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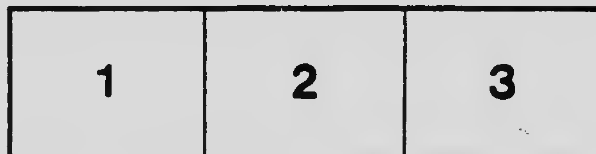

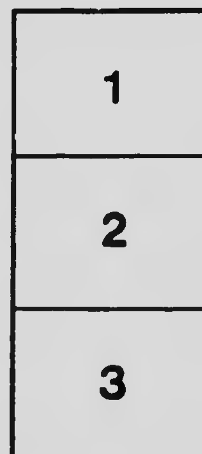

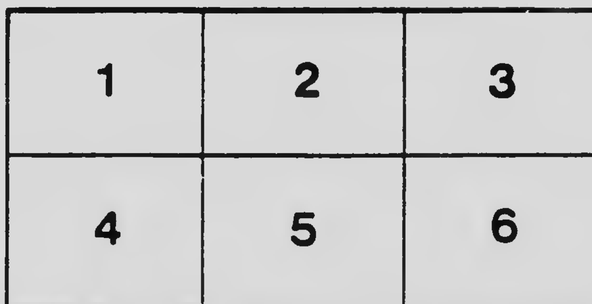

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LIBRARY

The Library School in the College

BY

SIR WILLIAM OSLER, BT., M.D., F.R.S.

REGIUS PROFESSOR OF MEDICINE, OXFORD; A CURATOR OF THE BODLEIAN, AND PRESIDENT OF THE BIBLIOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY

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"The library movement to-day is rich in possibilities both for town and country. It is always difficult to measure the influence of institutions on the well-being of the community. But it is certain that the love of literature adds greatly to the happiness of each generation, and also that the diffusion of knowledge and the direction of thought which a well-organized library system can promote deeply influence the future progress of the community. Thinking ultimately is that which moves and develops society, and we shall not have a real democracy until we have a well-educated people. With every stimulus to thought which good books bring, and with every development in the organized bodies of working men and women students, the well-being of the workers themselves is being surely and steadily secured. As the leisure of the workers increases, the opportunity for study becomes greater; and, while the more recreative literature should not be neglected, the first call should rather be to provide the best materials of study for those who are becoming the leaders of thought among their fellows."—Prof. Adams' "Report on Library Provision and Policy to the Carnegie United Kingdom Trust, 1915".

THE LIBRARY SCHOOL IN THE COLLEGE.[1]

By Sir William Osler, Bt., M.D., F.R.S., Regius Professor of Medicine, Oxford, a Curator of the Bodleian, and President of the Bibliographical Society.

At the outset of a difficult journey what a comfort to meet with one who knows the road and its perils, the land and its delights, one to whom you may turn in every difficulty, feeling sure of encouragement, a never-failing friend whose presence is a perpetual benediction. Working as you will do in that final triumph of organization and equipment, the National Library building, recall for a moment or two the beginnings of the modern library movement in those far-off days of the fourteenth century, and invoke the blessing of Richard de Bury upon our labours. "If thy presence go not with us carry us not up hence." From the start let him be your closest companion, and his "Philobiblon" the guide of your professional life, in the hope that some measure of his gracious spirit may be your portion. The hard hazard of the times wrecked the noble scheme of the great Bishop to found a library at Oxford, but his book remains the ideal library companion, and his memory is enshrined in the hearts of all true book-lovers.[2] His practical wisdom was wonderfully shown in the plan of his lending library for the scholars and masters of the University, both

[1] An Address at the opening of the Summer School of Library Service, Aberystwyth, 31 July, 1917.

[2] The "Philobiblon" is to be had in the King's Classics Library, price 1s. 6d. Chatto & Windus.

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regulars and seculars, for their advantage and use in study. One of his golden rules I should like to see enforced in every library—when a man asked the loan of any book the keepers were first carefully to consider whether they had the book in duplicate.

Before taking up the subject of my address, let me offer in a semi-official way the greetings and best wishes of the Library Association for a successful meeting. It is particularly gratifying to know that more than fifty students are in attendance, coming from all parts of the kingdom. As this is an introductory lecture a few preliminary statements are in order, and without any technical knowledge I thought it wise to consult the Director of the National Library, Mr. John Ballinger, from whose notes I have culled them.

I.

Within the last few years the work has been so organized that we may speak of a science of librarianship. The old rule-of-thumb order which each custodian of a collection of books adopted, as his own knowledge or ignorance suggested, is giving place to carefully thought-out methods of arrangement designed to make the books of greater service, and more easily accessible. The librarians of to-day, and it will be true still more of the librarians of to-morrow, are not fiery dragons interposed between the people and the books. They are useful public servants, who manage libraries in the interest of the public. The old notion of the right person to have charge of books is going, but by no means gone; the sooner it goes the better for everybody. Many think still that a great reader, or a writer of books, will make an excellent librarian. This is pure fallacy.

