Clark.
The Public Library As A Social Factor In The United States.
THE PUBLIC LIBRARY AS A SOCIAL FACTOR
IN THE UNITED STATES

BY

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A. B. Northwestern University, 1909
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THESIS
Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the
Degree of
MASTER OF ARTS
IN SOCIOLOGY
IN
THE GRADUATE SCHOOL
OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS
1916.
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS
THE GRADUATE SCHOOL

May 29, 1916


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In Charge of Thesis

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Recommendation concurred in:*

Committee on Final Examination*

*Required for doctor's degree but not for master's.
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THE PUBLIC LIBRARY AS A SOCIAL FACTOR
IN THE UNITED STATES

I. HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION

1. Early history.

It is the purpose of this study to determine the social importance of the American public library as it is today, and to indicate what appear to be its probable social activities in the near future. In order to understand the present situation, it is necessary to review briefly the historical development of this important institution. The modern public library did not come full-fledged into being, but is the result of a gradual and natural evolution and owes its rise and growth to the fact that it is based on thoroughly American principles. Americans have always been bookish people. The first colonists brought with them to this country, both the love of books and the spirit of democracy which were necessary to the development of the modern library. But though these two principles were strong in the hearts of Americans from the beginning, it was more than two centuries before the ideas were so connected that the free library resulted.

Mr. Joseph L. Harrison tells us that from the exclusive private library of colonial days, to the free public library of today, there were four intervening steps: the scholastic, the cooperative, the school-district, and the privately endowed library.

1. Hereafter the terms "library", "public library" and "free public library" will be considered synonymous unless otherwise indicated.

The first library in America designed for the use of a constituency larger than the family, was that of Harvard University which was established in 1638. This was the beginning of the scholastic period. During this time libraries were used only by the exclusive few, the scholars, and no books were loaned. Nevertheless this was a step in advance of the purely private library.

In the year 1731 began a new era with the establishment of the Philadelphia Library Company, by Benjamin Franklin. Thus was created and maintained the first general library in America designed for the use of the manual laborer and the mechanic, rather than for the exclusive use of the scholar. Benjamin Franklin's idea proved to be a popular one and by 1773 there were some twenty of these so-called proprietary or joint-stock library companies. These partook of the public library idea insofar as membership was open to anyone, but the books were loaned only to members. Other co-operative libraries were established by theological, medical and scientific societies. These too were for the use of members exclusively. Another form of the co-operative library was seen in the young men's mercantile libraries, the oldest of which were established in New York and Boston in 1820. These differed from any libraries previously established, in that they were not confined to the one function of furnishing books to readers, but were designed also as a means of supplying further opportunities for education to those whose school days were over, thus night-schools, lectures and instruction in various trades were carried on in connection with them. Though limited in their constituency, these co-operative libraries were a distinct step toward the broad free institution of today.
In 1826 with the beginning of the movement toward school-district libraries in New York was born the idea of publicly supported libraries. These are not to be confused with school libraries. The school-district was chosen as a unit, and the school house furnished a place to keep the books which however, were mostly for the use of adults. These were authorized by law in New York in 1835 and subsequently twenty other states passed similar laws. Altho the district-school libraries did not prove to be a practical success, they were of immeasurable value in spreading abroad the idea of libraries as a part of the educational system, to be justly supported by public taxation.

The fifth period in the evolution of libraries in the United States, according to Mr. Harrison, was marked by the private endowment of libraries. Such were the Astor, Lenox and Cooper Institute of New York, and Pratt of Baltimore. These were open to the use of the public under whatever conditions their founders desired to make and have been of great value in making the use of books free to all, but the public library maintained, or created and maintained, by the community in which it is placed was yet another step in advance.

The really free public libraries, legally supported by taxation, belong to the latter half of the nineteenth century. Massachusetts passed the first law authorizing the establishment and maintenance of public libraries by municipalities in 1846, when it empowered the city of Boston to raise $5,000 yearly for the support of a public library. Under this act the Boston Public Library was established in 1854, and the act was extended to all
towns in the state in 1851. Similar laws were enacted by New Hampshire in 1849, by Maine in 1854, by Vermont in 1865, by Ohio in 1867; and now practically every state in the Union has authorized the establishment of public libraries by municipalities.

This in brief is the history of the evolution of the public library through what has been called the Dark Ages (to 1850) and the Middle Ages (1850-1876) of the library movement, but the Modern period did not begin until 1876. In that year there was a conference of librarians at Philadelphia, a permanent organization was formed, the Library Journal was established, and a government report on libraries was published. These four events mark the beginning of really active progress along the lines of the "modern library idea."

2. The modern library idea.

The essence of the "modern library idea" is that the library should be an active, democratic institution. Founded with an ideal of service, it should multiply its relations with the people. Whereas the old libraries collected books, preserved them with care, and grudgingly allowed them to be used, the modern library considers it a part of its duty not only to collect books and make them easily available, but to make known the fact that it has them, or as Mr. Bostwick expresses it: "The modern library believes that it should find a reader for every book on its shelves and provide a book for every reader in its community, and that it should in all cases bring book and reader together." ¹ With this

ideal in view the library has extended its activities until it has come to be an institution of great and growing social importance. In the following pages an attempt is made to indicate this importance by showing to what extent and by what methods the library serves society.

3. The modern period.

During the forty years since the beginning of this modern movement (1876-1916) there has been a phenomenal growth in libraries both in numbers and in function. An idea of the former is obtained by a comparison of the statistics presented by the reports on public libraries published at intervals by the United States Bureau of Education. The first of these which was at all comprehensive gave statistics for 1875 and later reports appeared for 1884, 1891, 1895, 1900, 1903, 1908 and 1913.

It is a somewhat significant fact that the earlier reports included the names of all libraries comprising 300 volumes, while in the 1891 report libraries containing less than a thousand volumes are not mentioned, and by 1908 the increase in the number of libraries was so great that 5000 volumes was made the unit of consideration. This phenomenal growth of libraries in the United States is shown by a comparison of the figures for 1875 with those of 1913.

In 1875 if we include school libraries, there were 3,648 con-

1. Summarised statistics for the smaller libraries are given.
2. Growth of libraries since 1875, compiled from bulletins of the United States Bureau of Education.

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*Estimated
taining over 300 volumes while in 1913, 16,000 such libraries were reported. The statistics of libraries of over 1000 volumes are somewhat more accurate than are those for the smaller libraries. These show that in 1875 there were 2,039; ten years later, 2,988; ten years after that 4,026, while in 1908 there were approximately 8000, and in 1913, 8302, or an increase of 307 per cent from 1875 to 1913. Libraries containing over 5,000 volumes increased from 1174 in 1891 to 2,849 in 1913, an increase of 142 per cent.

Analyzing the 1913 statistics a little more closely in order to show the extent at present it appears that of the 8,302 libraries containing over 1000 volumes each, 2,849 have 5,000 volumes or over. Of this number 1844 are classified as public and society libraries of which 1,446 reported as entirely free to the public, while 111 were free for reference. The 1844 libraries had 1,652 branches and reported an aggregate of 50,031,382 volumes. During the year 1913, 3,063,870 volumes were added to 1,702 of these libraries, and 1,282 reported 7,209,690 borrowers' cards in force. 97,718,299 volumes were issued for use outside the library, as reported by 1,387 librarians. Only 503 libraries reported the number of visitors to the reading rooms, but these had a total of 19,986,390.

The total income of 1,685 libraries was $16,304,128 of which 2,932,022 was expended for books for the year (1,597 libraries reporting) and $7,270,135 for salaries (1,568 libraries reporting).

These figures make an imposing array, but without further analysis they are misleading for they do not indicate the distribution of library facilities. It appears from some rather startling 1. Only 13,686 of these sent in reports.
statistics presented by Mr. Henry E. Legler that these libraries are concentrated to an amazing degree in the large centers of population. There are 1,222 incorporated places of 5,000 or more inhabitants in the United States and concerning these Mr. Legler makes the statement: "The population of these 1,222 places is 38,758,584, considerably less than half that of the entire United States. Their book possessions on the other hand, are nine times as great as those in the rest of the country; the circulation of the books nearly 12 times in volume. Closer analysis of these figures enforces still more strongly the actual concentration of the available book supply. The hundred largest cities of the United States, varying in size from a minimum of 53,684 to a maximum of 4,766,883 possess in the aggregate more books than all the rest of the country together, and represent the bulk of the trained professional service rendered... Forty per cent of the books circulated are issued to the dwellers in these one hundred cities, and in 15 of them the stupendous total of 30,000,234 issues for home reading was recorded last year (1912)"1

But carrying the comparison still further we find that comparatively few people, even in the cities have yet made use of the free public library. According to investigations made recently by Mr. Joseph L. Wheeler,2 not more than one-fifth of the people of the average city use the public library. Of the remaining four-

fifths he estimates that one-fifth have either no time or no desire to read, and another fifth are either illiterate or too young, while the remaining two-fifths are prospective users, and present the field for the future growth of libraries.
II. PHASES OF LIBRARY ACTIVITY WHICH ARE OF SPECIAL SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE

I. REFERENCE WORK

a. General.

The use of library books may be classified into two broad divisions: the home use of books, which belongs to the circulation department, and the reference use of books, which in its broadest sense signifies the use of material within the library building, and belongs to the reference department.

Besides providing a collection of books and the facilities for their circulation, every public library provides a reading or reference room (or in the case of large libraries a number of rooms) designed especially for the use of books or other material within the library. It also provides experts whose chief business it is to aid the reader in finding the books and the facts desired. This service ranges all the way from the small library in which the functions of loan, reference and chief librarian are combined in one person to the very large library which has experts in every field of knowledge as reference assistants. These assistants have been called the interpreters of the library to the public. However complete the collection of books may be, and however zealous the searcher after knowledge, without some one to help a little, to explain, to guide, the desired book or fact may not come to light.

