On the contrary, local effort is likely to be encouraged if the result of such labour is shown in a national rather than a local field.

Co-operation in publicity must, naturally, be arranged in concert with co-operation in facilities, services and organization. Library Systems in London have been so inter-related as to form, in effect, units of a single, coherent whole. Details of such co-operative methods have been adequately described elsewhere; here it is sufficient to suggest that such initiative might profitably be extended, as far as circumstances permit, to include other regional areas.

Full credit must be given to the Metropolitan Librarians for their progressive policy and for the skill with which local autonomy has been utilized and combined for the welding of an instrument of potent power. Would it not be beneficial

if the methods of the Fiction Reserve, the Non-Fiction Specialization Scheme and inter-availability of tickets were freely copied? Periodical and Annual coverage is certain in London; why not in other areas?

Need we stop here? Could we not have co-operative binderies, unification of book purchase, planned provision of microfilm newspaper and periodical records? Should not we provide *real* reference facilities in specified centralized locations to act as master centres for intricate and specialized enquiries?

It may be objected that reference facilities do exist and that ASLIB is always in the background to assist. This is true for some areas, but the coverage is far from being complete. Such provision is not sufficient; it is casual and slipshod whereas it should be automatic and precise. There should be provided a regular channel of enquiry that would have the effect of speeding up and giving authority to the informational services in present backward areas.

Developments such as these must come eventually. Better that they should arise as proposals from the professional ranks than that they should be forced upon us by external forces.

The library service in this country has been growing for a century. Conceived as a philanthropical gesture towards an illiterate and inarticulate multitude, handicapped at birth by ridiculous restrictions, carefully nurtured by a small but enthusiastic band, it has nevertheless developed into a movement of vital worth in the life of the community.

If this instrument of culture is to develop along progressive paths it must be freed from the fetters of inertia. It has long outgrown these swaddling bands! Artificial boundaries must not be allowed to dam the flow of information, yet this is permitted to-day when a system is circumscribed solely by the service it is able to afford.

A more realistic approach is indicated. Personal beliefs and loose assumptions are no substitutes for facts. It is necessary to organize our methods so as to strip off all superfluity. Research should be initiated for valid objectives; enquiry should be made into reading habits. What do the people read? Do they read within certain prescribed limits and, if so, why? What are the factors that influence reading and in

what direction do they operate? Is it possible for the library service to do anything to extend the field of reading experience? If so, what are the best methods to adopt?

Surveys of libraries we have had. As such, they are excellent but provide only a fraction of the solution. We need a complementary survey of our readers, and especially of our non-readers, yet this is a subject almost entirely neglected in this country. There have been local attempts, it is true, but no survey can pretend to be accurate unless the "sample" is collected from a sufficiently wide source. Small, local surveys are often abortive and, at best, are merely partial answers to the main question. All such attempts must be assessed in relation to wider spheres if accuracy and certitude are to be obtained.

Reading interest is the territory to be explored; reading, not only of library users, but of the whole community. Research cannot, therefore, be confined solely within library circles but must be conducted out in the sphere of the great unregistered.

The result of such experiments would provide essential data, the lack of which leads us now into error. We should be very reluctant to form conclusions not based on unassailable facts, yet we do so every time we swamp our shelves with masses of light fiction, assuming that we are catering for public taste; or, alternatively, when we condemn and prohibit such supply entirely on the plea that we are elevating reading standards. We are not justified in acting on personal whims and conjecture; all of our actions should rest on a sounder basis and should be controlled by factors of demonstrable validity!

Reader research is a vast field and can be carried to absurd lengths. No such extremity is advocated here, but the principle of research must be accepted and the basis of experimental method adopted. It is quite impossible to plan the development of the service as a whole unless we know for what we are planning. And plans must be based on facts, not fancies, prejudices and assumptions!

Here is a field of endeavour for those restless spirits careering in the realms of "culture"; a call to duty sounded for those wantons now sporting with the educationists and vying for



nebulous favours! Here is an opportunity to exhibit the ingenuity of invention and facility of organization now frittered away in pursuit of elusive phantoms!

Whether or not it is possible to canalize endeavour into these more fruitful and legitimate channels must remain a matter for speculation. But it is certain that the empiricism of local expediency must be forced to give way to the guidance of organized and objective research, planned on a regional or national scale, if we are to obviate the blundering economy of a narrow understanding.

The educational standard of the population will rise, and this development must be accompanied by a more critical appraisal of a social service such as ours. We can meet this demand or we can ignore it, but inevitably we will be judged, not by our intentions, but by our achievements. It is useless to lag behind progress, to procrastinate until forced on by pressure and necessity. It is essential to be ahead of demand and to lead public opinion. The profession needs the elevation of status, we need the respect and confidence of the public. Only by leadership and initiative can the three-fold purpose be achieved: to select, to make available, to guide and to advise.

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