For the first hundred years of its existence, the British Museum was worked by men chosen for their success or partial failure as literary men. Then came a stirring time. Mr. Anthony Panizzi, an Italian refugee, was appointed to a minor post in the Museum in the year 1831, and displayed from the first such a grip of the science of administration that six years later he was appointed Keeper of Printed Books, over the head of Carey, the distinguished translator of Dante.

Already the state of affairs at the Museum was uncomfortable. The eminent, easy-going literary men, and others selected for all sorts of reasons other than administrative ability, were in a state of ferment. Panizzi had a bad time, but he stood his ground, and prevailed. Posts were given to young men, mainly from the Universities, chosen by examination, and so trained that the work of the Museum was gradually done by experts. The real greatness of the library began with Panizzi. When he was appointed Keeper the printed books numbered about 165,000, after one hundred years of existence. Think of what has happened since! In about seventy further years the collection of printed books exceeds two millions. Not only the British Museum but your craft at large owes much to Panizzi. He was a librarian in the best sense of the word, and received his reward in promotion to the Principal Librarianship, which he filled for nearly twenty years—much loved and much hated. Often described as tyrannical, he certainly was masterful, but he was most liked by the best men among his subordinates—and they included at least three who succeeded to the chief office, and also Dr. Garnett, who went into the Museum on the selection of Panizzi.

Between the years 1855, roughly, and the present, there has grown up in Britain and America libraries of a type altogether different from anything existing before—the libraries of the people, public libraries, sometimes mis-called free libraries, brought into existence by the will of the people, maintained by funds derived from the rates. These libraries are firmly established as a factor in promoting education and culture, besides serving many other useful purposes. They are in many places highly organized contributors to the general welfare, but their potential place in the scheme of things intellectual has not been grasped as yet in Britain. Perhaps it is because too much has been done for the people, who have not in this matter worked out their own salvation. Mr. Carnegie and his Trust have spent on library buildings in the United Kingdom more than two millions sterling. In America the function of the public library is better understood than it is here. Why is this?

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Britain was first in the field with this, as with so many other movements. Somehow we seem to have been content to jog along, leaving things to chance, or to the small number of eager understanding people who have concerned themselves with the movement.

Associations of people interested in the work have been formed, one in this country, the other in America, and working together they have done a vast amount for the improvement of library administration, though only the fringes, as it were, have been dealt with.

America has gone further than we in the matter of technical training. Library schools have been in operation for many years, and their graduates in large numbers have found employment. In this country the Library Association has laboured with praiseworthy zeal to set up standards of proficiency, to establish classes for instruction, and to test by means of examinations the qualifications of candidates.

What encouragement have they received from those who have in their hands the government of libraries? Not many years ago our schools were officered by teachers very slenderly equipped, and the impression still prevails that no particular qualifications are required for the organization and administration of a library.

Let us consider for a few minutes how the matter stands, taking the prospectus of this Summer School as a basis. Eight branches of study are there indicated as necessary for librarians, who should possess, in addition, a good education and a healthy constitution.

Let us glance for a moment at the subjects. What librarian or assistant can hope to deal with books without a good knowledge of literary history, not merely of his own but of other countries? There is a story of a man who styled himself "Chief Librarian" (his staff was a boy of 16), who was asked at the library counter by the Editor of one of the local newspapers whether there was a copy of the "Morte D'Arthur" available. To the pressman's profound astonishment the "Chief Librarian" replied that the library did not keep French books. "Oh! thank you," said the pressman, "good day." There are many similar stories.

But this one happens to be true. And it has never been told until now. It may serve to show the importance of some knowledge of literature even to a "Chief Librarian" with one junior for his staff.

Bibliography, next in order, is sub-divided by the Library Association into Historical Bibliography, Practical Bibliography, and Book Selection. How many people would be able to pass even an elementary test in either of the first two sub-divisions, or even to define them. Many cataloguers (of sorts) describe themselves as bibliographers, thereby displaying their ignorance of terms, and of the whole subject.

Bibliography deals with the history of printing, the evolution of the printed book from the manuscripts, paper, bookbinding, book illustration, authors, publishers, booksellers, the collation and description of books, the various methods of book production ; while book selection is concerned with the type of books suitable to the needs of the people who are to use the library. To do this efficiently requires wide knowledge of books of reference—bibliographies—practical experience, and sound judgment. For a clear statement of the many problems relating to the subject, the little work of the late Prof. John Ferguson, "Some Aspects of Bibliography," 1900, will be found most helpful.

