Organization of College and University Libraries

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Within the last fifteen years, college and university libraries have been led by a number of factors to recognize the importance of sound organization. Perhaps the most obvious of these factors is the growth in the size of collections. Whereas in 1900 no library in the United States had a book collection of over 1,000,000 volumes, by 1937 there were thirteen such libraries, and by 1951, twenty-eight, of which fourteen were university libraries. Whereas there were only 79 libraries with 200,000 or more volumes in 1937, there were 239 in 1950, 103 of which were college or university libraries. At what point organization begins to emerge as a problem and to be recognized as a separate element of administration can only be guessed at, but a fair estimate seems to be when a library collection reaches 200,000 volumes.

Other developments of the last fifteen years that might well be expected to influence library organization are: (1) growth in the campus population and changes in its composition, (2) changes in higher education and in research, (3) rising costs and tightening finances, (4) changes in the rate and in the forms of publication, (5) advances in technology, (6) increased institutional coordination and cooperation, and (7) the growth of professional knowledge. The general outlines of these developments are well known; most of them are discussed at length in other articles in this issue, and are not elaborated upon here. Familiarity with the elements and principles of administration and with the fundamentals of sound administrative organization is also taken for granted.

However, one pertinent factor, namely, the increase in the fund of professional knowledge available to the librarian, should be discussed, especially as it relates to organization. Studies conducted during the
last few years have provided much factual information about the learning process, the methods of scholars, the existence of research materials, and the communication of ideas. Through possessing a more exact knowledge of these factors, the librarian is able to organize his library so that it will be more responsive to the needs of his patrons.

Over the past twenty years, librarians have discovered, taken over, and modified for their own use the principles of management that had been developed earlier in industry, government, and military science. Leaders in this development have been C. B. Joeckel, L. R. Wilson, D. Coney, K. D. Metcalf, and many others. These elements and principles of organization and administration were first publicized widely in the profession by the 1938 Library Institute of the University of Chicago.1 The same year marked the date of the first formal survey of a university library by a committee of experts.2 The published reports of such surveys have dealt at length with the principles of library organization and administration and unquestionably have had considerable influence on the profession.

Steadily increasing collections and the tremendous expansion in campus populations after the war have led many universities to erect new library buildings, or, in less fortunate circumstances, to add to and modify old ones. In the process, librarians have been compelled to review the educational philosophy to be embodied in their libraries and to reconsider organization. They have had to choose between several different methods of organization for service, two of which have evolved within the last fifteen years. After the war, the Cooperative Committee on Library Building Plans also stimulated thinking on library organization as well as on library buildings, through its various conferences and its published proceedings.

Finally, the various graduate schools of librarianship and certain specialized journals have, during the past twenty years, fostered a better understanding of the principles of organization and provided more information on which decisions about organization may be based. The graduate library schools and the college library journals are relatively recent. The Library Quarterly began publication in 1931; College and Research Libraries in 1939.

As recently as 1940 the average college or university library was organized along departmental lines. Work was divided among as many as thirty or forty departments, depending on the size of the library, and the heads of these departments all reported to the chief librarian and were responsible to him alone. The departments were supervised
and coordinated only through one man, the librarian. The span of control of the chief librarian therefore was as large as the number of departments in the library. Yet eight or ten is generally accepted as the maximum number of departments one man can competently control.

As the library grew, more departments were added and the task of the chief librarian was increased. If he felt overburdened, he added another secretary or an assistant who also reported to him. It is obvious that as the number of units grew larger in the big libraries, administration began to break down, or else the librarian became so immersed in operational duties that he had little time left for the broader aspects of librarianship, such as educational planning and institutional relationships, two very important responsibilities.

