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During recent years American library schools have given increased attention to the need for providing librarians-in-service with opportunities for taking stock critically, and at regular intervals, of recent changes in methods and professional thinking, and for renewal of acquaintance with basic principles of librarianship. Acceptance of responsibility for meeting this need has required much extension of the traditional academic calendar in the form of institutes, workshops, and noncredit courses. The present report summarizes the work of a Summer Institute for Librarians-in-Service conducted by the University of Illinois Library School and sponsored by the Division of University Extension in June 1952. It presents a director's-eye-view of the Institute and is divided into four main parts: (a) The Program and Its Purposes, (b) Some Details of Planning and Administration, (c) An Estimation of Results, and (d) A Final Summary.

The Program and Its Purposes

The main purpose of the 1952 Institute was to provide an organized program which would help public and school librarians in Illinois stay abreast of current movements in fields of special interest, and afford direct opportunity to see and discuss with specialists various new methods, materials, and forms of equipment. In keeping with the general theme of new library trends, Institute talks and discussions in the mornings and afternoons were concentrated upon happenings in the following nine areas:

- New materials and their uses
- Work with groups
- Mechanical and electronic aids to librarianship
- Cataloging and classification problems
- Public and school library cooperation and consolidation
- Audio-visual services in libraries
- Communications behavior, studies of reading, and related subjects
- Small library design and renovation
- Evaluation of library services

Evening meetings featured presentation of new educational motion pictures and other library materials, informal discussion, and recreation. The "combined book exhibit," loaned by A. C. McClurg and Co., was on display for several days.
during the week and received heavy browsing. Other resources included the full staff and equipment of the Demonstration Laboratory (audio-visual service, training, and research unit of the Library School) and a complete professional library. Large stocks of "give-away" material pertinent to the work of the Institute were distributed. These had been prepared in advance by the Library School, or were made available through the courtesy of various private and public agencies.

Of special benefit to the Institute was its location. For six days, June 8-13, the complete facilities of Robert Allerton Park in Monticello, Illinois, were placed at the disposal of the sixty to seventy-five librarians in daily attendance. Robert Allerton Park was given to the University of Illinois in 1946 to be used as an educational conference and research center. Its setting (modeled after the English manor), gardens, statuary, and beauty are unique in the Midwest. All meetings were held and all meals were served at Allerton House, and during their limited free time guests enjoyed walking through elaborate formal gardens and along the many miles of paths which lead away from carefully kept grounds to all parts of the magnificent country estate. The Institute was also favored by clear although exceptionally hot weather during the entire week.

The Institute program began with a coffee hour at the Sunday afternoon registration period on June 8. This was followed by a special welcoming dinner, and the first general meeting was held Sunday evening. The program closed with luncheon, Friday noon, June 13. A thirty-two page Materials Kit was distributed to each participant, along with other useful lists and announcements at the time of registration. The Kit, containing outlines of the talks to be heard, reading lists, and a final revised copy of the program, was arranged to follow the daily schedule of meetings, and was intended to serve as a guide to the week's activities. Coffee hours were spaced through the days to provide a "break" at the end of each general session. A representative of the faculty Committee on Program and Arrangements was present at all meetings to insure satisfactory introduction of speakers, ample opportunity for questioning and discussion, and arrangement of any follow-up deemed necessary or desirable by the group. With reference to the last, the wishes expressed for more information about readability formulas, the Public Library Inquiry, the Illinois Circulation Index, and sociometric analysis led to arrangement of four special meetings, held at hours otherwise unassigned for those concerned. All were well attended.

The following paragraphs summarize briefly, and without critical comment, the approaches taken during each of the main sessions.

LESTER ASHEIM addressed the first general meeting. Reviewing "Recent Studies in Reading," he elected not to discuss investigations concerning the physiology, hygiene, or psychology of reading, but gave primary attention to sociological studies—i.e., who reads what, where he gets it, and how it affects him. Asheim also presented a critical review of publications listed in a short bibliography of the subject which he had prepared previously and which was included in the Materials Kit. An excellent recent article by the speaker, which refers to material comparable to that offered at the Institute, but which confines the argument to "Research on the Reading of Adults," appears in the April
1953 issue of Library Trends (1). In summary of the topics covered by Asheim's talk at the Institute, reference was made to general patterns of reading in the past and present, the impact of television and other media, newspaper and magazine reading habits, the application of readability formulas, content analysis, and possibilities for future research.