Next in order is Classification, the application of which to collections of books is comparatively recent, and the outcome of modern experience. By it the library is made an organized instrument of service, like a well-trained and disciplined army. For just as hundreds of thousands or even millions of men without proper organization form a mere mob, so a library without classification is nothing more than a mob of books. Catalogues lessen the confusion, but every catalogue is out of date as soon as it appears, and the reader becomes dependent upon his own and the librarians' memory for the latest books on his subject. With classification, however, this difficulty disappears. The books are sorted to their proper place as they come in. If one wishes to study "Cancer," for example, or "Poultry-keeping," or any other subject, a properly classified library would be of infinitely greater help than any catalogue, and more expeditious,

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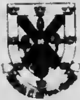

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because all the books wanted would lie next each other on the shelves.

Classification is making its way in the libraries of this old country—slowly, but it must come, and those who are to take part in the administration of libraries as their life-work will do well to recognize this fact, and equip themselves. In America, where the scrapping of obsolete methods is more general, and more promptly adopted, no library of any size ignores classification. What is more, the libraries which in past years adopted methods which no longer hold front rank, are changing over to better systems. Even small libraries should be classified, they will grow, and if started on right lines valuable time and labour will be saved.

The Library of Congress started reorganization some years ago, a heroic thing to undertake with such large collections, and the re-classification has occupied a special staff for over seventeen years. It is now approaching completion, and incidentally has produced the soundest and most practical scheme of classification yet given to the world, known as the Library of Congress Classification. Most of the American libraries are using it. On this side the National Library of Wales is the only library to adopt it up to the present.

Following the subjects in the order of the Syllabus of the Library Association we come to Cataloguing, an important branch of the work, but not, as many people suppose, the most important. The widely prevalent idea that library work is made up of cataloguing and that beyond compiling catalogues the staff is mainly engaged in reading and writing books is very wide of the truth. Valuable as is a catalogue it can be of little use unless the books have first been arranged in an order which will enable them to be found when called for, and returned to their places when done with. The classifier in fact must precede the cataloguer, or the labour will be wasted.

One could discourse for a month, or longer, on catalogues without exhausting the subject. Every man and woman of average ability thinks he or she can make a catalogue—and they may be right. But the question is as to the value of

the catalogue when it is made. There must be rules, as for all other things worth the doing. The British Museum rules, drawn up by Panizzi, were far in advance of anything existing at the time. These in turn have been added to, amended, and otherwise revised, until the Anglo-American code of rules came into being a few years ago. Even this code is not final. But it is adequate for most purposes, and if generally followed would result in a much better type of catalogue.

About one point in cataloguing much has been written (and in the United States some action has been taken), and it calls urgently for attention. It is absurd that valuable time, which might be given to other pressing work, is daily devoted by hundreds of librarians to cataloguing the same books. All this unnecessary labour could be saved by the adoption of a system of co-operative cataloguing. If one library would undertake to catalogue and print cards for all books as they appear, then the others could be supplied with printed cards for such books as they add, with an immense saving of time and money. Each library would add to the cards the shelf numbers of the books, and the printed cards could at once be inserted in the card catalogue.

There are six libraries in the United Kingdom entitled to a copy of every book issued. Three are connected with Universities, Oxford, Cambridge, and Dublin, one is the Library of the Faculty of Advocates at Edinburgh, and two, the British Museum and the National Library of Wales, are public libraries maintained by State funds. One of the two last named might very well be called upon to take up this important work, the expenses being met by an increased grant from the public funds. This question has an important bearing upon our scheme of studies. By performing the functions of a practising school, a system of co-operative cataloguing would give splendid opportunities for the training of cataloguers. There would be many advantages resulting from such a scheme. It would take too much time to enumerate them all. One, however, is worth mentioning. It would enable the public to obtain reliable information from a full catalogue entry, on a *printed* card, easy to read, free from slips in copying ; all entries would be in full, because the cards for

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subject entries and cross-references would all be the same, with the addition of the subject at the head of the card.

This method has been in operation in the United States for several years. The cards are prepared, printed, and distributed at cost price, plus 10 per cent, by the Library of Congress. One card costs two cents, further cards of the same book are supplied at about one half cent each card. Five cards of the same book cost about twopence. Why should this country continue to waste valuable time, when by co-operation so much time and expense can be saved?