In the early and middle forties the librarians of some of the large university libraries, dissatisfied with this traditional plan, began to seek a more efficient administrative organization. As early as 1938 Coney referred to "The emergent trend toward a divisional head for technical processes." The work of the library was divided into two to four major divisions, each of which contained a number of related departments. An assistant administrator was appointed for each division, placed in charge of the work of that division, and given the authority necessary to administer it properly. Only the two to four division heads reported directly to the librarian. The changeover to divisional organization in each large library usually followed shortly after the retirement of an older librarian accustomed to the departmental plan of administration. In the seven years since 1945, divisional organization has proved so satisfactory that most of the major libraries now have a small group of capable administrators at a level immediately below that of the librarian.

These early divisions were not always well thought out. Consequently, there was a good deal of rearranging before a uniform plan emerged. At least three different forms of divisional organization were tried at Columbia, Harvard, Illinois, and other universities between 1941 and 1950. The oddities of some of these early forms of divisional organization were due to insufficient understanding of the principles of administrative organization, but in other instances conditions peculiar to the individual institution brought them about. Organization almost never starts from scratch; it is affected by capacities of existing personnel, by environment, and by the continuous interaction of the various parts of the institution. No satisfactory history of this evolutionary process exists; but the development of divisional organization
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at Columbia University is well documented and can be considered typical.

By 1952, however, one particular plan for divisional organization has been widely accepted in large libraries. This is a bifurcated functional organization, in which all library activities are considered either readers' services or technical services. An assistant or associate director is placed in charge of each of the two divisions and is responsible to the director for its conduct. The "librarian" has become in the meantime the "director of the library" or the "director of libraries." At least twenty university libraries are now organized in this fashion. Representative are the libraries of such universities as Illinois, Cornell, Chicago, Tennessee, and Wisconsin, and the library of Pennsylvania State College.

In a number of libraries the two assistant administrators both have the title of assistant director and are coequal. This practice of not designating a second in command, still in use at Harvard, Illinois, and Tennessee, and used at Columbia before 1948, seems administratively questionable. The two officers do perform staff as well as line duties but their first responsibilities are as line officers. The two divisions may be equally important but administrative principles call for a distinction between the two.

These division heads in the past have usually combined line duties with auxiliary staff and general staff duties. The tendency in large libraries now is to split off auxiliary staff functions and assign them to lesser officers attached to the director's office. For example, when the procurement and training of personnel becomes a major activity, a full-time personnel officer is appointed, given a lesser or staff rank as opposed to administrative rank, and assigned to the office of the director. Most such appointments have come into being since 1940.

Many university libraries also have an administrative assistant to the director, who is usually a professionally trained person. This assistant supervises an office staff in charge of general accounting, budget work, supplies, space assignment, payrolls, etc. Examples are the libraries at the Universities of Michigan and Illinois. Sometimes the accounting force reports to the director himself, as at Yale. Such administrative assistants usually perform only technical staff functions.

At Yale, Harvard, and the University of Texas, experiments have been made with a floating research and planning staff attached to the director's office. The research and planning officers, performing only staff functions and having no line authority, certainly appear desirable,
and it is surprising that other libraries have not adopted the idea. Even the Library of Congress staff officers appear to be chiefly technical or auxiliary rather than general staff officers. The 1949-50 Annual Report of the Librarian of Congress contains a description and a chart of the Library's organization. A general staff should contribute significantly to the improvement of libraries by evaluating existing services and providing data for sound planning. A few university libraries have used special staffs for evaluating collections, as has been done at Louisiana State University. However, such duties may be carried on in other university libraries by office personnel whose titles do not reflect their work. Most university libraries appear to depend on administrative or line officers to perform these functions.