In outlining "A Developmental Approach to Materials," MARIE M. HOSTETTER stressed the need for understanding the "whole" child and accumulating detailed knowledge of his background, interests, and present environment before embarking upon any program of reading guidance. In answering some "basic questions" about use of the developmental approach for selection of materials and in advisory work, Miss Hostetter cited important research in the fields of child and adolescent psychology, and encouraged librarians to become more familiar with the valuable information and tools derived from contemporary studies of group behavior and sociometric analysis, and to make more direct application of them.

GRACE GILMAN, talking on "New Books for Adults," indicated the main trends to be observed from analysis of current publishing output, and devoted a considerable portion of her time to discussion of the values to be derived from reading and of library responsibility for fostering discovery of these. Miss Gilman illumined her remarks with selected readings, personal reminiscences, and what amounted to a "very special" demonstration of the book talk.

Publishing trends in children's books, and the adequacy of standard tools available for selection, were discussed by ALICE N. FEDDER. Branching out from her general topic of "New Books for Children," the speaker noted an unusual increase in biographical writing, the overwhelming number of sports stories published in recent years, a dearth of good pictorial books, and the increasing number of new publisher's series currently on the market. Referring critically to selection aids, Miss Fedder also reviewed at some length, and unfavourably, the latest edition of Gateways to Readable Books (2).

ARTHUR N. DAVIS weighed the advantages of "Commercial Lending Library Service to Public Libraries." Speaking frankly, and from the standpoint of a commercial lending enterprise, he presented a general review of existing services and procedures employed in particular libraries and offered a personal estimation of results. Challenged by questions from the audience, during subsequent discussion, for his apparent lack of concern about the improvement of reader taste and concerning the need for establishing and preserving an active program of selection in individual libraries, Davis defended his position on the grounds of increased circulation and lower costs to libraries. Members of the audience were divided in their opinions concerning the moral integrity of this position, and argument was heated. The main point finally at issue was the degree to which the public librarian serving a small community could or should accept "educational" responsibilities.

"Problems and Techniques of Working with Groups" was highlighted briefly in a lecture and demonstration given by FRED P. BARNES. Barnes
explained some basic principles of group organization and operation, and, working with his entire audience, illustrated one technique of problem-solving called "role-playing." His lecture and demonstration provoked much interest, discussion, and favorable response.

Limiting her field to American history, biography, travel, language and literature, art, folklore, and folksong, ROSE B. PHELPS explored "The American Heritage in Reference Books." After comparing current sources and those available a generation ago, Miss Phelps proposed several reasons for the "growth in sources on all things American," and explained the positive roles which can be played by the reference librarian as an interpreter of American culture.

ERNEST J. REECE offered practical advice to librarians, weighing "New Trends and Problems in Small Library Design and Renovation." Having opened the meeting by showing a number of lantern slides depicting floor plans and views of relatively new library buildings and quarters, Reece commented upon the major styles of library architecture currently in vogue. He also suggested a number of specific factors which, in the light of the purposes and the resources available, should be considered before building or renovating a library, e.g., geographic location, costs, color, lighting, and functional furniture. Questions from the floor prompted extended discussion of particular situations and detailed points.

A symposium on "Integration of Audio-Visual Work in Library Service" was conducted under the chairmanship of H. E. SALLEY. Two main objectives of the symposium were (a) to indicate the present extent of library interest and acceptance of responsibilities for audio-visual work, and (b) to identify the key problems which must be taken into account by librarians planning to introduce A-V materials and services. Following general statements by Salley on A-V experiences in Louisville (representing the public library point of view) and by DONALD W. SMITH on A-V service to schools (representing public school and university A-V specialists), the meeting was divided into two discussion groups. The first, intended for public librarians, was led by DE LAFAYETTE REID. LEWIS V. PETERSON led a second, composed largely of school librarians. Each section attempted to develop an inventory of specific problems peculiar to its own field, and to consider these in relation to established principles and the experiences of others. Marked differences in opinion and professional orientation caused both groups difficulty in reaching significant conclusions.