Broadly speaking, the reference department may be said to have two functions: to serve as a general information bureau and as a laboratory of research. The first function consists in
furnishing information on every conceivable subject and answers to all kinds of questions from the most commonplace and trivial to those of great importance. The question may be "What is the pronunciation of the name Przemysl?" "Who is the author of Tom Sawyer?" "Where is Timbuctoo?" or some one may wish information which will require extended research, for example the effect of colors on the human conduct, the identification of a religious order from the dress on a doll or how to color metals. Those who seek information in the library are people of every profession and interest - authors, artists, scientists, craftsmen, musicians, journalists, clergymen, lawyers, actors and club women. They may secure information either by letter, by telephone or by going directly to the library. Telephone service is becoming increasingly common and busy people are finding it of inestimable value.

There is no doubt that this use of the public library as a great universal cyclopedia which may be conveniently consulted, is of great and constantly increasing importance, but the second function of the reference department - that of a laboratory of research - is even more important.

It is quite generally known that the public library distributes good books to those who would not otherwise have them, but that it is also its purpose to aid in the making of these books is not so well recognized. Good books do not come by chance and they are not usually original sources, but must be carefully compiled by the painstaking scholar. He finds in the reference collection of the library diaries, letters, autobiographies and manuscripts; reports of scientific investigations; narrations of travel and
events; and records of experiments which have been carried on. But these are not always readable books and they do not contain information in a convenient or compact form. The books that are of greatest use to the investigator may be seldom opened by the general reader, they must, however, be used by the writer of those books and articles which do reach the general public. Histories, essays, text-books, magazine articles, popular books on science, sociology and economics and all the wide range of informational literature, the books by means of which popular education and instruction are carried on, are produced by use of the less read collections stored in libraries. And the laboratories in which they are written are public libraries, as often if not more often than the university and college libraries of the country. It is becoming increasingly common for the ordinary citizen, by which we mean in this case the men and women of the workaday world who are not generally included under the term of scholar, to write the books and articles we read, and the public library is providing them with the material for this work.

The large public libraries are also performing an important service for many specialists and experts in various fields of research work. The greatest need of the investigator is help in finding all the important literature on the special point on which he is conducting his research. He must first know what already has been done in this field. He may find that it would be mere duplication of work for him to conduct his proposed investigation. But without the bibliographic resources of the library he would not have discovered this and his time would have been wasted.
The catalogue itself in a large library is an invaluable bibliographic aid to the investigator and in addition to this there is the assistant, made expert by experience and training in finding material, as well as the collection of bibliographies which have either been compiled within the library or secured from other sources. By using all of these aids the investigator, the inventor and the student may avoid doing over again that which has been done and he may find the material necessary to his own researches. Even the highly original book, which is far more than a compilation of facts previously known but widely scattered, must make use of previous knowledge. Advance in knowledge is made by those who have followed previous progress to its boundary. Original conclusions are based upon wide collections of data.

In connection with this bibliographic work for investigators it seems proper to speak of the numberless selected bibliographies or reference lists on various subjects which are produced every year by reference librarians. These are usually lists of material to be found in a particular library on a given subject and range from the comparatively extensive list such as that on "Sewage disposal and Treatment," a pamphlet of 96 pages, or the one on "Metal corrosion and protection" 58 pages in length, published by the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh, to brief lists of only a page or two, which are ordinarily not published but kept for reference use in the library.

1. As an indication of the extent to which the publications of such lists has been carried, it may be noted that the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh has published 22 bibliographies, each of which is more than 10 pages in length.
It is of course impossible to find statistics to show just how much reference work the public libraries of the United States are doing, and even if it were possible to ascertain the number of questions answered within a single day or a year by all the libraries of the United States, we should still have no adequate measure of the importance or value of this work. Figures indicate very little as to accomplishment, for a question requiring only a few minutes counts just as much as one which requires hours of work. However, a careful study of a number of library reports shows that the amount of reference work is multiplying rapidly and that librarians consider it one of the important functions of their work. "The possibilities of reference work in reference libraries are, I believe, but dimly seen as yet". says Mr. W. W. Bishop, Superintendent of the Reading Room of the Library of Congress, and he continues, "Judging from our foremost examples, one might say that the keynote is specialization, either by way of departments within the general library, as in the New York Public Library, or by limiting the field of the library itself, as in the John Crerar Library".

For the sake of convenience I shall now consider various special divisions of library work in which the reference function predominates. As indicated above in the quotation from Mr. Bishop, libraries following the trend of the age are tending more and more toward specialization.

2. The reference department of the New York Public Library has the following divisions - Information; Readers division; American history; Genealogy and local history; Arts and prints; Music; Economics; Documents; Technology; Municipal reference; Oriental; Jewish; Slavonic; Manuscript; Periodicals; and Newspaper.
b. Special Work for Business Men.

All over this country great business houses are establishing for themselves libraries which are peculiarly fitted to their own kind of business. The American Telephone and Telegraph Company of New York City has three special libraries of its own – a large engineering library, a legal library and an accounting library. The Wm. Filenes' Sons Company of Boston has a special library on retail distribution. Similar instances might be enumerated at length for there are some hundreds of members of the Special Libraries Association of America, but it is merely to indicate the trend in the business world that they are mentioned here. Business men are recognizing that printed information is an integral factor in the successful prosecution of their work. Business competition is becoming ever keener. It is requiring the wisdom of men of the greatest intelligence, the most careful training and the widest range of information to develop it. An ever increasing number of college and university men are entering upon business careers. They have been trained to the use of books for years previous to their entrance to business, and to deprive them of these after beginning their business career is to take away their best tools.

Furthermore, we find that a new note is being struck in the business world, which is almost revolutionary in its effect. It is this "Business and business efficiency for service rather than for profit." This new standard of ambition is making itself increasingly felt in the business world.

All these factors – the increasing complexity of business, recognition of the fact that broad knowledge is necessary to suc-
cess, the entrance of college men upon business careers, and an ideal of social service—have opened wide the door of opportunity to the public library. For, though it is true that the very large business organizations have their own special libraries, the men in these represent only a small per cent of the men in business. It is then, for the so-called small business man that the public library can and in some cases does perform the greatest service.

It must be admitted, however, that it is only within recent years that the public library has awakened to its opportunity and obligation in this direction, and that at present only a small percentage of business men are being served. In justice to the library, however, it should also be said that business men have not always realized that the library could be of use to them and have made no demands upon it. Therefore it has been necessary in many cases for the library both to create the demand for its services and to be ready to fulfil such demands. The former it is doing by advertising its resources and the services it is ready to perform, the latter, by the purchase of a greater proportion of commercial books, supplemented with pamphlets, current periodicals and clipping files which supply the latest information. Large libraries are establishing special business departments under the charge of experts, either within the library building or in a place more easily accessible to the business men of the city.

1. An investigation made recently by Mr. S. H. Panck, of Grand Rapids, Mich., revealed the fact that the library in that city which is one of the most active along this line served directly about fifty per cent of the business men of the town.
One of the best examples of the business branch is that of the Newark Public Library, and since other cities have used this as a model a brief description will be of interest. It is located in the center of the business district on the ground floor, and has a show window which is used for advertising its services. The material collected includes the best and latest books on business; maps of railway and freight routes; all kinds of time tables, city directories, not only of Newark, but of smaller towns, of the capital of the state and of the largest cities of the United States; trade directories; the best local maps; house organs; reports of scientific societies; the Official Railway Guide; magazines relating to all aspects of business; and a typewriter for the free use of visitors. Special effort is made to have this material easily accessible, and when the business man does not have time to visit the library his inquiry will be answered whenever possible, by telephone or mail. It is evident that such a collection of material under the charge of an expert reference librarian has great possibilities for serving the business men of a community.

c. The mechanic and the library.

In every large library today there is a special division for the use of men who are included under the term "mechanic."

This division is called by various names: "technology department", "applied science", "useful arts department", but in every case it has the same aim, which may best be expressed in terms of the policy of the Franklin Union of Philadelphia - "The further education of men already employed."

In this division of the library may be found books, pamph-
lets, and current periodicals relating to the so-called useful arts or industrial sciences. In the very large libraries these are in charge of a custodian familiar with the books and with the subjects they discuss, whose business it is to guide the inquirer. It may be said that the service rendered by the custodian of a collection of such books is scarcely second in importance to the collection itself. A library with a comparatively small collection of books, but with an expert assistant in charge of them sometimes does more real service than a library with a large collection of material but with no "interpreter." This is because those who use such a collection are in many cases not accustomed to finding information in books. They come to the library for information about a particular topic, not usually for a particular book by a specified author or with a certain title and they depend upon the librarian to tell them just where and how to find specific information.

As a mere suggestion of the extensive work a library can and in many cases does do in the way of practical help to workers we quote the following from one who was himself the administrator of such a library: "The printers, the wood-workers, the masons, the plumbers, the lithographers, and in fact, the men in almost every mechanical pursuit seek the library for books about their work. One man comes to learn how to bend a cast iron pipe; another wants designs for wrought iron work; another reads up the latest process of paper making; another brought in an excellent violin.

1. The technology departments in large libraries are usually placed in charge of men who are graduates in technology or engineering. This is one field of the work in which women do not predominate.
which he had constructed from directions found in library books, another comes for books on dyes and dye-making, a young woman studied up oriental rugs and secured a good position with a rug dealer; another who earns her living by making jewelry, got her designs at the library.\(^1\) Examples of this kind might be multiplied many times not only by libraries having a special division for such work, but by almost any general reference department. There are no consolidated library statistics with regard to the use of the library by mechanics, but the statistics of some of the larger libraries are suggestive. In the technology department of the New York Public Library during 1914, 42,710 people consulted 175,630 volumes which was 8.2 per cent of the total number of volumes consulted in the main library building. In St. Louis 21,277 readers used 48,556 books in the Applied Science room during 1914. This constituted 20.9 per cent of all the books used in the reference department. In the Technology department of the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh the total attendance for the year was 27,486 people who consulted 142,894 volumes.

d. The Fine Arts department

In a considerable number of libraries the Fine Arts division is one of the most important. It includes material on such subjects as architecture, sculpture, painting, photography, engraving, the reproduction of graphic arts, design, decoration and music. In the larger libraries music itself forms a separate division.