A number of variants from this bifurcated function-divisional plan do exist. Harvard University Library has at the secondary level of administration four assistant directors in charge of four units: circulation and reference, cataloging, the Houghton Library (of rare books), and the Lamont Library (for undergraduates). Only the first two are based entirely on function. The University of Pennsylvania Library has, in addition to the two usual assistant directors for service and preparation, a third for administration, corresponding to the Columbia University Library plan of 1944 to 1948. The University of California Library is difficult to assess because of frequent staff changes, but as of 1950 it had an assistant librarian in charge of a variety of specific administrative and public service functions, an acting head of branches at a lower level but reporting to the librarian, and an acting head of general services under the assistant librarian. The heads of technical departments and of certain branch libraries reported directly to the librarian whose span of control covered nine or ten divisions. The State College of Washington Library places an associate director over the two assistant directors for technical services and readers' services.

In some instances the two-unit divisional plan has been adopted only in part. The libraries of the Universities of Kentucky, Syracuse, and Ohio State have a head of branch libraries; the State University of Iowa Library recently abandoned such an appointment. The Universities of New Mexico and West Virginia have not adopted the divisional plan entirely but do have heads of technical processes. In the Northwestern University Library, which has a non-divisional organization, the head of the reference department supervises certain branch libraries. Numerous other variations from the usual bifurcated divisional plan exist, and many libraries are seeking improved adminis-

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tration, especially coordination, at a tertiary rather than a secondary level.

In a few libraries organized on a divisional rather than a departmental basis, one or two relatively new departments are not included in any division but report directly to the chief librarian. An example is the Department of Photographic Reproduction at the University of Chicago, which originated in the early thirties. The chief of the proposed Audio-Visual Center at Stanford University apparently will report to the Director of Libraries. Also, many libraries have established special collections units to bring together private collections and certain form-of-material units, but these ordinarily seem to be fitted into the function-divisional plan.

Divisional organization has been most fully developed in the large university libraries. Examining the organization of medium-sized and small college and university libraries reveals that function-divisional organization has not been widely adopted by them. Smaller libraries usually remain organized on a departmental basis; for them, the departmental plan probably is entirely satisfactory. However, the subject-divisional plan of organization has been adopted by a number of medium-sized and small libraries since 1938. This form of organization will be discussed in the following section.

The advantages of the function-divisional method of organization are often pointed out when the changeover is made: (1) It reduces the librarian's span of control and relieves him of details. (2) Better coordination, which has become necessary, will occur as a matter of course. (3) The division head has no routine responsibilities and can give more time to policy matters and other large problems. (4) Technical processes and readers' services will proceed more smoothly. (5) Costs will be reduced. The success of divisional organization on a functional basis has not been and perhaps cannot be evaluated adequately, but the plan has been accepted widely. A three-way division of university library functions into technical processes, instructional services, and research services has been suggested by one librarian, but the plan has not been adopted by any library. Cornell University Library is planning a new building which will have an undergraduate library unit, a research library unit, and a unit for rare books and special collections.

Increased democracy in administration may be noted nearly everywhere. Staff members are more fully informed of affairs of general interest and are allowed to participate in the making of decisions.
which affect them. Administrative councils have been established since 1945 in many university libraries such as those of the Universities of Chicago, Oklahoma, and Illinois. Reports of their proceedings are usually distributed to the entire professional staff. At least a dozen college and university libraries started staff or administrative bulletins in the forties. Independent staff associations have been organized at Columbia, Illinois, and many other libraries, usually with the encouragement of the directors. The increasing use of these various devices indicate that as libraries have grown larger they have found it increasingly desirable to establish formal lines of communication for the easy transmission of information and orders within the library. The lines for transmitting orders downward are not enough; information and ideas also must move upward and laterally as well. Such activity takes place naturally in small libraries but it must be planned in large ones.

The internal organization of the institutional library has also been affected by the growth of various supra-institutional influences. Examples are the board of regents established for all state-supported higher education in Oklahoma and in New York; the Library Council of the University of California libraries; regional cooperative compacts such as those for the New England Deposit Library, the Midwest Inter-Library Center, and the Southern Regional Education Board; and new or expanding plans for cooperation such as the Farmington Plan and cooperative microfilming projects. So far, however, the influence of such forces on the internal organization of libraries has not been great.