Personally very enthusiastic about his subject, STEWART W. SMITH sought to arouse general interest in using "New Mechanical and Electronic Aids in Library Service." Contending that modern library practice demands mechanization in order to provide adequate service, Smith cited many examples of use by libraries of punched cards; audio, mechanical, and photographic charging machines; teletype; and other labor-saving and/or service-improving devices. Pointing out critically the advantages and limitations of each of the various measures and systems discussed or demonstrated, Smith urged his
listeners to become more gadget-conscious, to take note of business practices, and to remove "antiques" and "cobwebs" from their libraries.

Based upon personal research completed during 1950-51, VIOLA L. JAMES presented a paper entitled, "New Developments in Community Unit Districts." It was Miss James's purpose to indicate the patterns of library service which may be found after consolidation of rural schools into community unit districts, and to appraise their importance as models. A careful and expanded statement of the findings Miss James presented to the Institute may be found in the report by her published as Number 27 of Occasional Papers (3).

Leading a spirited discussion on "Possibilities for Cooperation Between Public and School Libraries," which followed presentation of the James report, MILDRED L. NICKEL focused attention upon problems faced in common by public and school librarians, resources which might be shared but usually are not so treated, the need for a "united front," and ways of acquiring mutual support for the achievement of common goals. Miss Nickel's remarks etched in sharp relief the stupidity of jealousies and suspicions so often held by public and school librarians with respect to each other, and urged strongly that these groups get together and do together the job for which they share responsibility. Exchange of visits, mutual planning, sharing of resources, and joint professional conferences were specific means proposed by Miss Nickel.

"Special Problems of Cataloging and Classification" was discussed by THELMA EATON in a speech which concerned itself primarily with some of the issues involved in adapting standard procedures of cataloging and classification to the needs of particular libraries, with special emphasis on small school or public libraries. After her remarks Miss Eaton answered numerous questions, the majority of which were occasioned by differences of opinion regarding the need for simplified cataloging and the proper extent to which a librarian should use it.

"Techniques of Evaluating Library Service" was reviewed critically by ALICE LOHER. Taking into account basic library objectives, national and regional standards, and the established functions of school and public library service, Miss Lohrer summarized the rationale, strengths, and weaknesses of procedures customarily followed in evaluating libraries, and suggested some practical steps and criteria for the individual librarian to keep in mind.

Late film releases treating a variety of subjects and representing several types of educational motion pictures of interest to public libraries and schools were introduced, shown, and discussed briefly during evening programs held at the Institute beginning Monday and through Thursday. The examples presented are listed below:

Teaching Films:

Andrew Carnegie, EBF, 1951. 19 min. sd, b&w, $85.
The Fox and the Rooster, EBF, 1951. 10 min. sd, b&w, $50.
Introduction to Foreign Trade, Coronet, 1951. 10 min. sd, b&w, $50.
Documentary Films:

Let's Paint with Water Color, Coronet, 1951. 10 min. sd, b&w, $50, color $100.
Longhouse People, EBF, 1952. 22 min. sd, color. Produced by the National Film Board of Canada.
The Sun's Family, Young America, 1950. 11 min. sd, b&w, $45.

Films on Library Service:

Keys to the Library, Van Allyn Inst., 1951. 14 min. sd, b&w, $65. color $120.
Library Organization, Coronet, 1951. 10 min. sd, b&w, $50. color $100.
Library Story, EBF, 1951. 20 min. sd, color.
Libraries Without Bars, U.S. Army, 1950. 30 min. sd, b&w.

Films for Special Programs (two films were shown as outstanding examples of the use of the motion picture technique to present special material):

Paris 1900, Brandon Films, 1950. 76 min. sd, b&w.
The Titan, Classic Pictures, 1950. 67 min. sd, b&w.

The last session of the Institute was given over to summarizing its work and to informal evaluation. This task was shared by HAROLD LANCOUR and C. WALTER STONE, who had been responsible for supervising the Institute-in-progress. Lancour's remarks were addressed primarily to the plan and method of Institute meetings, and to the group feelings and responses and general effects. Stone highlighted the content of the programs and the contributions to thinking about ways in which libraries might extend their services and become more fully dedicated to the selection and realization of appropriate educational ends.