The functions of such a department are to develop a wider

\(^1\) Wellman, H.C.

appreciation of art and to serve the practical needs of students and art workers in general. To this end art books of all kinds are collected—standard histories, dictionaries, beautiful and rare books—and in addition to these there are the current art periodicals, usually a collection of prints and photographs, and sometimes lantern slides.

Artists, designers, illustrators and workmen in artistic handicraft are among those who use the art collection, commercial advertisers find in the books suggestions for illustrations, and the work of architects and decorators often shows the influence of art books used in the library. The members of women's clubs are a numerous class of patrons. Both art clubs and general clubs use the collection in making up their programs and in preparing their papers.

In connection with the art department exhibitions are occasionally held in libraries. These are an important factor in the work of popularizing art because they tend to create an interest where before none existed. These exhibitions are obtained from many sources—individuals, collectors, societies, institutions, the United States government, and the American Federation of Arts.¹

As has been previously indicated the collection of music in libraries is becoming increasingly common. In addition to the

1. "The first exhibition that the American Federation of Arts sent out was shown in a public library—the Carnegie Library of Fort Worth, Texas. It comprised forty oil paintings, and led not only to the formation of an art association in Fort Worth, but to the establishment of a permanent art collection and a Texas exhibition circuit, including San Antonio, Austin and Houston. Other exhibitions sent out by the American Federation of Arts have been shown in public libraries, which are to-day found to be one of the strongest factors in the upbuilding of appreciation of art." Mechlín, Leila. The work of the American Federation of Arts in relation to public libraries. L. J., Jan. 1914, 39:20."
literature of music such collections usually include sheet music and
in a few cases pianola rolls and phonograph records. Some libraries
have sound proof rooms in which the piano or pianola may be used
without disturbing the readers in the building. 1 In libraries where
music collections have been established the extent of their use has
more than justified the expense and the demand has usually been
greater than the supply. 2 They serve not only the professional
artists, lecturers on music and composers, but also the music loving
public and in this way play a large part in the popularization of
good music.

e. Work for women's clubs.

The public library is an "integral part of public educa-
tion". The woman's club has been called "the school of middle-aged
women". It is not strange then that there is a very close relation-
ship between these two American institutions, both of which are a
part of the great movement toward a more general education. The
club woman is a club woman largely because she wishes to increase
her store of knowledge, her fund of information, and it has been
the privilege of the public library to have a large part in making
possible the attainment of this desire on her part.

In general it may be said that there has always been a
spirit of mutual helpfulness between these two. The club women are
among the most ardent supporters and the most appreciative patrons
of the public library. The library is almost a sine qua non to the

1. Evanston and Los Angeles are examples.
2. In the New York Public Library, 22,916 opera, 20,320 vocal and
14,720 instrumental scores were circulated during 1914. This
does not include of course the extended use of music in the lib-
mary.
woman's club. It is partly for this reason that in many small towns the library owes its very existence to the woman's club. Once organized for study the women realize that without a library their activities are very limited, and many clubs have made it their first object to bring about the establishment of a free public library.

The ways in which the library makes itself useful to the club woman are numerous. They begin with the making of the program. Committees of the club meet at the library to plan their program for the year. Sometimes the librarian is asked to meet with them. The lists of topics, the club programs, and the many reference lists on the various subjects which every library keeps on file are found useful in planning the year's work. As soon as the program is printed a copy is given to the librarian in order that all the information on each subject may be found and made available. If the necessary books and periodicals are not in the library they are very often purchased to fill this particular need. This is one of the ways in which the clubs help the library. By calling for good standard literature and for material on current subjects they justify it in spending a greater share of its appropriation on books of a more serious and informing character.

The average woman, when she first takes up club work, has had very little experience in using the library. She is unfamiliar with the tools - the catalog, the bibliographies, the periodical indexes, the systematic arrangement of books - which the library provides. It is at this point that the library assistant has been of the greatest help. By informing her of these tools, teaching her how to use them, and guiding and helping her in finding the desired
information the librarian has helped the club woman in her independent search after knowledge. In many clubs it is the custom to have the reference librarian give an occasional talk to the members on the reference use of books.

The library has often been accused of catering to women, of buying more books especially for them than for business men and working men, and in general of paying more attention to their demands. Perhaps this has been to a certain extent true in the past, but in justice to the library it should be said that this has been largely because the men have not realized that a library could help them and have made no demands upon it. However, as we have shown the tide is now turning in favor of the men, and it seems likely that in the future there will be a more even distribution of activities.

f. Legislative and Municipal reference work of libraries.

Of comparatively recent development in library specialization are the legislative and municipal reference libraries. The need for legislative reference work was first recognized some twenty years ago in New York state, and Wisconsin followed about ten years later in the creation of a special staff for such work. Their example has since been followed by a number of other states. 1

The development of the idea in connection with city govern-

1. Mr. Kaiser, who has written a detailed report of the subject says, "I find that in practically thirty-two states it (legislative reference work) is attempted in some form or other - the state library as a whole, a division of the state library created within the library a division created by law, a separate bureau, Library commission bureaus, state university bureaus, etc." A.L.A. Bulletin 7:200, July 1913.
ment grew out of the establishment of these state bureaus, and had its beginnings within the last decade. The movement has spread rapidly until at present there is provision for special municipal reference work in many of the large cities in the United States. In some cities this is a department of the city administration, as in Baltimore and Kansas City, in others it is organized in connection with the public library, as in Grand Rapids, St. Louis, Chicago, New York, Milwaukee, Cleveland, Philadelphia, Oakland, California, Portland, Oregon, and other cities.

For the benefit of small cities some states have established departments of municipal reference in the extension division of their state universities. This has been done in Wisconsin, Kansas, Washington, California, Oregon, Illinois, Minnesota, Texas and Michigan.

The functions of a legislative or municipal reference bureau have been classified into three divisions:

1. In New York City the municipal reference library was first established as a part of the Finance Department but a year later was placed under the control of the public library, and is now operated as a branch in the Municipal Building.

2. A national legislative information service was started in 1915 through the efforts of the National Association of State Libraries. So far they have accomplished the publication of a weekly cumulative index to legislation in all the states during 1915. It gives for each bill and resolution introduced the (1) bill number; (2) the date of introduction; (3) the name of the member introducing the bill; (4) the subject; (5) the effect of the proposed legislation and the short title of the bill; (6) its position or status. A valuable part of this publication is the subject index which shows not only what legislation has actually been passed, but what legislation has been proposed, and being topically arranged all the laws of several states on a given subject can be located at once. About thirty states cooperated in this enterprise in 1915, and it is confidently expected by the promoters that the other states will soon join in the work.

and making ready for use the best material available on topics of current interest; (2) "division of expert service"; (3) bill drafting.

The material to be found in a legislative or municipal reference library includes the most recent books on economics, sociology, political science and special phases of administration. However, the largest and most valuable part of the collection is not in book form, because the subjects, in which the patron of this type of library is interested, are of current interest, and the best information on them has not yet found its way into books. It is still in the form of what is termed "fugitive material", which includes official reports, charters, laws, pamphlets, magazine articles, newspaper clippings and correspondence. All of this material is carefully classified, and indexed and in many cases digests of the material on certain subjects are made, in order that it may be most

1. In the pamphlet on its municipal reference library published by the University of Cincinnati I find a suggestive list of subjects and will note here only the first few: Accounting, Arbitration of industrial disputes, Automobiles, Banks, Federal reserve, Banks - Land banks, Billboards, Bill drafting, Bills of Chic Legislature, 1914, Budgets, Building codes, Buildings - Height regulations, Charters, Child labor, City manager plan, City manuals, City planning, Civic improvement, Civil service, Commission government, Compulsory voting, Constitutions, Convict labor, Co-operation, Cost of living, County officers, Courts, Crime and Criminals.

2. Chicago Municipal reference library bulletin No. 2, prepared by the librarian Frederick Rex, is on "Municipal dance halls." It is a summary of the efforts made in Boston, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Denver, Milwaukee, and San Francisco, toward the establishment and operation of open public dance halls, and was prepared for the use of the city council when it considered the question of establishing similar amusement places in Chicago.
quickly and easily available for use by the busy government official.

The comparative nature of the material is another of its peculiar characteristics. If the government is to be run efficiently it is necessary that officials shall know what has been done elsewhere. When a measure has proved unsuccessful and dangerous in one state, knowledge of this fact is brought to the official in his own state by the legislative reference librarian. If one city has introduced a system of sewage disposal or of milk regulation which has endangered the lives of its citizens, how important it is that officials in other cities shall know of this in order that the same experiment may not be tried again. It is with the object of preventing all such waste and error, as well as to secure for one state or city the benefit of successful experiments in every other, that these special libraries gather and select material.

It is not enough in any library merely to bring a collection of material together and more particularly is this true of the legislative or municipal reference library where the most valuable information is not to be found in well indexed books. It must be sifted out of the vast amount of ephemeral literature which is published in magazines, newspapers, and reports and the ordinary patron of the reference bureau has neither the skill nor the time to find answers to his questions in such material. It is here that the trained reference librarian can help him. "There are consequently,

1. An important fact with regard to the legislative or municipal reference library is that it may be and usually is, located in the state or city building, where it is most easily accessible to the government officials. It would be quite impossible to keep in such a place a large general library even if it were as useful, thus the need for such a specialized library.
on the staff of the reference bureau, those well trained by graduate and professional study, and by experience, in the economic, social and political questions with which they must deal. Material is secured, data is briefed, and plans are presented for all the questions which can be anticipated. The official has thus for his assistance information as to the probable success or failure of the plan he proposes, knowledge of devices which might strengthen his plan, if it has been tried elsewhere, and a general critical study of the problem. Moreover, he has in his research the aid of one not only trained generally in the subject matter which interests him, but one who has become by special investigation familiar with all phases of the subject."