Certain technological experiments in the recording, location, and transmission of information have important implications for all aspects of library service; they may even change the basic nature of the library. However, the full impact of these experiments may not be felt for a number of years if their development continues at the present rate.

Four different bases of departmentalization of readers’ services in college and university libraries exist. Of these, one is traditional, the second has been modified considerably since 1940, the third came into use in 1935, and the fourth is less than five years old. Each is claimed to offer excellent service, each has certain virtues, and each has strong adherents. The three newest are based primarily upon subject rather than function; in fact, this trend toward a subject basis is the outstanding development in organization for service during the last fifteen years.14
Traditional Centralized Organization. The average college and small university library for many years has been and still is organized for service into three functional departments—circulation, reference, and reserve—and often has a fourth commodity or form-of-material department—periodicals or serials. Its virtues hardly need detailing, but it provides no subject-specialist service and is a small-library organization which many institutions have outgrown. It is usually operated more economically than any other library.

Decentralized Subject-Departmental Organization. The plan of service used by most large university libraries is based upon the existence of a strong system of subject-departmental or branch libraries, plus a central unit which serves areas of knowledge not provided for by branches and which supplements branch library service. The central unit is almost always organized on traditional function and material bases, though a number of subject-departmental service units may be housed in the central building. The central unit bookstacks tend to become a storage place for less-used materials.

This system of organization provides very satisfactory and probably effective service to upperclassmen, graduate students, and faculty members, if enough duplication of resources is allowed; if the branches are staffed with librarians having both subject field and professional training, and are not too specialized; if the various units are coordinated properly; and if the entire system is run well. The most common branches are for law and medicine; next most common are units for engineering and the various sciences. These subject-departmental units also tend to take the place of personal libraries which, in this age of increasing publications, the average professor can no longer afford.

In such library systems the needs of undergraduates tend to be overlooked and they formerly were poorly served. During the last few years, however, a number of university libraries have recognized this condition and corrected it by providing an open-shelf undergraduate library, either in a separate or, more often, in the general library building. The Lamont Library opened at Harvard in 1949 is a good example. Others, all in the central library buildings, are at Yale, Chicago, Duke, Texas, Illinois, and U.C.L.A. Four such undergraduate or freshman-sophomore libraries were started in one year, 1951, at Minnesota, Oklahoma, Iowa, and New Mexico.

While this is an excellent plan of service for large universities, it is by far the most expensive because of high staffing costs and extensive duplication of resources. Administration and coordination of units
was often poor or nonexistent until the forties, when administrative centralization was undertaken in many libraries. Many librarians object to the breakdown of subjects into relatively small units, but it may be said that the clientele seldom does. However, even some of the largest libraries have found they can ill afford a fully developed system of numerous branch libraries. The tendency now is to reduce the number of departmental libraries, in the interests of efficiency and economy, by consolidating units or drawing some into the central unit. The establishment of new units is eyed very carefully everywhere.

At the same time it should be noted that the University of California at Los Angeles is expanding its system of subject-departmental libraries,15,16 and that the Massachusetts Institute of Technology after very careful consideration of its plan of library service has decided on a fixed number of outside subject branches.17 Princeton and Iowa have not included the branch libraries for science in their newly-erected central buildings.

A major weakness of branch library service has been the lack of effective administration. This could only be expected when the branch libraries were completely independent, as they used to be in many universities. Most of them have been drawn into the library system only within the past twenty-five years. The departmental libraries at Harvard University are still decentralized administratively; although the director of the university library does have some legal control over them, he prefers as a matter of principle not to exert it. However, the centralization process is going on steadily nearly everywhere else that independent branch libraries still exist; representative are activities at Cornell, Michigan, Oklahoma, and Nebraska.