Some Details of Planning and Administration

From the start of its planning in November 1951 the Library School faculty Committee on Program and Arrangements faced difficult decisions. Should the Institute favor theory or practice? Should its approach be broad or narrow, inspirational or operational? Should attendance be large or small; or restricted by type of library served, level of responsibility, subject interest, or some combination of these? And so on. In all cases the solutions represented a compromise with the ideal, based upon the most reliable information available concerning explicit needs and upon a fair amount of guesswork. The next few paragraphs may serve to identify a few prime elements considered in first deciding to hold an institute and then in planning the general character of the program.
Education for librarianship does not end in the classroom. Often it does not even begin there. In the United States, one hopes simply that a library school will provide an intensive program of sound professional orientation and familiarization with basic principles and techniques, and some stimulus toward improvement of practice in the field. Responsibility for achieving and maintaining real professional competence, however, rests with the individual. In the environment of the university community or large city, continuing self-improvement is encouraged and made easy. In other situations the individual often is very much on his own. Work experience, regular attendance at conferences and regional meetings, clinics, workshops, on-the-job training, short courses, and the reading of professional journals shape the backbone of informal efforts by conscientious librarians. An occasional summer session in library school, a class by correspondence or in university extension, limited travel, and infrequent participation on short-term research projects or demonstrations round out the educational experience of most librarians after receiving professional degrees. The special handicaps faced by many thousands of individuals holding full-time professional positions in American libraries without having attended library school are well known. The sporadic and uneven quality of such educational experiences as those listed above, a desperate national shortage of trained personnel, and the continuing costly failure of libraries generally to provide adequate service in the present day, have influenced professional leaders to call for a much better general education and to give over more and more time to subsequent in-service training. Many of the largest libraries do some of this work themselves. Smaller institutions, however, depend upon state agencies, library associations, and universities.

In this situation, library schools have come to accept increased responsibility for encouraging practicing librarians to maintain professional interest and standards of performance. By offering a larger number of extension courses, institutes, workshops, problem conferences, and demonstrations, leading schools have sought to meet some of the needs for postgraduate and nongraduate professional study. Because of its position, the University of Illinois Library School expects to focus its major efforts in this direction upon Illinois and neighboring regions. Further, it believes that its best and most logical contribution can be made on the professional level, and should deal with librarianship in the round, as distinguished from training in specific skills and the like. In Illinois, the latter is already provided to some extent in regional meetings held annually by the State Library and at the conferences of professional associations. Within the always too stringent limitations of staff, time, and budget it is the evolving policy at Illinois to conduct a program of summer institutes having sufficient variation of theme from year to year and yet sufficient regularity of presentation of basic material, so that the practicing librarian can, by periodic attendance, remain comfortably abreast of significant changes in professional thinking and methodology. This was the framework within which the 1952 Institute was planned. Hence the emphasis was at all times upon theory rather than technique, policy rather than specific programs of action, questioning rather than passive acceptance and adoption of new ideas, and important decisions and the grounds for making them as distinguished from methods of carrying them out. Obviously the Institute program referred to both types of concern, but major weight was given the first.

The fundamentals of conference planning and administration have been the subject of many authoritative books, pamphlets, and articles. These will not
be discussed here. In the present case there were, however, some details perhaps unique in the planning and conduct of library institutes, and which deserve mention. Of first importance was the fact that the entire faculty of the Library School shared initial responsibility for planning the 1952 Institute, and all participated in its presentation in one way or another. The majority worked without extra pay or received only token fees. Many attended the meetings of the Institute throughout the week, bearing extra expense of meals and overnight accommodations personally in order to be of assistance by helping others to be comfortable, offering supplementary resources, and leading impromptu discussions. This united effort of the faculty, buttressed by the full cooperation of the other members of the Institute staff, was a key factor in maintaining interest and harmony.

Another factor was the unusual flexibility of program arrangements. This pattern was established even during planning stages. Once the general outlines of the program had been set and approved, letters were sent to early registrants and others asking for suggestions of specific problems and questions in each area of interest, which might be taken into account by speakers and discussion leaders. The replies received were forwarded to each speaker and became the basis of some of the most important contributions. During the week of the Institute itself strict adherence to schedules was maintained, but the limits of the schedule were never allowed to interfere with an extra meeting needed to supply background information when a need was discovered, nor with the personal satisfaction of participants and speakers, nor with opportunities to satisfy any reasonable request. Nightly sessions, held by the Committee on Program and Arrangements, reviewed the activities of each day, considered plans for the next, and made whatever adjustments seemed desirable.

