The Library and the Researcher

(Continued from page 106)

librarians suggests that the reasons are overwhelming. The writer entertains few hopes that the situation can be improved. What is fervently to be hoped is that the researcher understand why the librarian has been forced to put certain difficulties in his way. Without this understanding, a growing hostility is inevitable between these two, whose cooperation is a sine qua non of successful research. It is a subject that ought to be aired. Some librarian can do us all a great service by presenting the facts of this matter from his point of view.

Technological Progress

(Continued from page 123)

With the rapid change around us, it is no longer enough to train our library workers of tomorrow for today's jobs. Observed objectively, the best, most flexible library training possible would be a solid grounding in fundamentals, particularly mathematics and sciences. Fundamentally trained, the library school graduate may thus be able to take advantage of the specialized jobs that develop. Inadequate preparation could mean shortage of personnel to man the machines providing the library service, even as it is today. Today, there are professional routines so close to the clerical routines that even the inadequately trained professional may find placement because the supply is smaller than the demand. In automated libraries this might not be possible.

Librarians are feeling the pinch today for top-caliber personnel. This shortage, which will grow, soon will force additional streamlining of procedures, short cuts in indexing, cataloging, and increased salaries. Personnel shortages will force the first automation. And before automation becomes a significant part of library procedures and routines, librarians and library schools must face up to the problems of preparing within their own ranks sufficient technically trained people able to perpetuate the advances made and to add others. It is very necessary that library schools be well aware of developments in the field of automation—where they can be applied, and where they may be improved. Most librarians, however, are unaware of the magnitude and complexity of the problem of switching from present-day libraries even to partially automated libraries. The significance of scientific advances, particularly in the field of electronics, requires re-emphasizing and re-examination of the basic principles of librarianship from which the every day struggle for space, personnel, and money has distracted us.

If librarians do not learn to extend their techniques and develop the new techniques required, other agencies, or new professions, will be created to do the job. If librarians restrict their activities to fit within the present framework and structure of librarianship, they will fail in their obligations to society.
Books Received


The Harvard University Archives, No. 4. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Library, 1957. 10p. (Apply)


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