Moreover through the medium of the librarian experts throughout the country are at the service of the library patrons. In some reference bureaus a record of sources of information arranged both by plans and subject is kept. Under each subject in this record the names and addresses of those who are specialists are entered. In the geographical list are entered the names of people who can furnish material relating to a given community. Then when a subject comes up, information on which has not been put into print, the librarian may telephone, telegraph or write to a specialist on the subject.

1. The New York Public Library has established a municipal reference course nine months in length in its library school. This would indicate that the municipal reference library is to become more and more the work of trained people and that it will be a permanent part of library work.

Bill-drafting in connection with legislative reference work is a most important element. It is the newest phase of this service and, probably for this reason, as well as its greater relative importance to state officials it has developed more in state than in city bureaus. Heretofore it has been considered the duty of the individual legislator to draft his own bill, and when we consider the men who make up our legislatures it is easy to see why so many laws are crudely written, complicated and ambiguous. Comparatively few legislators are lawyers and scarcely any have both the knowledge and the ability to draft a bill correctly. Thus bill-drafting agencies have come into existence. Several states have official bill-drafting agencies other than legislative reference departments, and in others the work is done in the attorney general's office. But this work seems to be closely connected with the reference work and has been successfully combined with it in some states, including Wisconsin and Ohio. A good idea of the function of the department in these states may be gained from a reading of their rules with regard to bill drafting.

"Rules for the drafting room.

"1. No bill will be drafted, nor amendments prepared, without specific detailed written instructions from a member of the legislature or the governor. Such instructions must bear the member's signature.

"2. The draftsmen can make no suggestions as to the contents of the bills. Their work is merely clerical and technical. They cannot furnish ideas.

"3. The Legislative Reference Bureau is not responsible
for the legality or constitutionality of any measure. It is here to do merely as directed.

"4. This department cannot introduce bills or modify them after introduction, it is not responsible for the rules of the legislature."¹

From this it may be seen that the legislative reference bureau takes no initiative in the making of laws, its service is purely technical in nature. What it does do is to draft the ideas of legislators into laws which are clear and precise in meaning.

The purpose of the ideal legislative or municipal reference library is to bring about a better government by supplying to those who have to do with governmental functions the best information on all public questions. "Reference bureaus, whether legislative or municipal, are not agencies for reform, if by reform one means the championing of principles which makes for good government; but if reform is to be secured by full information and knowledge of facts reference bureaus are admirable agencies for this purpose."²

Closely related to municipal reference work and probably an outgrowth from it is the civics department of the public library. These exist in name in but four libraries, namely Chicago, Cincinnati, Detroit and Louisville. While the primary aim of the municipal reference library is to serve the city officials and thus bring about a better government, that of the civics department is to serve

¹ S. Gale Lowrie, op. cit.
² S. Gale Lowrie, op cit.
the general public and thereby bring about a more enlightened and a
more efficient citizenship. The scope of the Chicago civics room
is indicated by the legend on the door which reads "Sociology,
Municipal affairs, Business, Economics, Political Science, and Edu-
cation." Indicative of the usefulness of such a department is the
fact that during the year ending May 31, 1914, 52,304 persons used
directly the civics room in the Chicago Public Library and they
consulted 69,320 volumes and 121,650 pamphlets.
2. CHILDREN'S WORK

a. Introduction and Brief History.

One of the most interesting as well as one of the most useful divisions of library work is that with the children. It is one of the features of the "modern library idea", which in its comparatively brief history has proved itself of great importance, and has grown with almost unbelievable rapidity. The first children's library was established in New York City in 1885, at the initiative of Miss Emily S. Hanaway, principle of the primary department of Grammar School Number 28. It was started in the autumn, with a few hundred books and remained open until the following summer, when it was closed not to be opened again until February 1887. After this it had a precarious existence for some time and finally in April, 1888, was removed to the third floor of the George Bruce Library, whose children's room it then became. It was thus the forerunner of special children's work in the form in which it is now most widespread - the children's room rather than the children's library. This experiment, however, seems not to have been noticed to any great extent by the library world, and it was not until 1890 that the movement was really started. It was in that year that the librarian of the Brookline, Massachusetts, public library was forced to set aside a room for the children, because the adults complained that there were so many children underfoot it had become no place for

1. "Its recent character may be seen from the fact that the voluminous government report on 'Public Libraries in the United States' issued in 1876, has in its index of 13 closely printed double-column pages not a single entry under 'child' or 'children.' The index to Library Journal for 1876-1897, containing 130 pages, has 38 such entries, but only 22 are previous to 1897 and none at all previous to 1887," A. E. Bostwick, The Amer. Public Library, p. 11.
the grownups. The room was in the basement in charge of the janitor. This experiment was noted in professional library journals, was widely discussed, and did not make a place for itself without overcoming the most severe criticism of the "old-fashioned" librarians. But before long librarians in various parts of the United States began to try the experiment for themselves. In 1894 Cambridge and Denver; in 1895, Boston, New Haven, Omaha, Seattle, San Francisco; and in 1896 Pratt Institute followed suit. The era of children's rooms had begun, and since 1900 scarcely a new library has been built, even of the smallest size, that does not provide a room or at least a corner especially for the children.

In 1913 Mr. Arthur E. Bostwick of the St. Louis Public Library compiled some significant statistics with regard to children's work in the United States. These show that in 51 of the 78 largest public libraries in the country, graded according to their circulation, there are nearly 9,000,000 books, of which 1,147,000 volumes (12.7 per cent) are intended especially for children. The total circulation in these libraries for the year (1912) was over 30,000,000, while the books drawn out for home use by children numbered 11,200,000 volumes, approximately 37 per cent of the total. These libraries have 231 rooms devoted entirely to children and 180 used by them in part.

With regard to the number of children drawing books, Mr. Bostwick found that in 46 libraries reporting, 413,000 children hold library cards. He found further that in these 46 libraries, there are 42 supervisors of children's work with assistants to the number
When we consider that children come voluntarily to these libraries and choose their own books from well selected collections, we cannot fail to understand what a tremendous educative and cultural agency the public library has come to be. Among these readers are the thinkers, the scholars, the public leaders, the lawgivers, the fathers and mothers and educators of the next generation. It is said that letters cut lightly in the bark of a sapling show even more plainly in the grown tree; so the habit of reading good books, established in the lives of millions of children today cannot fail to have an influence on the men and women of the future.

b. Methods of working with children.

Library work with children has taken various forms, but in general it may be said that most of the work done by the children's department of a typical American public library would fall under the following heads: (1) The selection of books and the general control and guidance of their circulation for home use; (2) the use of books and periodicals in the reading room; (3) story-telling; (4) work with very young children, chiefly by means of picture books; (5) illustrated book lists, and exhibitions; (6) the formation of library or reading clubs; (7) cooperation with settlements, vacation schools, playgrounds, recreation parks, and juvenile detention homes; (8) work with mothers.

2. A somewhat similar classification from a different point of view will be found in A. E. Bostwick's, The American public library, p. 79.
(1) Selection of books and the general control and guidance of their circulation for home use.

The selection of the proper books is the basis of the entire library work with children. In large cities the books selected are read and reviewed by experts, while the librarian of the small library who does not have time to review all of the books herself uses as a basis of choice selected lists which have been published by experts. ¹ The literary and ethical quality, popularity, type of illustrations, and binding of the books are all considered, that the books may not only be good for the children but likewise attractive to them. Chief among the problems of book selection is that of finding books which are attractive and yet without the bad influence of the yellow backed literature sold so largely in this country. But the librarian seeks to find what it is in this literature that attracts the child and then to collect books equally attractive which will have a proper influence on him.

Because the books are on open shelves and the children have entire freedom of choice the librarian has not and should not have any power to compel a child to read that which she thinks may be good for him. However, by friendly advice, or tactful suggestion she may guide his reading in the right direction.

(2) The use of books and periodicals in the reading room.

Home use is, of course, only one of the ways in which the

¹ Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh, Catalog of children's books. Buffalo Public Library, Annotated and graded lists. H. W. Wilson Co. Children's catalog. A. L. A. Book list. These are a few of the many excellent selected and annotated lists which may be used as a basis of selection by children's librarians.
books are used. It was found, especially in the large cities, that
the children need not only books to read but in many cases some
place besides home in which to read them. Homes in tenement flats
with small rooms in which the household duties are continually car-
rried on, with poor lighting and bad air, too hot or too cold for
health and comfort, and often filled with small children, are not
inspiring places in which to read. An Italian boy at one of the
New York branches bore witness to this fact when he said "I cannot
take care of the books at home; we have so many children. It is
pretty and quiet in the library and I remember what books I have
read. I like best to read here."¹

The typical children's department in an American public
library provides a large reading room, suitably equipped in every
particular. The walls of the room are made attractive with good
pictures, there are flowering plants on the window-ledges, and books
in pretty bindings on the shelves. All the furnishings of the room
are of a type suited to children, low book-shelves, small tables
and comfortable little chairs. The catalog is low, and the older
ones are taught how to use it so that they can find books for them-
selves. Most important of all is the special children's librarian,
who has charge of the room. If she is successful she has not only
been trained for the work, but is especially fitted by her person-
ality to have an influence on the children. By her contact with
them, she is sometimes able to come into very close personal rela-
tions with her small patrons. They go to her for advice concerning

their lessons, their play and their personal conduct, as well as for advice as to the books they desire. She may influence their habits of thought, their personal habits, in fact the whole trend of their character. Her personal influence upon them may be far more important than that of the books which they read. The children's room is perhaps the one beautiful spot where some of these children are made welcome, and it often supplies the comfortable homelike atmosphere which children need so much.