Every opportunity was taken during the Institute to make people feel welcome, comfortable, and pleased. Measures helpful in this were summaries before and after each meeting, simultaneous outlining of key points on a chalkboard during talks, coffee hours following each general session, informal dress, group photographs, extra transportation for side trips, rearrangement of furniture after each session to allow for the most appropriate and comfortable working conditions, a concerted effort on the part of the staff to sit with different groups at each meal, flowers for the ladies at dinner on the last evening, and overnight duplication of lists and other materials upon request. Two members of the staff were on duty throughout the day to assist the speakers, demonstrate equipment, supervise the Institute library and displays, talk with visitors, introduce strangers, and insure that all conference machinery was working properly.

The Division of University Extension subsidized the Institute heavily in an effort to keep charges to the individual at a minimum. The registration fee was set at $5.00 in order not to bar librarians representing libraries with the lowest budgets. The cost to each person staying at Allerton House was $8.00 per day, including excellent meals. While every attempt was made to keep expenses down, however, no important item was sacrificed. Following is an itemized estimate of costs, excluding those charged to normal university overhead:
Two additional details of planning may hold some interest. First, from the time of initial consideration of possibilities to final evaluation, careful and continuing attention was given to anticipating problems and accidents, making changes, keeping all participants informed, and at the same time preserving basic plans. Second, recognizing the isolated and discontinuous nature of most institute programs, the narrow framework of their conception, and the customary failure to draw upon the experience and thinking of the intended audience, the 1952 Institute was considered in part an experiment, which might or might not set a pattern for subsequent meetings and indicate important considerations for future planning. During the Institute and since, using both formal and informal techniques, continuing efforts have been made to evaluate and measure the results and to determine the most significant content and most effective methods of presentation. A special advisory committee, representing public, school, university, and special library service, is now working with a committee of the Library School faculty in planning a series of summer institute programs to be offered during the next five years. As one result of the evaluation process, the next four institutes will be devoted to broad general areas, including human relations, information services, the library in the community, and inter-library relations. These will be open to all interested librarians and will continue for a minimum period of three days, preferably longer. Main emphases will be upon basic thinking as distinguished from improvement of skills. A fifth meeting summarizing new library trends is projected for 1958.

An Estimation of Results

Before undertaking to appraise the Institute, it is essential to distinguish between the process of evaluation on the one hand, that is, the making of qualitative judgments concerning such matters as the worth of the program, the personal feelings of attendants, and the desirability of the outcomes, and on the other hand, measurement, which refers to uses of quantitative data for ascertaining effects and determining upon changes. When and wherever possible measurements should be used in support of judgments about strength, weakness, and achievement, but they are never substitutes. This section of the report is concerned primarily with evaluation.

How can one estimate the success of a summer institute held for librarians? Lacking formal testing procedures, one cannot reliably report increments in knowledge or shifts in attitude. Although some believe there is a significant correlation between attendance at such meetings and improve-
ment of job status, general raising of standards and levels of performance, and broadening of interests (which might be evidenced by earlier payment of dues to professional associations, acceptance of more committee responsibilities, new subscriptions to professional journals, etc.), the testing of such hypotheses requires use of elaborate survey techniques. Such techniques were not employed here, nor would their high cost in time and money be justified simply for evaluation of this Institute. The main questions with which the present section is concerned are these:

What did the Institute mean --

a. To those who came and registered as participants?
b. To the staff which planned and presented it?
c. To the profession?

Responding to the last of these questions first, the 1952 Institute afforded Illinois public and school librarians an opportunity for continuing their education for librarianship on a professional level. It attempted to demonstrate one specific way in which such experiences may be provided. It brought together two groups of librarians who normally do not see much of each other and yet who share responsibility for accomplishing many of the same ends. As postinstitute evaluation sheets and interviews illustrated very clearly, the Institute generated good will in behalf of the University of Illinois and the Library School, and toward the many professional interests, agencies, associations, and institutions represented by those attending. Finally, it stimulated growth of mutual respect, understanding, friendship, and professional solidarity among librarians who will have many future opportunities to work together.

For the staff, and especially to members of the Library School faculty, the Institute brought a welcome opportunity to keep in close touch with thinking and practice in the field. Not least in importance were benefits derived from working closely together as a team. For some members of the faculty, the Institute afforded a first chance to observe colleagues working in their own divisions of specialization.

