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Library Trends

Current Trends in Personnel Administration

BERNARD VAN HORNE

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Library Trends

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Each issue is concerned with one aspect of librarianship. Each is planned by an invited Guest Editor. All articles are by invitation. Suggestions for future issues are welcomed and should be sent to the Managing Editor.

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Introduction

BERNARD VAN HORNE

In August 1938, Mr. John B. Kaiser entitled his contribution to the University of Chicago Library Institute “Personnel: the Key to Administration.” This title was a statement of a conviction widely held in the profession. Expressed in many different ways, it was the instant, automatic response of all who were approached regarding plans for this issue of Library Trends. The sheer size of the subject, its multifaceted nature, when applied to questions of policy and practical administration in the many different types of libraries, dictated compromise with the ideal of completeness in planning this issue. No attempt has been made to discuss and to assess trends in each of the fields. Rather it has been the intent to review the major questions involved, particularly emphasizing the individual, for here is often the danger for the personnel worker or administrator faced with the need to meet the tests of a modern scientific approach to personnel matters.

Certainly self-criticism was in order twenty-five or thirty years ago all through the profession. Little defense could be offered for the highly individual, frequently temperamental and quixotic handling of personnel matters a generation ago. Libraries as small units in local government or as parts of larger institutions, often enjoying independent or semi-independent status, frequently fell deplorably short of satisfactory standards of personnel practice. Many still do, but if any significant trend can be detected from the general field of personnel policies and practices in the library field, it is that, in self-defense, if for no other reason, library administrators must formulate their policies, must seek to meet standards in fields comparable to their own, if they are to gain and hold the personnel essential for growth and development. The small size of almost all library operations is at once an opportunity for the finest kind of personnel work and a temptation to neglect it altogether. No library operation reaches the size, complexity, and impersonality of the industrial units common to

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our society. With few exceptions, the staff can be known to the administrator individually. Administrative hierarchies are modest in size or absent.

Nationally, the profession, especially since the thirties, has recognized the need to raise educational and economic standards, to develop classification and pay plans and to apply them objectively, to relate categories of employees to employees of similar requirements elsewhere in the public service structure or the business world. The strongest force working for this goal, one which has notable achievements behind it, which has tremendous influence and has been a source of strength for the smaller library especially, is the American Library Association's Board on Personnel Administration. A review of its history and operations needs to be made, and its mission now clearly stated.

The emphasis placed in this issue on the individual is evident in the lead article, "The Librarian," by Ralph Munn. Mr. Munn's perspective on the librarian, what he was, what he is becoming, and his place in society, keys the issue. The individual is viewed through each of the rest of the articles by way of his morale, his preparation for the work, his placement, his orientation to the job, and his career. The last two articles, the one by Hazel B. Timmerman, "Classification and Pay Plans," and John B. Kaiser's "Civil Service and Libraries," are overviews of two major developments in personnel work in libraries on which information on trends is primary to all administration.

It is regrettable that so many desirable and useful studies had to be omitted. Personnel questions applied to the different fields of library work have been and are being discussed in other issues of Library Trends, but a study of staff organizations, of migration in connection with individual development, of the Board on Personnel Administration mentioned above, of methods of estimating performance, of the value of large versus small institutions as trainers, of new requirements implicit in the adult education activities, all would be desirable at this point.

Personnel standards in libraries have risen with requirements for the profession and with the growth of objective administration and the development of stated policies. Whether librarianship was an occupation or a profession a generation ago could have been debated, but the creative accomplishments of the day of the builders could not. That there is any magic in a set of standards that will transform all who meet its prescriptions is open to question. We can only hope to make it more probable and to control conditions for individual and
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group development. A profession essentially implies a profession of faith and a way of life based on training and natural endowment of a high order. Personnel work has only one aim, and that is to enable the librarian to act creatively in bringing reader and book together.