As in the adult reading room so in the children's room certain books and periodicals are kept for use in the building alone and are not allowed to circulate. The children soon learn that many interesting questions may be answered by these reference books and they use them not only in connection with their school work, which is more or less compulsory, but also to ferret out knowledge for themselves.¹

(3) Story-telling.

The third class of work listed above, namely, story-telling, is an important feature of the work with children, and has been found to be one of the most successful means of bringing them to the library, and of stimulating their interest in good books.² "Mankind heard and spoke for untold ages before they wrote and read. Thrice happy the child who makes it first acquaintance with the great

¹. This phase of work with children will be treated more in detail under the heading - The library and the school.
monuments of literature, which arose when the world was young, not by reading but under the spell of the story-teller's art.\footnote{1} As in primitive times the story was the chief means of creating and perpetuating literature so to-day the librarian, recognizing the primitive nature of the child, uses the story to introduce him to the best literature of the world.

Story hours were used early in the history of special children's work, and today story-telling as an organized method of stimulating interest in books is more widespread than ever before. It is used by practically all but the smallest libraries and these do not conduct the story-hour because in most cases they cannot afford to.

A few statistics will show how extended is the practice of story-telling in city libraries. In New York\footnote{2} "regular weekly or monthly story hours for little children, and for boys and girls below the ages of 12 or 14 years are held wherever the library service is equal to the growing demand." In 1913, 1929 regular story-hours were held in the branches of the New York Public Library, with a total attendance of 45,618 children. Chicago reports an attendance of 18,188 children at story-hours during 1912.\footnote{3} In Philadelphia 40,472 children attend 556 story hours in 1914.\footnote{4} The Cleveland Public Library reports a total attendance of 102,741 children at story-hours in 1914.\footnote{5}

2. New York Public Library, Annual report, 1913 p. 73.
5. Cleveland Public Library, Annual report, 1914, p. 84.
Library story-hours fall naturally into two divisions, stories for little children and stories for children of ten years and above. These are usually held once a week in groups of thirty to forty for the younger children and somewhat larger groups for those who are older. Stories for the smaller children comprise fairy tales, legends, fables, poetry, Bible stories, folk-tales, animal stories, nature myths, stories concerning holidays and birthdays, Greek myths, humorous stories, and stories of primitive life. The interesting experiment of telling the children stories characteristic of national folk-lore was tried in Cleveland. Stories typical of a country were chosen, the nationality was given and in some instances the customs of the country were briefly described. The children were delighted with the stories and there was, as a result, an increase in the reading of travel.¹

To the older boys and girls the story-teller tries to present in an attractive way, a large class of literature such as the Greek myths, the Arthurian legends, Norse myths, Robin Hood, Pilgrim's Progress, the Odyssey, or Shakespearean plays. These are usually told in carefully planned cycles. The fact that the stories week after week, have the same atmosphere and deal with the same characters means a development in power of concentration, a broadening of outlook and an awakening of interest in following the varied lines of reading thus opened up. For instance, interest in Shakespearean stories may lead not only to the reading of the stories, but may serve also as an introduction to the plays themselves.

¹. Cleveland Public Library, Annual report, 1912, p. 61.
to the ballad stories and even to an increased reading of English history.

The story hour is intended to be educational primarily, but that does not prevent it from being enjoyable as well. It is an easy and comparatively inexpensive way of giving to the children an hour of recreation by which all the good results of recreation may be gained and much more accomplished if through the story hour the children may be given the ability to choose and the desire to read books of value.¹

(4) Work with very young children.

We do not ordinarily think of a public library in connection with very young children, but with the beginning of special work for children it was found impracticable, as well as undesirable, to set an "age limit" for those who might use the library. If it is to have an influence on the child it is desirable that he should acquire the "library habit" as early as possible.

In many places, too, it has been found, that unless the "little mothers", and in some cases the "little fathers" can bring their younger brothers and sisters with them to the library they themselves can not come, for they are responsible for the younger members of the family while their mothers are at work. And so it has gradually come about that the library has provided small tables with picture books and games on them for these youngest patrons.

(5) Illustrated book lists, exhibitions, etc.

One of the methods devised by librarians to lead children

¹. Children's librarians are also adding a contribution to child-psychology, by experimenting with a view to gaining certain ends and recording the results.
to read the best books is the use of the so-called illustrated book list or picture bulletin. Pictures relating to a special subject are combined with a list of books so as to interest the child in the subject and in this way to draw his attention to the books which treat of it.

(6) Reading clubs.

Another activity of the children's department, is the organization of boys and girls clubs. Such clubs are never forced upon the children by the librarian, but they are based upon group interests which already exist. Until this interest exists it has been found that the time and thought necessary to club development bring little or no results. The part which the library ordinarily takes in such development is to furnish a place for meeting; a club leader, who is usually a volunteer; a general supervisor for all club work, who is a member of the library staff; and books for the use of the club members. These clubs have various interests - 

1. In Cleveland there are 72 children's clubs with a membership of 875 and an annual attendance of nearly 8000. (Cleveland Public Library, Annual report, 1914, p. 84).

2. The following quotation from the Minneapolis Public Library report (1914, p. 23) is suggestive of the way in which these clubs sometimes come into existence. "In September a most interesting 'How to Make Things' exhibition was held in the Central Building. At the close of school in June an invitation was sent to the children asking them to make some articles from descriptions given in books drawn from the Public Library and promising that all such things would be shown at an exhibition. Lists of 'How to' books were distributed at the various branches and the call for books everywhere was overwhelming. When the exhibition date was set and articles began to come in, the amount and variety was amazing; as one little boy said, 'There was everything from fudge to automobiles.' The children attended the exhibition in great numbers, intensely interested in each others accomplishments. Parents and teachers also came by the hundreds. It was a practical demonstration of the educational work which the library is doing for the boys and girls. One direct result was the formation of two boys' clubs, a wireless club and an aviation club each under the direction of experts. The library expects to repeat this exhibition as an annual feature as long as the children respond so enthusiastically."
tricity, stamps, Boy Scouts, Camp Fire Girls, debating, literature, art, music, drama, current events, travel and nature study. An interesting club at one of the New York Public Library branches is "The Hero Club", which is composed of young Jewish boys. The name and inspiration for the organization of this club came from their enthusiastic appreciation of the Heroism list, a list of books about great heroes, published by the library. At each meeting of the club the career of a hero mentioned in the list is described. The meeting is opened by the "Chief Councillor" who reads the final quotation from the Heroism list which begins: "I am a citizen of America and an heir to all her greatness and renown." This quotation has been adopted as a pledge by the club. Daniel, David, Moses, King Arthur, Horatius, and Havelock the Dane, have been studied in turn. Significant names of other clubs are the Nature Club, the Oak Tree Girls, the Grace Darling group, the "Waverley Club, and the Juvenile Electricians. Debating clubs seem to be of greatest interest among the boys, and interest in literary clubs, especially drama, seems to prevail among the girls.

The director of the New York Public Library tells us that some of the clubs there have held the interest of the same boys and girls from their twelfth to their eighteenth year. He says "Many of these young people had been accustomed to read whatever came in their way and to read without thinking. Looking back upon their reading and discussion of books at club meetings, and catching the reflection of it from those who meet them in the Library, it is gratifying to note not merely a definite improvement in the taste of club members, but a radiation of the influence of books extending

to the home and the school, and passing on into the social life of young men and young women." \(^1\)

One of the chief objects of these clubs is to create an interest in good books, and thereby to improve the taste of the club members. They also give an opportunity for self-expression, which is in itself invaluable, and furnish a means for wholesome and helpful recreation. Other good results of such organizations are the cultivation of self control, a love of fair play, and a sense of personal responsibility.

In Pittsburgh \(^2\) the library does a special work among boys' gangs, organizing troublesome street boys into reading clubs. This kind of work furnishes us with a good example of what Jacob Riis meant when he said "It is by the Boys' Club that the street is hardest hit. In the fight for the lad it is that which knocks out the gang and with its own weapon - the weapon of organization."

(7) Cooperation with other agencies.

The library is not attempting, however, to do everything itself for it is peculiarly well fitted to cooperate with other agencies that work for the welfare of children. It is a public building and properly furnishes room for certain kinds of activities, as well as books for the use of these other agencies. Librarians are commonly not merely willing but anxious to do this and more often than not the initiative for the work comes from the library. Settlements, vacation schools, playgrounds, recreation

parks, juvenile detention homes, schools and various educational societies are among the agencies with which the library thus cooperates.

Cooperation with playgrounds is carried on in most of our large cities by providing a small collection of books to be sent to each playground, and by sending a library assistant to issue the books to the children as well as to tell them stories. The children's librarian of Seattle tells us that these activities perform a double purpose. "They act not only as additional distributing centers from which children draw books, but they fill the part of a Pied Piper, for when at the end of the summer the books are withdrawn from the playgrounds to the library buildings, the children follow them as though drawn by a magic charm and become steady and regular library patrons." In similar ways the library lends aid and in turn is helped by the other agencies enumerated.

(8) Work with mothers.

In order to do efficient work with the children the children's librarian has found it advantageous to cooperate with the mothers. Mothers' meetings are held and mothers' clubs are formed at which children's books are discussed, suitable stories illustrating ethical subjects are told, current magazine articles on educational subjects are reviewed, and interesting books about education, and stories for children are brought to the notice of the mothers.

1. Cooperation with schools will be discussed more in detail in another place.
In the library reports of New York, Seattle, Pittsburgh, Cleveland and some other cities we find descriptions of exhibitions of books suitable for children's Christmas gifts.