For the fifty or more registrants, who came from some thirty-two Illinois communities located in all parts of the state, the Institute meant at least some information, much inspiration, a reaclinic with educational processes, and fifty new friends. Collecting relevant words of the registrants themselves from a formal record kept of postinstitute evaluations, the week at Allerton Park was specially appreciated for its insistence on informality, attention to the needs and interests of each individual, a broadly conceived and balanced program, challenges to change old ways for new and better ones, and individual guidance received during personal conferences with speakers, faculty members, and other delegates. Suggestions for future Institutes clustered around problems of finance, human relations and personnel administration, publicity and public relations, research methods, extension of educational services to the community, and studies of reading and other types of communications behavior. Formal rating of the Institute in meeting individual needs was uniformly "good" to "very good."

While it is not appropriate in this report to acknowledge individually
the hard work and very generous assistance given by those who participated in planning and conducting the Institute, their efforts were very much appreciated, and the Library School acknowledges a considerable debt to all. A special word of thanks goes to those who, with some personal inconvenience, generously permitted last-minute changes in the schedule and added to previously accepted responsibilities without murmur. It may be in order to list the names of those most directly responsible for the meeting. They are:

a. Representing the Division of University Extension--
   Byron E. Fulk, Conference Supervisor

b. Representing the Library School as members of its Committee on Program and Arrangements--
   Herbert Goldhor, Chairman of the Committee until December 1951; Associate Professor of Library Science until his resignation in January 1952; Librarian, Evansville Public Library, Evansville, Indiana
   Harold Lancour, Associate Director of the Library School and Professor of Library Science
   Alice Lohrer, Assistant Professor of Library Science
   C. Walter Stone, Chairman of the Committee after December 1951 and Director of the Summer Institute for the Library School; Assistant Professor of Library Science

c. Representing the Library School as special assistants on the Institute staff--
   Juliette Bryson, Research Assistant
   Ronald C. Tollafield, Research Assistant

Three major professional issues were confronted directly in the Institute program, namely, the choices between (a) educational goals for libraries, as contrasted with objectives favoring recreation and services already in demand; (b) a school as compared with a public library approach in serving children and young people; and (c) stress upon theory and general principles, as against practice, in education for librarianship. Firm stands were taken on each, and recommendations were given. It was agreed that educational aims are primary for libraries, that school and public librarians cannot work efficiently without working together, and that the main concern of the education conducted in and by library schools should be with theory and principles.

A Final Summary

The following remarks were delivered informally by the author at the close of the 1952 Institute. They represent a personal point of view. At least for those who attended, they may recall some events of the week of June 8-13 more easily than a revised statement written in the third person and in past tense.

What have we gotten out of our meetings here at Allerton Park? An attitude? Information? Inspiration? Certainly plenty of perspiration, and on occasion a sore back. And yet we've sat through. We've looked and we've listened and talked. And I seem to sense now that we feel we have gotten somewhere. There are new things that we are going to try when we get home. Some old things will be done better.
Perhaps most important—we'll be more critical of what we're doing. We'll be asking again and again: - Is this worthwhile? Are these statistics worth keeping? Do we need borrower's registration cards? Can we study our own community a little more closely? Should we attend a school board meeting representing the public library? As a school librarian can I work more closely with the school psychologist? Can we accept responsibility for work with a remedial program? Or, in a different vein, can we do a more effective job of library service by studying the people and the groups involved and by learning the skills and techniques which may enable us to accept and fulfill the responsibilities of democratic leadership? And so on—

My job now is to review our Institute very briefly from the viewpoint of one who is most concerned with ways in which the library may extend its services and realize its fuller educational responsibilities. What have we learned? Where do we go from here?

It seems to me that Mr. Asheim's talk accomplished at least two things. One, he helped us to realize some of the matters that we can and cannot expect to prove from our studies of reading behavior. Furthermore, he certainly led us to question an old axiom in the library—that which assumes progress "from comic to classic" in easy stages. Whether or not we agree with Mr. Asheim's specific conclusion, we must have been impressed with his integrity and sincerity. Naturally, we tend to resist the implications because in the past so much of our service has been based on the axiom quoted. But we must have been led to wonder—inside, is this right? If so, what does it mean? What do we do now?

