

plaining to new students the reasons of certain arrangements which they may not otherwise comprehend. Older students may also be reminded by that means of some aspects of the use of the Library which they may have forgotten. For this reason I have gladly accepted the invitation of the Editor of *The Varsity* to make use of his columns in order to bring these matters to the attention of his undergraduate readers.

In the first place, it should be borne in mind that the chief aim of the Library administration is to serve as many readers as possible, and all classes of readers impartially. The Library is not conducted for the benefit of professors chiefly, nor of undergraduates chiefly, nor in the interests of honour men rather than pass men. Consequently the individual will sometimes find that he is expected to sink his immediate private advantage and even convenience, and submit to a rule framed with a view to the greatest good of the greatest number. The simplest illustration of this principle is the case of a text-book, of which perhaps there is but one copy to meet the requirements of twenty readers. The man who has been fortunate enough to borrow the book for his evening's reading is not allowed to possess himself of it again on the following morning, although he may present himself at the desk and ask for it in advance of all competitors. The rule, "First come, first served," is not followed where it would conflict with the maxim that turn about is fair play. I should like to make another observation on what may be called the ethics of the Library. The observance of silence and quiet in the reading-room is obviously a matter in which all readers are interested. Talking or any other kind of noise is disturbing to those who are trying to study, and mutual consideration ought to prevail among readers so as to reduce to a minimum the sounds which are unavoidably incidental to the assemblage of many persons in one room. There is no express rule of the Library against talking or moving chairs noisily or tramping, but to do such things in a room where other people are studying is not good behaviour. The offence is against the students themselves and is, properly, cognizable only by them. I mention it here because I hope that the body of students will discountenance it in future more than they have done, and that the sentiment of its impropriety will become general.

From the point of view of the undergraduate reader there are four broad divisions of books in the Library. The first division is of those indispensable aids to study, dictionaries and encyclopaedias, books not to read but to refer to constantly for the elucidation of those that are read. This class of books is to be found on the open shelves on either side of the desk. Readers are expected to select for themselves the dictionaries they require, to use them at their seats in the body of the room, and on leaving the room by no means to neglect to return them to the shelves whence they were taken. The second division is that of the text-books prescribed in the Calendar. These are kept either on the shelves behind the desk or in the stack-room, and the only way of obtaining them is to apply by "Reader's ticket" to the clerk at the desk. The fact of these books being few in number and in demand by a greater number of readers sufficient-

ly explains why they are not placed at the immediate disposition of readers, but their distribution is regulated by the clerk in charge. A third division of books would be those that are interesting to read or look through, but are not prescribed by the Calendar or recommended by the professors, and perhaps are not even indirectly connected with the course of study. This is a large class, and according to the varying tastes or curiosities of readers may embrace most of the volumes in the Library. Having due regard to exigencies of space, the librarian has made a selection of the books that are interesting and instructive and at the same time are not prescribed for any course of study, and has placed them in the bookcase that runs down the middle of the reading-room. There they may be examined at pleasure, and if they seem to deserve more leisurely perusal they may be taken home on the ordinary application to the clerk at the desk. I may here add that I shall be delighted to receive suggestions from students as to the kind of book that they would like to have placed on these reference shelves, and that, as far as possible, all requests for particular volumes to be transferred there will be complied with. The fourth division of books need only be mentioned for the sake of completeness; it is that of the books in foreign languages or on abstruse subjects which only a specialist cares to consult. These are, of course, kept in the stack-room.

Next to the books themselves the most important property of the Library is the card catalogue. A few words may be necessary as to what the catalogue can be expected to reveal and how it should be consulted. Every book in the Library is recorded in the catalogue at least once. (There are a few exceptions, such as sets of scientific periodicals and Government reports, but for practical purposes these may be ignored and the general statement accepted as true.) The record of the book is a transcription of its title-page, with certain significant modifications and additions. The chief modification is that the author's name is put first, the cards being arranged alphabetically according to the names of the authors. One consequence of this is that the arrangement of cards in the catalogue has no relation to the disposition of the books on the shelves. If a book is wanted and its title as given in the catalogue is transcribed on a reader's ticket, the clerk at the desk, except from recollection of the book itself or surmise of its subject, has no information as to the place of the book in the stack-room. This information is given by the two or three abbreviated words which are written in the upper left-hand corner of the card. Whenever the title of a book wanted is taken from the catalogue, these abbreviations, which are the shelf-mark or shelf signature, should also be copied. The catalogue, being a transcription of the title-pages of all the books in the Library, indexed by their authors' names, is a complete key to what the Library contains by any number of given authors. It is also, to an incomplete extent, a guide to what the Library contains on given subjects. The preparation of a complete subject-catalogue is now in process. The departments of the Library fully catalogued by subjects or topics are those of Economics and Political Science, Law, and Education, and this