At this point we take leave of the Syllabus of the Library Association, and come to two branches of a librarian's equipment which have been rather neglected in this country. On the Continent the Archivist is an important personage. He is going to be important here. We welcome therefore the addition of Archives as a subject for study in this Summer School, and congratulate the authorities upon securing one of the most expert of living Archivists as the Instructor. The name of Mr. Hubert Hall is known to all of you. I am glad to hear that the entries for his course of instruction are satisfactory. It is a great opportunity of getting an insight into the methods of record preservation and classification. The course of instruction in bookbinding will be a useful auxiliary to the study of Archives, as in addition to bookbinding in its usual forms, instruction and demonstrations will be given in cleaning, repairing, and preserving documents, rare books and valuable manuscripts.

II.

It is not a little strange, it is indeed a singular anomaly, that our universities, whose chief function is to train men to influence others, do little or nothing directly for the education of those great teachers of the nation, the masters of the elementary schools, and the purveyors of knowledge called librarians. Not 5 per cent of these teachers in England and Wales are college-bred. Perhaps when salaries are raised to a living level, and the training colleges for teachers are made part and parcel of the college system, we may reach the

realization of the dreams of Erasmus and Colet.[1] But the question to-day for us is the personal one—the training of librarians, for which purpose this Summer School has been opened.

A collection of books is, as Carlyle says, a university, and a custodian of books is necessarily a teacher. Post-graduate education is largely in the hands of libraries. Take in illustration my own experience of the past ten days. In a complicated and unusual type of war-shock case, about which I asked my own books in vain, the answer was easily found in the Royal Society of Medicine Library. About a Cambridge University medical diploma, 1683, I bothered my teachers at Bodley, at Cambridge, and at the British Museum. An early, possibly unknown, edition of the "Malade Imaginaire" led me far afield beyond the Taylorian Institution. The British Museum and Bodley are themselves Universities as great as Oxford and Cambridge. The London Library possibly helps the education of more people than London University.

Vocational training is not the chief business of a college which should offer the broad foundations of a liberal education, partly through the personality of the teacher and the moulding association of comrades, and partly by the influence on growing minds of the great minds of the past of whose thoughts the book is the transmitter. The two processes are supplemental, and it is the function of the college to see that the human and literary sides of the training are developed equally. Deep versed in books, the student may become a shallow-pated pedant unless there has been that testing of the facts of life that comes only to those whose delight is with the sons of men. How true it is that instruction may be the least part of education, and the ideal of the college must ever be the Academy and the Lyceum where the masters and the pupils form happy bands in which all are teachers and all are taught.

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[1] "Erasmus also thought boys carried from School, as from their first Vessel, that Savour or Tincture of Good and Evil that prevailed in all their following Course of Life and gave them the Right or Wrong Bent and Turn, to be wise and useful in their Generation or to be a Sort of Rakes and Reprobates for ever." —"Life of John Colet," by Samuel Knight, 1724, p. 178.

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In many ways with proper direction and example, youth is its own best teacher, and the mutual clash of bright minds may be of more value than any syllabus. How well in "In Memoriam" does Tennyson describe those precious extra academic hours in which

> We glanced from theme to theme,
> Discussed the books to love or hate,
> Or touched the changes of the state,
> Or threaded some Socratic dream.

The problem before us may be stated simply, and the solution is not, I believe, difficult. The library is everywhere becoming one of the great factors in our educational system, and the director is perforce a teacher of wide and critical influence. How shall he be trained so as best to utilize his opportunities for the public good? No man in the community requires a more comprehensive and thorough education. All knowledge is his province. A common tap for the waters of wisdom, he should not perhaps know everything, but he should know where everything may be found. The parson, the doctor, the lawyer, the engineer, the farmer, the worker in every craft should be able to go to him with full assurance that he will be able to help. The Apocalyptic literature, the recent theories of immunity, the law of war claims, submarine engineering, the chemistry of dyes, the metallurgy of nickel steel, the story of aviation, the laws of trajectories should be as familiar to him as the "best sellers" among the novels or the most popular of the war poets. He is the badly salaried intellect of the community, and if fortunate enough to be able to suffer fools gladly he leads a life of surprising usefulness. And let us not forget other important qualifications—an ability to manage a business as complicated as a department shop, and a knowledge of men and a gift of manners that will enable him to drive his Committee or Council without strain on bit or rein. As Mr. Tedder remarked in a recent address, "The Librarian in Relation to Books," "The model librarian must be two-sided—at once a man of business, and a man of learning and reflection". With the missionary spirit and an absorbing interest in his work the librarian may be one of the happiest of men. But, oh the difference, should he be a