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The Librarian

RALPH MUNN

During the course of the Public Library Inquiry Robert D. Leigh and his associates discovered that there is a strong basic belief among librarians which has inspired and sustained them through the years. Leigh isolated and defined this belief, calling it "the librarian's faith." He defined it as "a belief in the virtue of the printed word, especially of the book, the reading of which is held to be good in itself, or from its reading flows that which is good." 1

Although librarians may never have reduced this belief to a formal statement or thought of it as a faith, it is a principal part of their heritage. The librarian of 1954 wishes to accept this traditional faith of his fathers, but like the modern theologian he is disturbed by gnawing doubts. He has learned just enough from research to want some demonstrable facts to support his faith. Is there virtue in all reading? Is the reading of a light novel of more value than viewing its televised dramatization? Can the individual reader drain a book of its meaning, or must he match his reactions with those of others in a discussion group? What are the actual effects of reading upon the various categories of people?

Though he lacks positive answers to these questions, the librarian still follows in the faith despite his doubts. Today, as in the past, he believes that there is virtue in the printed word—and in its audio-visual counterparts—and he acts upon it. It is still the determining factor in his decisions; it inspires him in his work, bringing to it a strong sense of social significance.

The public librarian has had, however, to revise his belief in the power of the book and the library to attract readers of all kinds. Our grandfathers acted upon the assumption that every literate person is thirsting for knowledge, that the world is waiting for us to bring it a book. Later, our fathers learned that this was not true. Now we in our day must cope not only with the natural human apathy toward

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any type of self-improvement which requires effort, but we face new forms of mass communication which have reduced effort to the minimum.

The so-called revolution in mass communications, affecting the way in which most people spend their hours of leisure, has profoundly changed the world as the librarian must view it. With entertainment and information available in every man’s living room by the mere turning of a knob, or at the nearest newsstand at modest cost, there is little incentive for the casual reader to go to a somewhat distant library for a book. The librarian can no longer win success for his library by simply providing a stock of readable books.

Today’s librarian is compelled to reappraise his library’s objectives, and to select certain ones of them for emphasis. He must fit his library’s services into those channels in which the more popular media are inadequate. Instead of the former shot-gun type of service which is aimed generally at the community at large, he must develop specific ones which are focused with pin-point precision at limited groups which need and will respond to special services. All of this demands a much wider knowledge of the ways of the world, a keener insight into the needs and interests of people, and the ways in which they group themselves according to occupational, racial, cultural, and other factors.

Because of his faith in the value of reading, the librarian has never bowed to public apathy. When the book alone failed to attract enough of all kinds of people, he used it as the basis of adult education programs. Since his experience had been with individual readers, his first efforts at adult education were directed at individuals through readers’ advisors and reading-with-a-purpose courses. After a time this individual approach lost much of its appeal, and today the librarian is engrossed in a variety of activities with groups.

It must be admitted that much of the librarian’s efforts in adult education have been based more upon faith and enthusiasm than upon extensive training or knowledge of the field. He has, however, had a measure of success, and in one form or another adult education programs appear to be a continuing and growing library activity.

So the librarian is becoming an educator. The motivation of adult learners, means of awakening and sustaining interest, methods of building book-centered programs, techniques of leading discussion groups and film forums—these and a hundred other problems are now added to those with which former generations of librarians wrestled.

His entry into educational fields has brought advantages as well as
problems to the librarian. He finds new acquaintances and broadened interests as he sits in adult education councils, Great Books committees, Foreign Policy Association chapters, film selection and all of the other groups which are concerned with informal education for adults. His association with these groups has no doubt resulted in an increased awareness on their part of the library’s book and personnel resources, and greater recognition of the librarian as something more than a distributor of books.

During the last two decades the librarian has also had to face many new internal problems. Recordings and films require new policies and techniques for selection, organization, and use. Microphotography is replacing parts of the library's own printed material and demands some technical knowledge. In larger libraries subject divisions have brought many problems in coordination. Public service has been more sharply defined by age groups. There are specialized activities for the preschool toddlers and the teen-agers and Golden Age Clubs for those who are in retirement.

Who is the librarian of 1954? What is his education and training for all of these widened responsibilities?