Miss Hostetter showed us something about ourselves. If we are really dedicated to the notion that we consciously are to study and foster personality development through guided use of library materials, then we have a great deal to learn. And if we aren't doing that, what are we about anyway?

Skipping for the moment over discussions of new books (with an aside to mention that we certainly saw demonstrated by Miss Gilman the art of making reading real and important to people), it is my opinion that Mr. Davis gave us much more than we may have realized. On the surface his was a discussion of a commercial service and of its procedures and financial arrangements. But back of all this is another and more basic set of problems or questions, viz., should the library support any activity which is conceived with a lack of moral responsibility? And when the librarian, through whatever combination of circumstances, finds it necessary to yield entirely to demand in any area and delegate her book selection to the dictates of popularity, is she not at that point giving up her most professional function?

On Tuesday morning something actually happened to us. In studying about the group process we became a group, and conscious of collective purposes and sensibilities in a much more intimate way than usual. And we started to work as a team. Perhaps most important,
we may have discovered that if we are to do our job well, we must turn more and more effort and attention toward the analysis of human relations. Our library service is only as significant as the people who use it. The relationships, the tensions, the allegiances, the way groups form and operate—these are not mysterious things. They can be learned and understood. And when we do take the trouble to acquire such knowledge, and the pertinent skills, then it seems to me our library service will be of a new order.

Materials, how they are employed, the people who use them, the places in which they are gathered and from which they are distributed—all are significant to librarians. Yet the important things about Mr. Reece's talk were not only the specific elements he mentioned as contributing to improvement of a library building, such as the use of color, elimination of unnecessary walls, suiting the facade to the tone of the community, effective lighting, and functional furniture. Most important to my mind was the notion that, in planning all of these, we now start by assuming the need to assure consumers of maximum efficiency and comfort, and to know what contributes to such results. We've come a long way from the warehouse and the delivery-room concepts of libraries.

Returning for a moment to materials, and thinking in particular of our audio-visual discussions, we learned a number of specific facts. We learned about new devices and new ways of handling and using our stock. But more fundamental in our acceptance of discussions on audio-visual materials was, I believe, this idea. Although we are librarians, we are something more, because our obligation has extended to ideas and information in whatever form they may come. Each of the media of communication possesses advantages and limitations. Each of them tends to have a rather well-defined subject content. They cannot be used intelligently without reference to each other. Our responsibility calls now for a cross-media approach, by subject or problem, to ideas wherever they may be found. This is the real justification for A-V materials in the library. And I think it is irrefutable.

Mr. Stewart Smith's talk said to all of us: Stop wasting your time. Get on about your real professional business. Wherever possible utilize the products of our mechanized age. The problems we face are big—they are 1952 problems. Let's not use "horse and buggy libraries" to work on them.

I think all of us were stimulated and encouraged by the spirit of cooperative endeavor which grew out of the discussions conducted by Miss James and Miss Nickel. Did you catch what was being said? Library service is an inclusive term. In any one area it needs to be planned inclusively. Insofar as possible, it needs to be developed inclusively, that is, cooperatively, and as an entity and without regard to type of community or institution. We want and should retain much of our local autonomy. On the other hand, every effort we can make in the direction of total planning and planning together is a forward step. The need is great enough. Certainly that has been documented sufficiently, as have the successes of cooperative endeavors....
It also is my hope that this Institute has brought information, some inspiration, and especially new friends. As almost inevitably must be the case, our specific discussions have led to more general questions and conclusions. I feel satisfied now that we have done the larger job. It was easy to identify new tendencies. It is more difficult, but much more important for us, to evaluate these trends, and see them in a perspective of total library service. This, of course, leads us to examine objectives. And when we do that, we find too often that they are weak and do not really guide us. When we are asked questions about excessive idealism, can't we answer they way: Who is the dreamer? He who sits in his library supplying what little demand makes itself felt, and who comforts himself by saying, "I am doing good." Or he who looks at the situation realistically, decides he will try to accomplish some specific change, and counts his success or failure in terms of results.

Unless I am very much mistaken we as a group, in our own ways, within the limits of our own communities and libraries, are going to try many new things during the coming year. Some of our experiments will succeed. Some will fail. Some efforts to serve will be rebuffed just when we need encouragement most. But I think we'll try again a new way. Why? Because maybe we are more certain that we know what needs to be done.

FOOTNOTES


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