grouchy old churl whose chief aim is to stand sentry over the shelves, and keep the public at bay. A more deservedly unhappy man does not exist than the librarian who regards the reader as an intruder. One of the best stories in that best of literary hoaxes, "The Old Librarian's Almanack" (Elm Tree Press, Woodstock, Vermont, 1909) is of Timothy Mason who "in charge of a Publick Library, was one day reading diligently when a Member of the Library entered, and presenting the Subscription Ticket begged the librarian to fetch him a certain Book. Master Timothy, being incens'd at this Interruption of his Reading, and Chancing at that Moment to see the Constable passing the Library, did put out his Head from the Window and Bawl loudly for the Constable to come in. When the latter had enter'd he gave the Member into the custody of the Officer, preferring against him a charge of Disturbance of the Peace." Through the creation of the fancy of Edmund Lester Pearson, Jared Bean, the old librarian, displays as much quaint wisdom as if he really had been Curator of the Connecticut Society of Antiquaries in the middle of the eighteenth century. The days are long past in which people tolerate rudeness in their keepers of books. Nor, however attractive, is the recluse student-librarian of the Magliabechi type any longer possible (see D'Israeli, "Curiosities of Literature"). He must be a man of the world and a man of affairs with a cordial, sympathetic manner, native or assumed. It is said that Bodley owes the gift of one of its most magnificent collections to the genial reception by Dr. Bandinel of Francis Douce, when visiting the library with D'Israeli in 1830. A frigid afternoon with a dyspeptic curator lost to a library I am interested in a priceless collection of Americana.

There are more than eight hundred public, i.e. rate-supported, libraries in the United Kingdom and probably another two hundred belonging to colleges, institutions, and societies. It would not be far wrong to put the personnel at more than three thousand, certainly a large and important constituency, worthy of careful cultivation by all interested in education.

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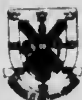

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We may expect a rapid extension of library work within the next ten years. In addition to the big collections there are in this country more than 100 small local libraries chiefly in South Wales and Monmouthshire, and these will grow on the lines laid down by the founder of public libraries, that remarkable man, Dr. Thomas Bray (1656-1730). The Bibliotheca Parochialis, as he termed it, is receiving the attention of the Carnegie United Kingdom Trust, and I commend to your attention this section of Professor Adams' Report (pp. 15-17). From his concluding remarks you may realize how important the movement is in this direction :—

"In these experimental areas there would be : (1) A central library, from which the books are distributed at regular intervals, and from which also there should be supervision of the whole area. (2) Village libraries, usually placed in the school, with the schoolmaster as librarian. This local library should consist of (*a*) a permanent collection of certain important reference books and standard works ; (*b*) a circulating library which would be exchanged each three months, or at such times as may be arranged. Such library facilities would bring a new power and influence into the hands of the teacher in the rural community, and, with the education authorities sympathetic to the movement, there may swiftly be spread through the whole country a public library service the effects of which for good it would be hard to over-estimate."

You may gather, too, from this Report the amounts paid in salaries, not I am afraid very encouraging figures. The fact is that a liberal profession is miserably underpaid. I wish the Carnegie Trust had made well-salaried brains as strong a condition of grants as well-mortared bricks. A direct effect of this parsimony is seen in the scarcity of the college-bred on the staffs of the libraries. An attractive occupation is neglected by the very people best fitted by education to undertake it. In the past twenty years professional certificates have been issued by the Library Association to about 650 candidates, not half a dozen of whom are college graduates. One hundred years ago the medical profession was trained very largely on the apprenticeship plan—four years with a general practitioner and then for a year the

student "walked the Hospital". This is very much the method in your profession to-day. The technique is picked up in the daily round and then a certain number of the better students follow the classes of the Library Association, or come, as you have done, to a Summer School. The condition confronting us is that between two and three thousand persons, actively engaged on all-important work, are in backwaters, and not in the broad stream of educational life. This is bad for them, bad for the libraries, and worse for the public. Nor can the colleges afford to neglect the cultivation of so important a field of influence. I have already admitted that the main business of the college is not vocational but cultural, not final but initiative—the liberal education in the old sense, from which we cannot afford to depart. We have departed from high standards, as even at Oxford and Cambridge men may enter at once upon special studies, and take the college degree in subjects which are purely vocational—a grievous mistake I believe, so far as the three so-called learned professions are concerned. Technical training with a view to immediate utility should follow in the special schools of the University, medical, theological, legal, etc. It is a farce to say that a man is getting a liberal education who enters at once upon the study of chemistry, physics, and biology, or who takes up theological work the term after matriculation. Possibly with historical and literary accessories and with modern languages a technological training may be made a liberal one, in which the student will get a wide outlook, and the all-essential Platonic conviction of education as a life-long process.

III.