The newer librarian has had more formal education than his predecessors. As recently as the Public Library Inquiry, completed in 1949, only five out of twenty of the older group of librarians possessed an academic degree, as compared with seventeen out of twenty of the younger ones. Eventually every librarian will have earned a degree since the 1951 standards of the Board of Education for Librarianship of the American Library Association require it for admittance to an accredited library school. Advanced degrees in subject fields are still rare among public librarians, but much less so among those in college and university work where the doctorate in either a subject area or librarianship is becoming a common requirement for the highest posts.

The English major—the applicant who “just loves books”—is still welcomed, though somewhat reluctantly, by the library schools, all of which are alert to the widened demands now made upon the librarian. The schools are recommending a broadly based college course, with some emphasis upon the social sciences for most applicants; majors in the appropriate subject fields for those hoping to become specialists.

The library school student now learns more about the social, educational, and governmental structures in which the library must function; the objectives of librarianship in its various areas; and the methods by which they can be attained or approached. In spite of the newer
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and additional demands made upon the librarian, however, he is still concerned primarily with the selection, organization, and use of books, and service to readers. Basic courses in these fields require much of the student's time, so that he is compelled to face many of his newer responsibilities with insufficient library school guidance.

Many of the schools now include instruction and practice in research methods, and there is already a substantial body of investigations relating to library problems. Surely the librarian of the future will base his decisions more upon objective investigation and fact, less upon rule of thumb, faith, and enthusiasm.

Supplementing the library schools are the many workshops, seminars, and special summer courses which deal with one specific phase of librarianship. It is a significant reflection of the times that Ralph Shaw's seminars on research methods in management have been well attended. Twenty-five years ago they would have been foredoomed to failure.

There are some who think that the librarian has veered too far into the field of management, and shows too few of the bookish traits of his predecessors. These critics appear to relate bookishness only to the polite forms of literature and to the rarities of the book world; expertness in the literature of political science or physics is not an acceptable substitute.

Today's administrator can only answer that the expansion and increased efficiency of his library are directly due to his wider knowledge of management; that greater familiarity with the belles-lettres would not help him cope with the problems of his day. The subject specialist can only reply that he must confine much of his reading to his own area if he is to gain proficiency in it.

The fact is that the librarian, like all other professional workers, is the victim of specialization. The literature of librarianship itself has become so extensive as to require much of the reading time of those who would keep abreast of current thought and development. The large library must have some staff members whose expertness in personnel management, public relations, audio-visual materials and equipment, adult education, and the public school curriculum is far more important than absorption in purely cultural interests. The chief of the smaller library often faces the impossible task of learning all of these specialties himself.

Since World War II the percentage of men in the library schools has been substantially higher than their percentage among practicing librarians. Improved salaries and the widely publicized shortage of
librarians have without doubt played their parts in attracting men, but the library’s expanded program, the opportunities for men of varied backgrounds and aptitudes, and the somewhat greater prestige now accorded the librarian are believed to be strong contributing factors. The library schools appear to be getting more young men who decided upon librarianship while still in college, fewer older ones who are turning from other occupations which they found to be unsatisfactory.

More men with creative and administrative ability are needed, but in seeking them we face the real danger of losing those women who are equally gifted. Scores of other occupations are now open to women, and those with the highest potentials are unlikely to choose librarianship if they continue to see most of the more desirable posts go to men. Whatever the need of men may be, we must not discourage the type of woman who should be ready to succeed the Flora Belle Ludingtons, the Amy Winslows, and the hosts of women who are carrying the banner perhaps less conspicuously, but no less ably and devotedly. Governing boards and top administrators can best serve librarianship by making appointments and promotions solely on the basis of fitness for the position.

From some of our older librarians we hear warnings that we are not producing “leaders and statesmen,” that the professional giants of a former day are not being replaced. It is true that librarianship once had a few pre-eminent leaders who occupied the national stage with rather little in the way of a supporting cast. In their times, William Warner Bishop came close to being “Mr. University Library,” and John Cotton Dana, “Mr. Public Library.” The spotlight was focused upon these leaders almost to the exclusion of all others. Certainly it is a sign of growth and progress that the cast of able players has become so large as to preclude individual stardom on such a national scale as these men knew it.