Even the babies are not forgotten by the library. Seattle, Grand Rapids, Jacksonville, Florida, and other cities send out lists of books on the care and feeding of babies, to all mothers whose names appear in the official register of births. Other slips sent to mothers contain lists of books and magazine articles on the value of clean food for children, the necessity of fighting flies and the value of hygienic precautions in guarding the lives of their children.

3. THE LIBRARY AND THE SCHOOL

One of the foremost library periodicals bears on its cover every month the motto "The Library is an integral part of public education." For the past twenty-five years this idea has been spreading and continually growing in strength among librarians and more recently school authorities too, have begun to recognize it. This does not mean that the library is trying to do what could be better done in the school, or that the school is

1. In regard to the Better Babies slips in Grand Rapids, Michigan, the librarian says in his report "There can be no doubt that the very exceptionally low death rate in this city, particularly among children, has been caused by the more intelligent care parents are enabled to give their children by reason of the educational campaign in this direction by various agencies, of which the library and the books in this collection have been one of the most important factors. The book stores report a largely increased sale of the baby books featured by the Library." Grand Rapids Public Library, Annual report, 1914-15
doing what should be done by the library, it means that these two
great factors in public education are necessary complements of
each other. This we must recognize as true if we accept the
statement of Mr. Grant Showerman that "The immediate design of
liberal education is not skill of hand or knowledge of technical
detail, but the cultivation of mental power, the broadening of
vision, the deepening of perception, the refinement of intellec-
tual and spiritual temper. Its ultimate end is the production of the
ideal citizen and of the ideal state."¹

Both the library and the school then are branches of
education but with a difference which has been well stated by Mr.
Willis H. Kerr: "School is formal. Library is informal. Funda-
mentally, the school is for discipline (training, if you will).
Fundamentally the library is for culture."² The school stands
for the acquisition of knowledge in certain definite subjects in
definite ways, the library for the rounding out of this knowledge.
Another difference between school and library is that the library
deals always with individuals, the school deals with children
collectively, that is, in classes. The library then may be used
by the schools to counteract, in part at least, the disadvantages
of the so-called "lock-step" system of education which now pre-
vails in the schools of the United States.

The initiative in this movement toward cooperation has
been almost invariably with the library, and perhaps the reason

for this is that the "missionary of the book" sees in the schools such a great opportunity to spread abroad the influence of the library. Children are brought together in the public schools in larger numbers than in any other place and under the most favorable conditions, to receive instruction. And furthermore it is the hope of the librarian that this influence shall last not only during the school life of the child, but that having learned while in school of the great sources of knowledge available in the public library he shall continue to make use of them when school days are over.

As to methods of cooperation between school and library probably the most important and one of the most commonly used, especially in cities, is that of sending small collections of books to the schools. This method of what has been called "sowing a library broadcast" is carried on chiefly in the following way. 1

At the beginning of the school year a collection of books, equal

1. That school authorities too are recognizing the importance of this cooperation is evidenced by the following extract from the report of the Superintendent of Schools of Buffalo, N. Y. "More and more it is felt that a public library and a public school have the same purpose and aim. Each in its own sphere is a public educator; and each can help the other; their duties are reciprocal - the library furnishes the school with books useful in school work, and helpful in giving the right bent to the child's thoughts and energies. The school, on the other hand, is bound to prepare the child to make a good use of the treasures which the library offers, by developing in him a love of good reading. If a child, when he leaves school, has formed the reading habit his education will be continued beyond the limit of his school days and he will be proof against many of the temptations which later life will bring." Report, 1901-02.

2. This is a description of the method used in the Buffalo Public Library. It was one of the earliest libraries to use this method and has been used as a model by many other cities. Mrs. H. L. Elmendorf, Buffalo system of public school and public library co-operation, 1912.
in number at least, to the number of children in the room, and suitable to their age, is sent to each class room in the schools which have elected to come under the system of co-operation. The selection of books is renewed at mid-year and all of the libraries are gathered in at the end of the year. This is important because the collection of books is so small that fresh collections at brief intervals are necessary in order to renew the interest. The teachers are allowed to arrange all details for the use of the books - they may read to the class from them, the children may read them in the room or they may take them home; they may be used chiefly as a reference collection or to supplement class work.

Other methods of cooperation said by an authority in library work with schools to be "well recognized methods of procedure which all agree to be conducive to the best results and success of this movement" are summed up as follows "... pictures are loaned, stories are told and books are read by library visitors, lists of desirable books for boys and girls and lists for collateral reading are printed, bulletins and posters give all possible information concerning new books, there are teachers' reading lists, talks to principals and teachers, exhibits of school work at libraries, special talks on library methods, card catalogs and reference books, at the school or library; branch libraries have been established in the schools, special help is given to the children in the reference room as an aid to school work, systematic training in library methods and courses in children's literature are offered in the normal schools."¹

¹ M. D. McCurdy, Methods to be used by libraries working with schools to encourage the use of real literature. A. L. A. Proceedings, 1907, p. 289.
another point of contact with the schools in many cities is the arrangement whereby the school principals send to the library the names and addresses of all children who leave school permanently. Personal letters are sent to these children urging them to continue their education through the library after they leave school. 1

Thus it is seen that the library and the school are cooperating in the education of children, but it is also evident that the library has but made a beginning in its part of the work. While statistics cannot measure the value of this work they can and do indicate the great field which yet remains untouched, for they show that at present the public libraries are reaching less than five per cent of the total number of school children in the United States. With regard to the opportunities in this field we find that the leaders both among school authorities and librarians now agree. Mr. P. P. Claxton, United States Commissioner of Education says: "The public libraries have no better opportunity for effective service than that offered through generous and intelligent cooperation with the public schools and especially with the high schools and the highest grades of the grammar schools." 2

While the librarian of one of the largest public libraries in the country, Mr. Henry E. Legler of Chicago, expresses the following opinion: "Most insufficient, and perhaps least successful thus

1. Grand Rapids sends in every such letter a leaflet entitled, "Don't be a quitter."
2. A. L. ... Bulletin 7: 87.
far, but suggesting the most important function of library activity and presaging its most significant development, is that branch of service associated with grammar and secondary schools. Here lies the most fertile field for strong, vigorous, fruitful energizing of such forces as the library possesses."

4. THE LIBRARY AND THE FOREIGN-BORN.

In the problem of assimilating the great number of immigrants in this country, who are more or less out of touch with American ideals and American ideas, the public library is doing an important work. "Rightly directed the native qualities and strength of these peoples will bring a splendid contribution in the making of a virile citizenship. Wrongly shaped their course in the life of the city may readily become of sinister import. Frequently they are misunderstood and they easily misunderstand."

It is in an endeavor to do away with this mutual misunderstanding that the library finds an opportunity for specialized work. For the native American it has many books on the immigrant question, telling of the hardships and difficulties of those who have come to a new land, but this does not call for specialized work and it is not the work to be discussed at this point. It is the newly arrived foreigner who, on account of his inability to read English, is debarred from practically all of the treasures of the ordinary library, who presents a real problem with which the library should and does cope.

The problem is one of education, but it is that most difficult problem, the education of adults. The school, the great assimilator of our foreign children, has accomplished little for the adult foreign-born. Neither books, nor system, nor seats have been well adapted to their instruction. The public library, although it does not offer formal instruction, may do a great service for these adults by bringing to them in their own tongues a better understanding of American customs and ideals, and thus assist in a large way, in the difficult task of assimilation.

It is in the large cities that special library work with foreigners has reached its greatest extent and its highest development. Here there is no longer a question as to whether foreigners shall be supplied with books in their own languages - the necessity has been forced upon such libraries both because of their ever increasing numbers, and by their settlement in districts according to their nationality. It is obviously impossible for a library or a branch library to do effective work in a district composed mostly of Polish or Yiddish, many of whom are unable to read English at all and few to read it with pleasure, without Polish or Yiddish books. Many of the foreigners in this country are too old to become Americanized in the linguistic sense, but by means of books in their own language treating of American history, customs, laws and ideals they may become Americans in spirit and thought, and their children who have learned to read and speak English in the schools will grow up in an Americanized atmosphere.

Almost without exception librarians have found that even the most recent immigrants respond quickly and in unexpectedly large numbers to every attempt made in opening the libraries to them. One has only to glance at the reports of such libraries as
those in New York, Chicago, Cleveland, Providence, Minneapolis and Seattle to see that these libraries are awake to their opportunities.

The New York Public Library has a total of 109,590 volumes in twenty-seven languages other than English. During 1914 these books had a circulation of 649,727 or an average of about six times per volume.¹

Chicago with 1,693,313 residents of foreign birth or parentage is working out her problem partly by means of a "foreign book room" at the main library. This contains approximately 68,000 volumes in seventeen different languages, which gives the foreign-born patron the opportunity of personal examination of books of all classes in his own language, without the inconvenience of searching them out among the English books. Chicago has also collections of foreign books in its various branch and deposit stations. In the reading room of the main library the following periodicals may be found: German, 80; French 27; Bohemian, 5; Italian, 13; Spanish, 2; Norwegian, 5; Swedish, 8; Danish, 6; Dutch, 3; Hungarian, 2; Russian, 5; Polish, 3; Lithuanian, 1; Hebraic, 1. In addition to these are 78 foreign newspapers.²

The work done at Providence, Rhode Island, by Miss Marguerite Reid, Foreign Department Custodian, is notable. Besides keeping her collection of foreign books in constant circulation she cooperates with the Immigrant Educational Bureau by giving lectures on various subjects interesting to foreigners.