I should like to see added to the schools of at least one University in each division of the Kingdom a *School of the Book*, in all its relations, historical, technical, and commercial—every aspect of bibliography, every detail of typography, every possible side of bibliopoly. And the Press should be included, as the daily paper is nothing but a glorified broadside. The opportunities exist: as the great library furnishes a laboratory, the college with the library staff supervise the

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courses, and a University Press subserves the typographical side of the training.

Prof. Adams says: "It is very desirable that the higher training in librarianship should be associated with University institutions, and that the best single centre for such work is in London, though it is also worthy of the consideration of the Trustees whether higher courses in librarianship could be arranged in other important centres, such as Manchester or Liverpool, Glasgow or Edinburgh, Cardiff and Dublin" ("Report," p. 23). A school started in Wales should be in connexion with the National Library, which is its natural home. A London school in association with the British Museum and the University would minister to the needs not only of England but in special studies could become a great centre for all parts of the Empire. A Scotch and an Irish school would have their own distinctive features. Certainly in no better way could the Carnegie Trustees further the higher interests of the profession than by subsidizing such schools in grants for teachers and in scholarships for pupils. The Library Association and the London School of Economics, which at present supervise the work, would welcome the extension of plans to which they have devoted much time and money.

A library school was first started in connexion with Columbia College, New York, by Dewey, a great name in your ranks, and in the thirty years that have passed scores of schools have been established, some with only short courses as the present one, others are training classes in big libraries, but many are schools in the true sense of the term—a post-graduate course extending over two years which leads to a special degree. Henry R. Evans, in a "Report on Library Instruction in American Universities, Colleges, and Normal Schools, 1914," states that ninety-one colleges have courses more or less adequate and complete. The development of the work in some of these schools is remarkable. The catalogue of one before me shows nineteen teachers, eleven of whom are members of the college staff. The school offers to freshmen and to others a course on the use of the library, and of the ordinary reference books. Even a

preparatory college curriculum is laid down for those who wish to devote themselves to library work—modern languages, Latin, mediæval history, etc. Special students with large experience are admitted to advanced standing, and any senior student may elect to take any course for which he is prepared. The curriculum is very much the same as that laid down by the Association. In the vacation members of the school are expected to do work in public libraries, and during the course visits are made to binderies, bookshops, and printing houses.

Can the market be forced in this country? Is it worth while to establish such schools when positions are not open which make it worth while to encourage good students. There are thirty-nine public libraries in Wales and Monmouthshire, with a personnel of about 114. In addition there are 115 workmen's libraries and the libraries of the National Colleges and the denominational schools. Of the 44 in Prof. Adams' Report, in which returns are given in 31, the total expenditure for salaries and wages is under £100. This does not look a very promising market in which to ask a man to invest the intellectual savings of four or five years' work. For a time at least, the Summer School may have to meet the demand. On the other hand, there are plenty of good billets, outside the Principality, and the Celt combines migratory with predatory instincts. A combined effort in each section of the Kingdom, would, I believe, be successful, and the movement would grow. In America the Library School has been a great boon, and has been the means of furnishing highly trained men and women who have, within my knowledge, completely changed the atmosphere of the libraries. I have seen the Surgeon-Generals' Library, the College of Physicians, Philadelphia, the Boston Medical Library, the McGill Medical Library, to mention only those in which I have been personally interested, grow from small beginnings to collections of national importance. The most striking bibliographical contrast in my own collection is the tiny octavo of 32 pages, the first catalogue, 1865, of the Surgeon-Generals' Library, Washington, alongside of the 36 folio volumes of the first and second series just completed. The stimulus of trained specialists

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has been a potent factor in this development. Even in the technical collections the assistants are chosen from graduates of the Library Schools, and they are usually women. A substantial financial uplift in salaries and the making of graduation from a Library School an essential qualification, would change the status of the profession and ensure the success of a movement for higher education.

Over the portals of a modern University is the "Homo sum" motto of Terence, as from ice cream[1] to aviation there should be nothing foreign to its comprehensive purpose. More than ten years ago I was asked by a friend to draw up a scheme of instruction in which everything relating to every possible side of the book would be represented—authors, makers, users, distributors, and conservators. The conception of the University Library and the University Press as technical laboratories had not yet, he said, touched the academic mind. Nothing came of our consultations. To-day the outlook is more favourable, and I have unearthed the scheme. Without hampering traditions it should be possible here to build up a great school of the book. You have not yet a University Press, but one could easily grow out of the present establishment at the Library, the work from which both in printing and binding is of a very high order. Modified to meet local conditions the scheme of the National School would be as follows:—

I. Organization.—Control jointly by a Committee representing the Library, the Press, the University, and the Colleges.

II. Staff.—(*a*) *Permanent.* The heads of the Library and of the Press, and the assistants in special departments, who would supervise the technical work.