On the local scene, there were many libraries in which a single strong leader kept the control of every detail of operation in his own hands. Mary Frances Isom was the Library Association of Portland, Oregon; now three assistant directors supervise various phases of that library’s public services. Perhaps to a lesser degree, Adam Strohm dominated the Detroit Public Library; today Ralph Ulveling works with and through a strong team of able associates. This change has brought many more opportunities at or near the top for librarians with creative imagination and administrative skill.

A degree may be merely a symbol, but the master’s degree, as now
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given after the basic library school course, has unquestionably added to the librarian’s prestige. It has brought the school librarian to parity with teachers who have spent a fifth year for a master’s degree. It adds somewhat to the academic respectability of the college and university librarian. It impresses city councilmen when the public librarian seeks a higher salary scale.

The university librarian, particularly, has gained in prestige through advanced education. In the not distant past, many of the more prominent university and college libraries were administered by men who had been brought in from the teaching or other fields. It is known that some such appointments were made after the university president had canvassed available library personnel and found it lacking in the scholarly attainments which he required. Today practically all major university and college libraries are in charge of professionally educated librarians.

The librarian of 1954 enjoys a better salary than his predecessors, thanks largely to the inflationary influences of the postwar period and to the demand for more and more librarians. Beginning salaries have, in general, risen beyond the cost-of-living index, indicating that the young librarian is better off than ever before. In far too many cases, however, the salaries of experienced librarians have not risen proportionately. There is often too small a gap between the beginner and the librarian who began a dozen years ago at $1,800. Low salaries are still the principal cause of dissatisfaction.

In spite of low salaries, extreme devotion to his own library and to the advance of library service in general has always been a primary characteristic of the librarian. Librarianship has been a cause to be served with the zeal of the missionary. Hours, effort, and personal sacrifice have meant little to the majority of librarians as long as they were serving the public at home or carrying the gospel into the hinterlands.

Sometimes one wonders what has become of this devotion when the current graduate inquires in far greater detail about salary, vacations, sick leave, the five-day week, evening assignments, and working conditions than about the opportunities for professional growth and service. We can hope that it is a sign of the times, and that these young people are merely taking their cue from the columns of the library press in which libraries, desperate for help, emphasize all of these material advantages and even boast of climate and opportunities for week-end travel. We also know that when these young people come to grips with the job, most of them settle down like old-timers.
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It may also be true that selfless devotion has been carried too far. The typical small library—and too many larger ones—is outgrown and outmoded, devoid of comfort, and lacking in the ordinary mechanical aids which every industrial worker demands as a right. It is understaffed and the staff is underpaid. Perhaps too much self-sacrifice, too great a devotion to service at whatever personal cost, is one root of the trouble. The librarian has been too modest, too willing to accept and actually be thankful for little. A more aggressive attitude, a readiness to fight for more liberal support for his library and for himself are traits with which the librarian may well balance his devotion. This younger generation may show us the way.

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There are no aspects of library education which do not have implications of greater or lesser significance to the larger subject of library personnel. In examining the rather considerable accumulation of literature devoted to professional training, however, one cannot but be struck forcibly by its theoretical and idealistic approach and by the lack of realistic measurement of the components and product of professional training. Expressed in other terms, our preoccupation seems to be invariably directed toward newer recruitment programs, new academic devices, new curriculums, and almost never toward a scientific and practical exposure of the student recruit, the resources of faculty and instruction made available to him, and the processes through which he is eventually assimilated into the profession.

By way of illustration, the literature is barren as far as any examination of the kind of person who, as a library school recruit, will in due course materialize into a personnel recruit. Is he mature? Is his foundation education adequate? Is librarianship his first vocational choice, or was it simply an expedient second or third choice? Is he psychologically and physically a promising candidate for a profession where success is uniquely balanced between scholarship and human leadership? The answers to such questions would obviously enable the profession to make better use of the recruit, as well as provide the foundations upon which any sound recruitment program is built.