² Chicago Public Library, Annual report, 1913-14.
In Cleveland the service of the public library to foreigners takes the following forms: (1) books are issued in twenty-one languages; (2) multigraphed lists of books in various languages are issued in order to let the readers know what books are available; (3) lists of foreign books are published in the foreign papers; (4) articles in foreign magazines are indexed by subject; (5) collections of simple books in English, including textbooks, readers, books in civics, and some interesting books not too difficult for reading and study are put in a separate alcove; (6) English classes for foreigners are allowed the use of rooms in the branch libraries; (7) every year the branch librarians visit the night schools in their respective vicinities, invite the foreigners to make use of the foreign collections in the library and leave lists of "Aids to foreigners learning English."

The Minneapolis public library owns one of the largest collections in Scandinavian in the United States, and added to this are books in nineteen other languages. This library is undoubtedly one of the most active in its work for the foreigner and yet statistics show here as in other libraries that only a beginning has been made. For with 55 per cent of its population either foreign born or of foreign parentage only 4.2 per cent of the total number of volumes in the library are in foreign languages. In connection with this fact it must of course be remembered that the entire library is at the disposal of all foreigners who read English.

There are many ways in which the modern library can and does help the foreigner other than putting books in his own language on its shelves. It is said that having supplied his library with
the foreign books the chief difficulty of the librarian is in making
the timid foreigner understand that he is welcome. He has never been
accustomed to such an agency organized for his welfare and he is
sometimes slow in understanding that the library may be freely used,
but once this is made clear he is said to display an amazing amount
of seriousness and earnestness in his desire to learn and to improve
himself. He also has the reputation among librarians of being among
the most loyal supporters and the most grateful borrowers the library
has.

1 One library in an Italian district began by giving a series
of simple lectures to the foreign born in their own language. These
were held in the public school, but occasionally one of them was
adjourned early and became a personally conducted tour to the public
library. They were then entertained by Italian music, a talk was
given on libraries and their privileges, and the librarian met per-
sonally as many as possible, giving a social and friendly air to the
place. With this introduction to the library it was found that they
continued to come, but the work of the library staff for them had
only begun for they needed much immediate personal attention.

In a New York branch the Bohemians have taken a special
interest in their library and nearly the entire third floor of the
building is devoted to them. A Bohemian club meets in the building
and entertainments are held there with Bohemian readings, addresses
and music. Sometimes Bohemian refreshments are served by girls in
national costume. Similar meetings are held for people of other
nationalities.

1. Carr, J. F., What the library can do for the foreign born.
L. J. 38:566.
A great opportunity for helping the foreigners, but one which libraries are just beginning to see and to take advantage of, is cooperation with the foreign societies which control the different nationalities in the foreign communities. In some cases these societies have themselves supplied books in their own language to the library. This has been done to some extent in Allegheny, Pennsylvania, Minneapolis, Cleveland, New York, Chicago and other centers. When it became known in Passaic, New Jersey, that the Library would buy books in foreign languages, different nationalities got together and made an urgent appeal to the trustees for their own books. When the petition was granted, a committee from each society assisted in the selection of the books, and when the books arrived the librarian reports that no advertising was necessary, members of the various societies flocked to the library.

The libraries in our smaller towns have been peculiarly slow to see and make use of their opportunities among the foreigners. What has been done for these people outside of the large cities has been accomplished mostly by State Library Commissions through traveling libraries, while even this work has been limited to a few states.1

1. The committee of the League of Library Commissions on books in foreign languages for traveling and public libraries reported in 1915 that only eleven state commissions were sending out traveling libraries in foreign languages. Three others expected to get out some such libraries soon and seven stated that altho they had no traveling libraries, one or more public libraries within the borders of the state had books in foreign languages on their shelves. There are no statistics to show the number of such libraries sent out by state commissions or the number of books relative to the foreign population sent out, but it seems safe to say only a small beginning has been made in a very large field.
Massachusetts is probably the foremost state in this work. The commission in that state has a director in charge of the work with foreigners. During 1914 this director sent 83 traveling libraries in 17 foreign languages and in simple English to 56 towns in the state. He also prepared 19 lists in 9 foreign languages for twelve towns expecting to purchase books for their foreign population.

In Oregon printed slips are furnished by the State Library to every applicant for naturalization telling them that the State Library has books which will help them to pass the examinations.

The traveling library collection of New York state includes 3176 foreign books representing nine languages, but the Director says that this collection should be much larger and more varied if the demands made upon it are to be satisfied.

In connection with work with foreigners it may be well to speak of the work for negroes. Where there are negroes in northern cities they are usually allowed equal privileges with the white population, but no special provision is made for them and the consequence is that they make very little use of the libraries. In the South the negroes are of course not made welcome at the regular libraries and few indeed are the branches for the colored. The first free public library in America exclusively for colored readers was opened on September 23, 1905 in Louisville, Kentucky. To quote from the librarian: "The work at the first colored branch library proved so successful that a second Carnegie building was erected in the Eastern part of the city," and again, "Aside from circulation of books and doing reference work, the libraries encourage and assist in all efforts to the advancement of our citizens to a social betterment. The people are made to feel that the libraries belong to them
and that they may be used for anything that makes for the public welfare. During a single month, forty meetings have been held in the buildings. Nineteen clubs and reading circles meet regularly in these two library buildings.\(^1\) Colored branches have also been established in Houston, Evansville, Memphis, Cincinnati and some other cities, but the large field of work here is undoubtedly much neglected.

5. The library as a social center.

The social center has been defined in the platform of the Social Center Association of America as representing "all the people in all those interests which are common to all. It is the peoples' forum and permanent headquarters for citizenship and neighborly spirit. In it the people come to know one another and how to make their government work." In other words the social center should bring men and women, boys and girls, of all classes, all ages, all interests, together in one neighborhood group, where they can know one another and sympathize with one another's point of view. The spirit of the social center is the spirit of the neighborhood.

If then we give to the term "social center" this broad meaning what proper place has the library as such a center? To those accustomed only to the old fashioned scholarly libraries, where one scarcely dared to breathe, or even to our university libraries, used largely for reference purposes, the library may seem to be going out of its field when it undertakes to become the neighborhood center. But we must remember that the social center is a

\(^1\) L. J. 40:873.
public need. The library is a public utility. It is supported by
the public for the public good. There can be no taint of charity in
the use of its privileges. On this point it seems worth while to
quote what one branch librarian has to say of the use of their club
rooms. "The fact that our halls may be had free of charge is not
their only attraction, for there are other institutions in our
neighborhood where free club rooms are offered. The greater number
of these organizations, however, are partly or wholly supported by
charity, and the popularity of our building is largely explained by
the natural aversion of self-respecting men and women to being ben-
eticiaries of philanthropists. They like the thought that they have
a civic right to the hall they use, instead of feeling that they are
recipients of charity. Another greatly appreciated feature of our
halls is the almost total absence of any noticeable censorship or
guidance on our part. Charity institutions have the word 'pater-
nalism' written all over them. Their manager is usually the leader
of the various clubs and societies meeting in his building; he is
always in the foreground as the central figure. Many of the clubs
are created by him and die out when he withdraws his support. In
the library club room this artificial condition does not exist. Our
clubs are the natural outcome of the social life of the neighborhood,
and all are organized in response to a definite need."¹

Other reasons why the library as a plant may well be used
as a social center are that it is an existing institution and unlike
the school or church it is open the year around, all day and in the

¹ St. Louis Public Library, Annual report, 1913 p. 85.
evening. This, however, does not necessarily mean that all activities carried on in the library building shall be under the direction of the librarian, in fact in many cases it is better that they should not be for they are not properly a part of the work of a librarian as such. There is a growing tendency among librarians to distinguish between the work of the library as a plant and of the library proper.

Every modern library building has an assembly room and one or more club rooms which may be used free of charge by practically any organization, recreational, educational, political, athletic, debating, labor, musical, religious, charitable or civic. The work of the St. Louis Public Library as described by Mr. Bostwick is suggestive of the variety of ways in which these rooms are used. He says "Outdoor organizations include the various turning or gymnastic clubs, and Boy and Girl scouts; social organizations embrace dancing classes, welfare associations, alumni graduate clubs of schools and colleges, and dramatic clubs; the educational, which are very numerous, reading circles, literary clubs galore, free classes in chemistry, French, psychology, etc., and such organizations as the Jewish Culture club, Young Peoples' Ethical Society, a Parliament class, and Industrial and Business Woman's educational leagues. Religious bodies and parish meetings, committees of Mission boards and such organizations as the Theosophical society; charitable or civic activities include the National Conference of Day nurseries, conference of civic agencies W. C. T. U., Business Mens' Association, Advertising Mens' League. Many exhibitions such as wild flower shows, Civic Leagues, Municipal exhibit, etc., are held in these rooms."

In other libraries we read of similar activities. It is not at all an uncommon thing for lectures on various subjects to be given under the auspices of the library. From various places come reports of victrola concerts given by libraries and recently moving pictures have been brought into the library.


Traveling libraries are small collections of books sent from one community to another either by the state, a municipal public library or by private philanthropy. They are usually sent free of cost except for transportation charges to any association and in some cases to any responsible individual asking for them. In general the only conditions are that the books shall be freely circulated, and that they shall be returned to the agency sending them out at the end of a specified period. Exceptions to this are collections sent to clubs or organizations that desire them for study of some special subject, these are circulated only among the members of the group.

Rural traveling libraries, except in the few states that have the County Library system, are usually sent out by the state and are managed by the state library commission, if there is one; by the State Librarian, as in New York; or sometimes by a special library committee appointed for the purpose, as in Kansas.

These libraries are sent into the most remote sections of a state, into isolated farm districts, mining and lumber camps, rural schools, and even to small towns without a public library. In some of these places books are sadly needed. For example, the Wisconsin Library Commission investigated one county containing 150 square miles in which no adult had read a single book during the year be-
cause there were no readable books to be had, while Mr. Dudgeon, who for a number of years was Secretary of the Wisconsin Library Commission tells of sending a library to a community, where in an area six miles square not a single adult had read a book within a year, four homes had the Bible, and some homes had dime novels as their entire supply of reading matter. In one school district where there were seventeen families, only two of them owned a single book.

