

and, following out the same suggestion, the Royal Society of London, in 1857, commenced the publication of the catalogue which bears its name and now comprises eleven volumes. After much negotiation, representatives from all of the civilized nations were invited to attend a meeting of the International Catalogue Conference, in London, on July 14, 1896. Sir John Gorst was called to the chair, and, after expressing his pleasure at meeting so many representatives of science, said: "Discussions have always been going on as to the best way of extending the catalogue, and of carrying it out in such a way as to make it supply the needs of scientific workers generally. About three years ago a Committee was appointed specially to take into consideration what appeared to be the only way of carrying out such a work in the future, viz.: to consider the preparation of such catalogues by international co-operation. The Royal Society realized from a very early period that it could not itself undertake such a work—that no single body could undertake it; and therefore invited the opinions of scientific men and scientific institutions all over the world. There was practically but one reply—that such catalogues were essential—and there was practically no doubt that the only way of carrying out the work was by international co-operation. The Royal Society worked at the subject during two years, and eventually this Conference was summoned at its instance, through the aid of Her Majesty's Government. If any proof were required of the importance of the work, I think the fact that this meeting is attended by so highly representative a body of delegates is in itself sufficient. . . . The great object before us is to produce a catalogue available for use by scientific investigators throughout the world. It is a mere bibliographic work that we are seeking to perfect. We desire to produce catalogues, arranged not merely according to authors' names, but catalogues arranged also according to subject-matter; and a very large number of those who have considered the subject are of opinion that in these catalogues the subject matter must be classified not merely broadly, so as to deal separately with individual sciences, but much more in detail, so as to deal with sections of individual sciences, in order to meet the wants of specialists. Each index, therefore, must be a classified subject index; and many of us also believe that it must be an analytical classified subject index—that we must go beyond the mere titles of papers and consider the subject matter, so that such information is placed in our hands that we shall know practically what is in a paper wherever it may be published. . . . But with regard to details—and there must be many details in working out such a scheme, especially when we come to consider questions of classification—it is quite clear that at this meeting we cannot do more than discuss broad principles. The details must be considered by committees, appointed either by this meeting, or by means of machinery set in action by this meeting. And in order that there should be a full study of all these questions, the Royal Society has proposed that the catalogue shall not commence until the year 1900. We have suggested that at least four years should be given to the preliminary work of organization. If means can be devised of leading authors, societies, and publishing bodies generally to co-operate in this work, it is clear that the central organization will exercise almost mechanical functions: it will, so to speak, sit at the receipt of custom; it will see that the scheme is carried out in a uniform way, but the material it requires will flow naturally towards it. In this way much will be done to economise both time and money. Later in the Conference, when we are clear what is the nature of the work to be done, it will be very important to consider what part each contributing country shall take in the enterprise in supporting it financially."

The Conference sat for four days, and agreed upon a basis of international work. English, French, German, and Italian were declared to be official languages, and resolutions were received in any of these. In printing the catalogue, it was resolved, "That English be the language of the two catalogues, authors' names and titles being given only in the original languages, except when these belonged to a category to be determined by the International Council."