

side of the Indicator that it is 'in,' hands in a request for it, together with his 'borrower's ticket.' The library assistant removes the corresponding ledger from its shelf, enters it in the number of the borrower's ticket and the date of the loan, places the ticket in the ledger, and replaces it so as to exhibit the 'out' colour to the public." Despite the popularity of the Indicator in England, one finds it hard to see how there can be any question as to the superiority of the Open Shelf System, combined with the modern charging system of cards and trays.

The first English public library to adopt the Open Shelf System, or "Open Access" as it is called in England, was that at Clerkenwell, whose librarian, Mr. James D. Brown, was sent over to the United States at the time of the Chicago Exhibition, by his unusually generous and far-sighted Library Committee, to study modern American library methods. Mr. Brown prefers the term "safeguarded access" as applied to the Open Shelf System, it being, he considers, more accurate, since it is admitted that various checks on readers and borrowers are necessary. At Clerkenwell the system applies to the circulating, but not to the reference library. The public "enter the library at one side of an enclosed counter in which an assistant is placed, and leave with him the books they are returning. After choosing a volume from the open shelves they bring it to the other side of the counter, where it is booked for them, and they then leave the library by a different door from the one by which they entered. The book-shelves are placed end on with the issue counter, so that an assistant stationed there can see between each, and has full control of the whole library."

A limited form of "open access" was tried at the Liverpool Public Library a few years ago, but has since been discontinued on account of the loss of the books. That this loss was not due to any weakness in the system so much as to defective supervision, is proved by the fact that the books were shelved in alcoves, where anything like adequate supervision would be impossible.

The system has been adopted in the Croydon Public Library, where it has proved eminently satisfactory, the library building having been arranged to suit the system.

In the Wigan Free Library, a special building for boys was opened in 1895, and here also a system of open shelving has been adopted.

At St. Martin's, London, open access is in vogue, but, reversing the Clerkenwell plan, it applies only to the reference department. An ingenious device is also in use here to keep readers informed as to recent additions to the library. It is known as the "wheel catalogue," and is placed under glazed portions of the counter. By means of