The qualifications of our existing teachers, the provisions which exist to enable them to maintain a realistic liaison with the working profession through sabbatical leaves and internships are subjects which are of direct concern to the library employer but remain subjects which have strangely been left uninvestigated. With almost as many curricular approaches to librarianship as there are library schools, there has been little attention given by the profession to measuring just what

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the common content of such varied curriculums may be and what its values are in terms of employment.

Questions such as the foregoing ones are illustrative of the need for realistic, scholarly investigations of the facts that underlie library education, facts which, when exposed, cannot but have significant and constructive implications. In their absence and in the compass of a short article it is impossible to go beyond three or four of the larger aspects of professional education which are of especial relevance to the subject of personnel.

The pattern of library education for the past decade has been one of considerable flux. This has been due, in part, to far-reaching attempts at curricular restatements toward the end of bringing education for librarianship into closer line with the changing objectives and needs of the employing profession. Studies such as those of J. P. Danton,1 Joseph L. Wheeler,2 Bernard Berelson,3 Harold Lancour,4 and Robert D. Leigh5 sparked interest in new philosophical approaches to library education that were explored further in the meetings of the various national library associations and through many special conferences throughout the country. Other factors which were responsible for change were of a less voluntary nature. They included problems in recruitment of students to meet great shortages of trained library personnel, difficulties in applying accrediting standards, and fiscal problems of schools in relation to standards and services.

The relationship of library education to library personnel is in three principal directions. While perhaps not directly responsible for recruitment, the school of library science has an inescapable relationship with, and responsibility for, both the recruitment and selection of new professional personnel. Second, the educational philosophy of the school, together with its resources to implement that philosophy, is highly determinant in the quality of professional training of new personnel for the profession. Finally, the processes of placement of the recent graduate and the placement guidance of the less recent graduate have a direct relationship to the personnel situation of every employing library. While it may be safe to say that very considerable gains have been made in the past decade in professional education itself, the areas of recruitment and placement are characterized by problems which are still critical and which are largely unsolved.

Until perhaps a decade ago library education was largely in the hands of those schools accredited by the Board of Education for Librarianship of the American Library Association. The Board maintained standards for library education and enforced those standards
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through visitations and reports. Through it the library employer was able to obtain considerable information about specific schools, and could also exert considerable influence on professional education. “Graduation from an accredited library school” became a qualifying device for most civil service, certification, and institutional personnel systems. Likewise, the accredited list was a useful guide for the recruit to the profession.

The list of such accredited schools now numbers thirty-eight institutions which are providing roughly 1,500 graduates to the profession each year. New Board of Education for Librarianship standards adopted in 1951 call for consideration of only graduate programs for accreditation. While this may be a factor in reducing the list during the present three-year program of evaluative visits, it is probable that the admission of previously unaccredited schools will offset the number which may be dropped.

It is a mistake, however, to consider the training of professional library personnel in terms of only the accredited schools. According to statistics provided by the United States Office of Education some 559 institutions of higher learning in this country offer training in library science, 214 of which offer programs exceeding twelve semester hours of work. The number of “trained” recruits which such institutions provide the library field is not known, but it would seem safe to guess that the number exceeds that of schools accredited by the Board of Education for Librarianship, perhaps by several times. The unaccredited department or school reached its present numerical strength immediately after World War II not only to meet shortages of library personnel in elementary and secondary schools, but also to meet the personnel needs of public, college, university, and even special libraries.

While very little information is available about unaccredited institutions, their influence and significance for the employing profession is becoming quite visible. The Board of Education for Librarianship has virtually no control over or communication with them. From the number of institutions involved, it is certain that standards of admission and instruction may vary from acceptable to completely unacceptable levels. Some state certification boards, government personnel agencies, notably the United States Armed Forces, and individual institutional personnel classification structures have modified their qualifications to admit graduates of unaccredited schools to full professional status. Perhaps most important of all has been the effect of the unaccredited school on recruitment, for frequently its graduates
discover that they may obtain eligibility for the status they desire only by virtually beginning their training again from scratch at schools on the accredited list.