Within the last few years major improvements have been effected by investing a number of administrators at a level immediately below that of assistant director for public services, with the control of several branch libraries grouped by broad subject fields. At the University of Illinois Library, this improvement took the form of subject councils presided over by elected chairmen.18 At Columbia University, the number of administrative (but not necessarily physical) subject-departmental units was reduced from thirty-seven to fifteen by grouping the administration of two or three such units under another unit, with subject-divisional officers appointed to control the fifteen units.19 The Stanford University Library is now following the plan for coordination outlined by its earlier survey,20 except that each subject-
divisional librarian, instead of managing one subject-divisional service unit, controls a number of separate subject-departmental units; administration is centralized but the units remain as they were, departmental rather than divisional. The plan of having assistants to the assistant director in charge of public services is needed only in institutions where the number of departmental libraries is large.

Centralized Subject-Divisional Organization. The third type of organization is based upon groups of subjects. Service is centralized in the main library building but is divided into five or six units corresponding to such logical divisions of subject fields as humanities, social sciences, physical sciences, and life sciences.

Provided for each subject division is a reading room staffed by professional librarians with appropriate subject training. In the room, freely available to the reader on shelves about the walls and on free-standing stacks, is a collection of 20,000 to 30,000 of the most frequently used volumes. Adjacent to the reading room are bookstacks housing the other books on the subject. To free the librarian for reference and advisory work, some libraries with this scheme of organization have placed exit controls and circulation service at the exits from the room or from the building.

The plan is designed to obtain some of the advantages of the subject-departmental system for medium-sized libraries without the disadvantages, including cost, of the large system. It should be noted that this organization appears to have many advantages, but has never been evaluated. Descriptions are usually enthusiastic; reviews by outsiders are sometimes critical. Like any other plan, it works best when conditions are favorable for it.

The idea for this plan of organization dates back to the 1880's, and it has been used for a long time by some public libraries. The first university libraries to adopt it were Brown University (which reduced its nineteen service units to three) and the University of Colorado, both in 1938. Since that time it has been adopted by the University of Nebraska, Washington State College, and the University of Oregon. The University of Wisconsin considered the plan while designing its new building but decided against it. It seems to be suited best to small or medium-sized universities. No very large university has adopted it.

However, various modifications of the administrative (though not physical) organization along subject-divisional lines have been used in efforts to improve the administration of departmental libraries, especially in the largest institutions. The examples at Columbia, Illi-
nois, and Stanford have been mentioned. At the University of California, reference services have been separated into subject-divisional units.

The heads of the subject-divisional units usually report to the librarian. One of them is sometimes designated as the assistant librarian, although all unit heads are usually administratively co-equal. If technical services are combined into a functional unit, the resulting span of control for the librarian is not excessive—the number of subject units varies but is never large. At least one general service unit usually exists as well, to service the central bookstacks and to control exits.

Open or Interspersed Organization. The newest method of organizing for service might be called the open, fluid, or interspersed system. In its best form it is basically a subject organization. Books are shelved in all areas of the building, with reader space scattered throughout. Service is provided according to readers’ need or financial ability of the library; with the exits controlled, such a building could be kept open by one exit attendant plus one roving assistant. It places unusual dependence on the scheme of physical classification of books, and may prove difficult for undergraduates to use if collections are large.

The central unit usually serves only social sciences and humanities; physical and biological sciences are served by branch libraries. Examples of this plan are to be found in the libraries at Princeton and Iowa, and at Oklahoma A. and M. College. The building for the last, which is not yet completed, will have two large browsing and reserve rooms. The State University of Iowa Library, visited by the writer, provided service at a circulation desk, in a reference area, in a special collections room, in a public documents area, and at the exit. Excepting for these services, the library appeared to be basically self-service.

Along similar lines, Northwestern University within the past year has thrown open its central bookstacks to all comers as an experiment; it provides no assistance therein to readers, but supervises the exit.