(*b*) Lecturers on library economics, history, bibliography, publishing, binding, etc., chosen partly from the library, partly from the college staffs.

(*c*) Special lecturers from outside, as you have arranged for this Summer School. Publishers, manufacturers,

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[1] In the calendar of a progressive American University I see courses advertised on this Apician subject!

printers, and inventors would be asked to give special lectures.

III. Students.—(*a*) Ordinary undergraduates, who would be given instruction in (i) the use of the library; (ii) the elements of bibliography; (iii) palæography.

(*b*) Special students: (i) in library work; (ii) in newspaper work, printing, publishing, binding, and illustrating.

The school in these departments would offer practical training quite as important as in other technical subjects. For a time at least the courses in library economics may have to be given in a Summer School, but to fit men for the higher library posts we should look forward to an advanced course of two years' post-graduate work.

(*c*) Research students. One of the chief functions of the school would be to train men and women in methods of literary and historical research. Tutorial classes and private instruction should be offered in all departments. The National Library with its unique collections should become the Mecca for Celtic students from all parts of the world for whom skilled assistance should be provided by the best scholars.

IV. The Public.—The classes in bibliography should be open. Anyone desiring special instruction in any matter relating to a book, from the preparation of manuscripts to the designing of a book cover, should be able to find it at the school. In the great working centres of South Wales extension classes would be held for working men dealing with the book as a tool of the mind.

And in connexion with the Press there would be organized a typographical museum in which would be displayed by models, etc., everything relating to the art of printing—a place in which the historical evolution could be studied from the Chinese movable type to the latest linotype machine

IV.

A School of the Book would prove an active ferment in the departments of literature and history. A few " Professors

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of books," to use Emerson's phrase, would introduce bibliography into the curriculum in a practical way. Take Milton, for example. The booklet with "Lycidas"—what a story in its few pages, and how it completes the fascination of the poem to know the circumstances under which it was written! Only a few libraries possess the 1638 edition, but in an enterprising seminar, one member would get a photograph of the title page, another would write an essay on these college collections, so common in the seventeenth century, a third would discourse on Milton's life at Christ's College, while a fourth would reconstruct the story of Edward King. The 1645 edition of the Poems, with Milton's famous joke beneath the ugly reproduction of his good-looking youthful face, would take a term, while the Paradise poems and the prose writings considered bio-bibliographically would occupy a session. How delightful to deal with Erasmus in the same way! how helpful to the senior students! how stimulating to the teacher! Think of the virtue that would permeate a classroom if the teacher held up a first edition of the "Praise of Folly," and then threw on the screen Holbein's illustrative pictures. The man cannot be separated from his books—both must be taken together to estimate properly his position and his influence. A term could be spent with Sir Thomas More and his books, and the student would take on the way much of the helpful history of the Reformation. The great advantage of combined biological and bibliographical concentration is seen in the awakening of a vital and enduring interest in which alone is the taste for good literature encouraged. The dry formal lecture rarely touches the heart, but in the conversational method of the seminar, or on the quiet evening at home with a select group and a few good editions of a favourite author the enthusiasm of the teacher becomes contagious. How different would be the attitude of mind of the average student towards the "Essay on the Human Understanding" if the splendid story of Locke's life served as an introduction. The man and the book must go together, sometimes indeed, as is the case with Montaigne, the man is the book, and the book the man! Take the Founder and Father of your art, Conrad Gesner,

"felicis memoriae". A study of the bibliography of his writings would carry the student through the whole range of literature and science to the middle of the sixteenth century. Even to handle the "Bibliotheca Universalis" is an inspiration! Wonderful man! with that rare gift of friendship, which mocks at death and the passage of time. To know his books is to love the man, and every true student mourns him to-day as tenderly as did Caius at Cambridge his "mors inopinata"! Some years ago I pasted on the fly-leaf of my copy of the "Bibliotheca" the following account—I know not from whom :—

"Conrad Gesner, who kept open house there for all learned men who came into his neighbourhood. Gesner was not only the best naturalist among the scholars of his day, but of all men of that century he was the pattern man of letters. He was faultless in private life, assiduous in study, diligent in maintaining correspondence and good-will with learned men in all countries, hospitable—though his means were small—to every scholar that came into Zurich. Prompt to serve all, he was an editor of other men's volumes, a writer of prefaces for friends, a suggestor to young writers of books on which they might engage themselves, and a great helper to them in the progress of their work. But still, while finding time for services to other men, he could produce as much out of his own study as though he had no part in the life beyond its walls." [1]

To come to modern times—who will attempt to interpret Shelley without a consideration of his bibliography? A sympathetic lecture on the vicissitudes of "Queen Mab," 1813, would unlock the heart of the young reformer.

