

Accepting the view that the library is properly a public service institution, we must face the question whether the founding of libraries is an appropriate work for philanthropy, or whether the function should be left entirely to the public initiative.

. . . The conclusion is reached that when the public authorities have been sufficiently aroused to the necessity of providing free libraries, and when the service itself has become sufficiently well organized for public administration, there will remain no occasion for the employment of philanthropic funds in this field. . . .

There is, accordingly, for the present abundant reason why philanthropic funds should be devoted to the establishment of libraries, and perhaps even better reasons why such funds should be employed to work out the problems of library service and establish standards of efficient performance.

#### *The American Library Association*

The first mention in records of the Corporation of the American Library Association, centrally located in Chicago, Illinois, as an agency through which library interests might be stimulated, occurs in this report:

Library service as a profession enjoys a fairly compact organization in the American Library Association. Much valuable work is conducted by the Association for the benefit of its members, of such character as the interchange of experience through the official journal, the preparation of book lists, etc. There is reason for believing that the Association, if better provided with funds, could offer a richer and more practical service to the associated librarians. It would be desirable for the Carnegie Corporation to work through the Library Association in the matter of collection of statistics and other general information pertaining to library conditions. It would also be possible, working through the Association, to improve the quality of the book lists by which the smaller libraries are guided.

It would be a relatively simple matter for the Library Association to undertake these and similar services. They would involve an expense that in itself is not serious, but that would weigh heavily upon a purely mutual association of an underpaid