The open plan of service corresponds rather closely to decentralized subject-departmental organization and has some of the elements of the subject-divisional plan as well. But it is more flexible or fluid than either. It has not yet been evaluated but probably will prove popular. It has one advantage that none of the others have: service can be reduced to a very low level. This is advantageous in permitting longer hours of service, but may possibly make it difficult to prove the need for an increased subject-field or subject-department staff when and if such a need arises.

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Each of these newer systems of organization has been developed in an effort to improve service or reduce cost, or both. Each is based upon definite theories about teaching, learning, and research, and the administration of each can be sound. The last three plans provide small and informal reading areas, easy access to at least a selected collection of books, and service by specialists who combine subject field and professional training. Of course, no institution can adopt any one of the plans blindly. Each college or university must choose its library plan with a regard for educational policies and practices of the institution, campus population, financial considerations, campus geography, the existing building, and like factors.

A trend toward the unification of all acquisition and cataloging functions under one divisional head was noticed some fifteen years ago. Since then, the term “technical processes” (or “technical services” as some prefer it) has come into everyday use and a functional division including all technical services has been adopted by many libraries. This divisional organization appears to be a successful improvement over previous plans of organization.

However, both the content and the departmentalization of technical services have been under attack from several sources. Some of the forces at work are: (1) dissatisfaction with the institutional approach to the physical book and a trend toward the wider acceptance of bibliographical and national approaches to information; (2) the difficulty and expense of processing the ever-growing flood of information; (3) increasing use of non-book forms for the recording of information; (4) arrearages in cataloging; (5) growing criticism of huge card catalogs; (6) acceptance of the principle of different levels of value and use of materials, and consequently of levels of accessibility and of cataloging; and (7) technological developments in recording, locating, and providing information. So far few major changes have resulted, but sooner or later these forces may affect all aspects of the individual library.

The chief criticism of the present divisional organization of technical services centers about its failure to recognize the importance of bibliography. R. C. Swank suggested the creation of a bibliography department (i.e., division) which would compile and service both catalogs and bibliographies. Although the Duke University Library established a Bibliography Section in its technical processes division, no larger library appears to have followed this suggested plan.

A similar proposal to combine certain services to readers with cer-
tain technical processes was made in 1940 by J. J. Lund, who suggested that ordering, accessioning, and descriptive cataloging be one unit, and subject cataloging and reference (or bibliographical) service to readers another.25

A number of university libraries have drawn together their bibliographical resources and placed them near the card catalogs. Examples are to be found in the libraries of the University of California at Los Angeles and the University of Illinois; it is planned at Stanford University. This action has not yet been reflected in the administrative organization of libraries, though it should be said that since the thirties an increasing number of libraries have been providing assistance to readers by placing an assistant at an information desk near the card catalog.

Close association in a divisional organization has tended to break down the barriers separating acquisition from cataloging functions. An illustration of this is the growth of deferred cataloging, preliminary cataloging, or simply precataloging. When uncataloged material piles up in the acquisitions department, it is arranged by serial number or date of receipt or by author; and a simple author card (an order slip is often used) is inserted in the card catalog. The arrearage can be processed regularly at any time, and in the meantime is available for use. Sometimes the circulation of such items is handled by the acquisitions department, sometimes by the regular circulation unit. A similar system has long been used in the Library of Congress; in the 1940’s, versions were tried out by Harvard26, 27 and Yale, and since then precataloging has been accepted by a growing number of libraries. The John Crerar Library, which has closed stacks, has adopted accession or date of receipt arrangement of its cataloged collection.28

A similar disregard of functional departmentalization is evident at Columbia, Illinois, and other university libraries, where units of the acquisitions department completely process added volumes of continuations and serials and even do some simple cataloging.

Nearly every university library has had to create additional subdepartments or sections in both acquisitions and cataloging during recent years to cope with an increased volume of work. The University of California Library, a representative large library, in 1950 had sixteen units (called sections and divisions) in cataloging and eight in acquisitions. Organization in acquisitions departments is usually based on forms of material; cataloging departmentalization is usually on many bases.
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An average acquisitions department in a moderately large library will have form-of-material units for book order, for serials, and maybe for government documents and microcopies, plus a gift and exchange unit, and process units for checking, accounting, and clerical activities.