The dryness is not in the subject, but in the authors of our bibliographies. Do you wish a model? Read a "Bibliography of Samuel Johnson," by William Prideaux Courtney, which we have recently issued from the Clarendon Press. It is really the literary life of the great lexicographer, and makes a fine supplement to Boswell. And in the department of medicine we too have a model—the Two-letter Bibliography of James Atkinson, a Surgeon of York, who finished

[1] If any reader knows the source of this, please let me know.

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the letters A and B, and then time and money failed; but he has left us the only medical bibliography without a dry page.

And there is another side of the work of the School of the Book. The times we live in offer small encouragement to a belief in the accuracy of any human record. We are back in the days of Lucian's "Liar" when the "delight of romancing themselves is only equalled by the earnest attention with which they receive other people's efforts in the same direction". The tongue has always been suspect, but now who will glean truth from the written record? It is not merely the congenital Cretans who are always with us, but the written statements of a cloud of witnesses are hopelessly at variance in regard to the simplest of facts. To make the best of these frail earthen vessels we must train historians and biographers in the critical study of original documents. This is the other great function of the School —to teach scholars how to study and interpret the rich stores of documents in our public and private collections. Of the training of Archivists you will hear from Mr. Hall. When, as we may hope, library schools are organized, opportunities will be offered to students on the same wide and liberal lines as the "École des Chartes" of Paris, whose students have been well named the modern Benedictines. It is not a matter of training men for library work, but as stated on the original foundation of the "École des Chartes," "Le but de l'institution est de former des érudits". While there would be pupils whose object was to make a profession of the care and study of archives, a majority, let us hope, would be learning how to do spade work in the sources of history and literature. What a revelation are the publications of the Record Office and of the Historical Manuscripts Commission! And so many rich veins remain unworked! What a different view we have of Shakespeare's business and dramatic personality since Prof. Wallace's spade work at the Record Office. Pupils of the "École des Chartes" have made Rabelais live again in the ten volumes of "Le Revue des Études Rabelaisiennes". It is astonishing that so many documents of the first importance should have remained unstudied. In my own country, Canada, a revoul-

tion has been effected in our knowledge of its history by the studies of Dr. Doughty and his colleagues, made possible primarily by the housing and classification of an immense bulk of documents. By enlisting the services of special students the material at Ottawa, at the Record Office, London, and in Paris, has been at least partly sifted. The change of Ezekiel has come over the dry bones of Canadian history. No student of federalism to-day can afford to neglect the practical lessons taught in the gradual development of Canadian constitutional history.

A final word from one student to another. Your business is that of purveyors, universal providers of the mental food of the public ; and not only are you caterers but you will often be called upon to do the work of cooks and doctors. The majority of mankind, as Burke says, providence has doomed to live on trust, a trust less in you, I fear, than in the ephemeral literature of the day. It is not often that one has a vivid, enduring impression of a newspaper article ; but one day in October, 1872, in a Tottenham Court Road tea-shop, I read in " The Times " a statement of Ruskin to the effect that no mind could resist for a year the dulling influence of the daily paper. Doubtless as an exclusive dietary the press and the magazine do lead to mental conditions the counterpart of what we know in the body as the deficiency diseases, scurvy, rickets, etc. The library through you supplies the vitamines which counteract the mental lethargy and anæmia which come from too exclusive use of Northcliffe : and other patent foods. You have a great opportunity—see that you rise to it. For most of you, I fear, the college course is not open, but for all of you there is the open door of self-education. The magic personality of the teacher, the stimulus of comrades, you may miss ; but in compensation you may get closer to the moulding influences of the great minds of the race. We no longer lay our disposition to the charge of a star—a man is his own star. Strive for mental accuracy and independence, cultivate the critical investigating faculty, keeping at the same time your mouth shut. Get your minds into touch with such magnetizers as Plato and Plutarch and Montaigne. In a profession demanding an amazing measure of equanimity, you cannot afford either to fight or to fret,

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Too genuinely interested in your fellow-creatures to be vexed with their vagaries, you will find the highest happiness in life to be an unselfish devotion to their interests. "I am among you as one that serveth," is the motto to-day of the sensible man who wishes to escape from the mental and moral worries of this much-perplexed world, and I give it as a prescription specially suited to the librarian. The outlook for your profession is bright, and you may help to make it brighter here in Wales by encouraging in every way the improvement of the conditions under which you work. One thing I should dearly like to see—an up-to-date *School of the Book* in connexion with the National Library and this College; and if anything I have said here hastens its establishment I will feel in Lucian's words "that I shall have had a share in its building if not in the dedicatory inscription ; my finger-tips will at least have touched their wet mortar".

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