In an account of "Free Traveling Libraries in Wisconsin" Mr. Frank A. Hutchins, secretary of the free library commission, sums up the merits of the traveling library system in the following way:

"1. It makes good literature acceptable in rural communities and hamlets.

2. It puts the choice and control of the reading matter in the hands of competent authorities.

3. It is an economical system, with no expense for rent, fuel, light or librarian's salary.

4. It keeps up public interest in the books by the frequent migrations of traveling libraries from place to place.

5. The care of such a library and the gradual extension of its usefulness form a social bond in small neighborhoods.

6. The library stations are new centers of intellectual life.

7. These stations are put on the mailing lists of state

1. Wisconsin Library Bulletin, 10:65 (April, 1914)
2. Told by Mr. Dudgeon in an address before the Illinois State Library School in 1911.
agricultural and educational societies and also registered with the department of agriculture in Washington, with the result that good influences from the outside world penetrate the smallest hamlet.

5. The system and purpose of traveling libraries excite quick and universal sympathy.

"To sum up briefly: the traveling library gives an abundant supply of wholesome literature to the people of small communities at a slight cost, and not only excites their interest in such literature but confines their reading to it until their tastes are formed. It is a free day and night school which does not close on Saturdays or Sundays or for long vacations. It instructs, inspires and amuses the old as well as the young and its curriculum is so broad that it helps the housewife in the kitchen, the husbandman in the field, the mechanic in his shop, the teacher in her school, the invalid in her sick room, the boy in his play and the citizen in his civic duties. It leaves no room for bad literature and keeps it from circulating without resort to threats, by the most natural and wholesome methods."

And he says further: "It is, after all, not the few great libraries, but the thousand small ones, that may do most for the people."

The 1912 Yearbook of the League of Library Commissions reports twenty state commissions sending out traveling libraries in 1912. New York state has a traveling collection containing 74,321 volumes and during 1914 collections of books were sent out in response to 1388 applications. Kansas is now circulating over 55,000 volumes in this way, while Wisconsin has nearly 1,000 traveling libraries, containing about 50,000 books. In these states and in some others the work seems to be on a fairly firm basis, but in the United States as a whole the rural population is cut meagerly served.
More than half of the people in the United States live either in the country or in towns of less than 2,000 inhabitants, where the traveling libraries furnish practically all of the library facilities they have, and yet all of the traveling libraries owned by Library Commissions in the United States contain less than 350,000 volumes, a number exceeded by any one of a dozen city library systems that might be named. It is true, of course, that there are traveling library agencies other than the state commissions, but these are comparatively few. Mr. Legler makes the statement that the total issue of all the traveling libraries in the United States is less than that of any one of twenty municipal libraries.

Traveling libraries are also maintained in connection with some city library systems for the purpose of supplying books to communities and homes and various groups of people not served by regular branches. In outlying districts where the homes are too scattered to warrant the establishment of a branch the library often has a "library station" in a store, post-office or other central place, where a small collection of books is left for a time and then replaced as occasion demands by a fresh collection. In addition to such places as Sunday schools, settlements, factories, department stores, fire department stations, and telephone exchanges are supplied. By this means the library endeavors to bring books to people who for lack of time or for other reasons do not go to the main library; to cultivate the reading habit in those who have never had the opportunity to acquire it, and to make it possible for working people to use their small amount of leisure time in a profitable and wholesome way.

Another variety of the city traveling library is the "home library", which is simply a small collection of books placed in a home for a time and then replaced by a fresh collection. These originated as a phase of neighborhood work with children and in most cities still retain the characteristics of such work. Those in Pittsburgh may be taken as typical. Here a collection of, say, fifteen books is placed in a child's home and about once a week a visitor from the library meets a group of ten or twelve children from the neighborhood in the home. The books are exchanged and discussed, the visitor reads aloud or tells stories, and in various ways helps the children to pass a pleasant and profitable hour.

7. Branches and other distributing agencies.

Early in library history it was found that one central building could serve only a limited proportion of the population of a city. To reach the remainder of the people some method had to be devised of carrying the books to them, and chief among these agencies have been: (1) Branches; (2) Deposit stations; and (3) Delivery stations. "A branch is an auxiliary library, complete in itself, having its own collection of books, either occupying a separate building or housed in one or more rooms in a school, park or field house, social settlement, parish house, rented store, etc. and administered as an integral part of the library system, i.e. by a paid staff."¹ The deposit station has a small collection of books, but not a permanent one, the books being sent from the cent-

¹. Definition accepted by A. L. A. based on Miss Eastman's "Branch libraries and other distributing agencies".
tral library and changed frequently. These are located in such places as stores, factories, schools and clubs, and constitute the city traveling libraries, which have been discussed under that heading. A delivery station has no books on deposit but orders left with the custodian are filled from the main library.

In addition to these three general types of subsidiary agencies which are common to almost every city, some cities have introduced home delivery of books. In St. Paul, Minnesota, and Wilmington, Delaware, for example, the public libraries have arranged with the Western Union Telegraph Company to deliver books at a minimum rate of five cents a volume, which is borne by the borrower. Some other libraries have arranged for local delivery of books by parcel post, the borrower paying the postage by a deposit made in advance.

The most important of these agencies through which the library is carrying out its policy of taking the books to the people are the branches. A large percentage of the total circulation of libraries with good branch systems is through the branches. For example, in New York during 1914 only 5 1/2 percent of the circulation of books for home use was from the central building, 1 percent was through the traveling libraries and the remainder from the branches. In Minneapolis, to mention only one more example out of many that might be named, 25 percent of the total circulation in 1914 was through the branches. Such figures as these show clearly that the social importance of the library system in any city depends

1. The statistics of "Public, Society and School Libraries" for 1913, published by the United States Bureau of Education show that 1,844 libraries of 5,000 volumes and over have 1,582 branches.
to a large extent upon the development of such a system.

Furthermore, the branch library, on account of the local or neighborhood character of its work, has an opportunity to come into closer personal contact with its patrons. Thus all kinds of neighborhood work naturally center in the branch. Practically all that has been said in another part of this study on social center work might be re-said here with regard to the branches. The same is true of what has been said concerning children's work, for it is obviously impossible for the central library to reach more than a very small proportion of the children in a city. The club women too are largely accommodated by the branches, although for extended investigation, they must go to the central building for in general the branches have only a limited reference collection.

Analogous to the branch library system of the city are the township and county systems which are being developed to meet the needs of rural districts. The library in the county seat is usually the center of the system, while branches are placed in the smaller towns and villages, and deposit or delivery stations in schools, churches or homes in the purely rural districts.

There are now county library laws in eighteen states and in ten of these eighty-five county systems have been established. These have been especially successful in California where there are thirty-one county systems and in Wyoming in which every public library established is by law a county library. It is undoubtedly true

that the county system offers opportunity for great enlargement of library work, and it may not be too much to expect that the extension of this system will go far toward solving the rural library problem. Says Dr. F. F. Claxton, United States Commissioner of Education. "It is impossible to estimate the good that would come from having central libraries at the county seats and branch libraries in the smaller towns and villages, and the schools serving as distributing points in every county in the Union. It would add immensely to the value and effectiveness of our systems of public education."

III. THE LIBRARY AND THE LEISURE PROBLEM.

Modern industrial conditions have brought with them many serious social problems among which none is more important than that which concerns the proper use of leisure time. The marvelous technical and scientific advances of a century have reduced the time necessary for production and have made possible to the masses an increased amount of leisure. But the culture and the high standards which cause men to make the best use of such opportunities have not always accompanied this added leisure, and it is found that unless leisure is wisely used it may bring greater evils than those which result from overwork. Work even under the worst conditions may have little moral effect but leisure wrongly used may be both mentally harmful and morally degrading. It is the open door to vice as well as to culture. This great social problem must be solved largely by such indirect methods as education, the cultivation of better social ideals and the provision of public opportunities for wholesome recreation. And the potentialities of the library in this direction are one great ground of its social importance.

Most of those who make use of the public library do so outside of their working hours. They may use it for practical purposes, that is to help them in their business, or to get a better education, or they may use it for recreation; but in almost every case it is time free from regular occupation which is so spent. Time, which might be wasted in mere idleness, in some useless or even harmful recreation, can now be profitably spent in public libraries.
The previous discussion has shown the methods by which the library furnishes advantages of a more practical nature which may be utilized in these leisure hours. But fully as important as the opportunity of gaining education or information is the satisfaction of the demand for pure enjoyment. In this connection the library as a social center has been discussed, but little has been said thus far concerning recreational literature. There is of course no clearly marked class of recreative literature, for the same books or magazines may be read by some for recreation and by others for education. In general, however, fiction is considered the recreational literature. Libraries are sometimes condemned for the large amount of fiction they circulate (from 50 to 75 per cent), but it would seem that this need be no cause for apology. For it is largely leisure time that is spent in the reading of library books, time which may be legitimately used in pure recreation. It must also be remembered that the fiction on library shelves is generally carefully selected by people of taste and refinement and embodies the qualities suggested by Mr. Thackeray when he said:

"If books do soothe cheer and console; if books do enlighten, enliven and fortify; if they do make sorrow bearable to or us, or teach us to forget/to endure it; if they do create in us harmless tears or happy laughter, if they do bring forth in us that peace and that feeling of good will of which Mr. Dickens spoke and which anybody who has read his books must have felt has come from them, surely we will not grudge these estimable blessings to the poorest of our friends, but will try with all our might to dispense these cheap but precious benefits over all".  

1. quoted from a speech made by Mr. Thackeray at the opening of the new library in Manchester in 1852.
Abbreviations used are as follows; A.L.A., American Library Association; C, conference number; L.j., Library Journal; Pub. lib., Public Libraries.

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