Departmentalization in cataloging is usually much more complex. The usual bases for division of work are form of material, subject, language, level of difficulty, and level of cataloging to be given, plus service or process. However, there is no general agreement on the levels at which departmentalization on the various bases will be made. Rather common is an upper-level division by form into a unit for serials and continuations, and other units for books. Cataloging of books is divided into sections by subject, language, level of difficulty, or level of cataloging to be given. Subject units are still the most common, but the tendency now is for such units to cover an entire subject field such as social sciences.

In a few instances, cataloging is divided at the upper level on a functional basis into descriptive and subject cataloging—Duke University and Yale University libraries provide examples. The University of Chicago experimented during the forties with division into descriptive and subject cataloging at upper levels, but now has such separation at the very lowest level, within the subject units, where the separation is rather vague.

An increasing number of university libraries are experimenting with upper-level division into units based on level of cataloging to be given or level of difficulty. The Harvard University Library established three levels based upon value of material and level of cataloging, with some cataloging deferred and handled by “drives.” Items destined for the New England Deposit Library received very brief cataloging. The Columbia University Library uses a Processing Unit for simple cataloging; it is less than four years old. Many libraries separate cataloging at upper or lower levels into units for items for which printed cards are available and units to handle items for which no cards are available, a level of difficulty basis. The processing of some materials in acquisitions departments has already been noted. It seems probable that the reluctance of some cataloging departments to adopt a number of different levels of cataloging has contributed to the development of precataloging in acquisitions departments and to the performance of some simple cataloging there.

Sub-professional and clerical activities have been separated adequately from professional work in most large libraries, as they have at
California, Illinois, and Columbia Universities. The volume of such service processes has led to their departmentalization; units are established for checking, typing, card reproduction, marking, filing, etc. Some units have grown so large that they have themselves been subdivided. Fluidity is maintained by keeping clerical personnel in large or small pools rather than assigning them to small cataloging units.

Binding is sometimes a unit in acquisitions or in cataloging or under the serial section in either department, but more often it is a third-level activity under the chief of technical processes. Wherever it is, it is usually a problem unit.

There is still wide variation in the organization of work for serials and public documents, though units for each are now usually located in acquisitions departments. In a few libraries, the unit in acquisitions processes the materials completely, including doing the cataloging; in others, the work is split between the acquisitions department and the cataloging department. A few libraries with functional organization maintain public service units for public documents and serials; in these libraries, the public service units may also do all or part of the processing of such materials. A trend is emerging toward the establishment of central serials record units; many such units have been established within the last five years.

Technical processes, especially the work of acquisitions, are increasingly centralized. The central acquisitions department usually acquires for all units of the library except those some distance from the main campus. Although standard cataloging and the cataloging of standard forms of material are usually centralized now, much lower-level processing of non-book materials is carried on in branch or other service units. Perhaps some such materials can be processed for use more economically and more satisfactorily by small readers' service units. Whatever the reason, there is much more processing work carried on in this way than is generally recognized. However, growing acceptance of bibliographical duties by cataloging departments and increasing acceptance of many levels of processing are tending to draw such decentralized processing work back into the cataloging department.

Conclusion. Most of this discussion has dealt with developments in the large library field. Anyone who investigates the subject will discover that a dozen or so of the largest libraries pioneer in the study of organization and in experimenting with new forms. Probably the function-divisional plan of library organization encourages such activity. But the obvious reasons for concentrating on large libraries are
that problems of organization become more important as a library grows; and that departmentalization has to be clearer and more complete as the work grows in volume and complexity. Leadership and the chief contributions appear to come from those large university libraries whose directors are themselves personally interested in problems of organization and administration.

References