The effect of the unaccredited institution upon the accredited school is even more marked. The statistics already cited indicate an average student body of less than forty among the accredited schools, a figure far below the minimum number of students required by any graduate school or department to justify an adequate budget, faculty, and other resources necessary to provide reasonable standards. While poor recruiting on the part of the profession may account for low enrollment in accredited schools, it is not unlikely that competition for students with the larger number of unaccredited institutions may also be an effective factor. That enrollment far below capacity may eventually affect standards of admission and quality of faculty and instruction is probably an unescapable conclusion.

It is paradoxical that the recent thinking of the profession with regard to library education has tended toward the point of view that the number of accredited library schools should be reduced to a point where there could be reasonable assurance for an enrollment of sufficient size in all schools to justify the highest standards of instruction and faculty. Leigh suggested that the thirty-six schools on the accredited list in 1949 be cut to twelve or fifteen. The profession has in fact, by inactivity, allowed a professional situation to develop wherein it has little information and, as a profession, virtually no control. The recent coming into being of the National Commission on Accrediting, just as the Board of Education for Librarianship was beginning to activate a stronger program, further complicates the situation. The Commission has indicated that it intends to move toward the accreditation of total institutions by regional associations. Should the Commission realize this objective, it may be difficult for the library profession to influence or prescribe standards for professional education or to obtain collective information about the hundreds of institutions on which it must depend for its trained personnel.

The shortage of trained recruits to meet library needs has been one of the recurring issues of the profession since World War II—especially, as it has been noted, in view of low enrollments in schools of library science. Recruitment has been the responsibility of committees of most of the national, regional, and state library associations, most notably of the Joint Committee on Library Work as a Career, which came into existence soon after the conclusion of the war and is sponsored by all of the major professional library associations. As a result
of such activities there appeared many recruitment pamphlets, posters, and leaflets describing the profession as a vocational possibility for high school and college students, and sporadic attempts were made to orient vocational advisers and even to communicate directly with groups of students in colleges and schools. However substantial these efforts were, the results have been far from adequate either to meet the needs of the profession or the minimum enrollment requirements of accredited library schools.

In an effort to explore the recruiting process the Committee on Recruiting and Personnel of the Association of American Library Schools attempted to reach all students enrolled during the 1951–52 academic year in accredited schools of library science through a questionnaire. The purpose of the questionnaire and study, which ensued was to determine what factors attracted students to library training that particular year. Of the 1,200 students replying to the questionnaire, 38 per cent attributed their choice of a career to the influence of a particular librarian, 19 per cent to their experience of working in libraries, and 10 per cent to their use or observation of libraries. Only 10 per cent indicated that they had been influenced by, or had even seen, any printed recruitment literature. The study would seem to indicate that past recruitment activities of the profession have been inadequate and in the wrong directions. While the preparation of a pamphlet or poster may be more quickly and psychologically satisfying to a committee, it seems evident that recruitment activities will not meet with great success until they take into account and effectively stimulate the responsibility of the individual member of the profession for recruitment.

The most obvious change in the pattern of library education has been the shift during the past eight years from the fifth-year postgraduate program resulting in a second baccalaureate to the graduate fifth-year program resulting in a master's degree. The recent change of policy on the part of the Board of Education for Librarianship to consider only programs at the graduate level for accreditation purposes indicates that the new graduate standard will be woven into the fabric of certification systems, civil service and merit systems, and many individual institutional personnel classification plans. Although the change of the fifth-year programs from the undergraduate to the graduate level may represent in part only the correction of an academic inequity, any study of the period in which this process occurred indicates that it was accompanied by curricular changes of some profundity. Perhaps most important of all was the opportunity for
each library school to examine the objectives of library education anew, and to experiment with its own curricular interpretations of those objectives. That this occurred is evident in the variations of program and differences in philosophical approach that are recognizable in the curriculums of the accredited schools today. The relationship of undergraduate preparation to the graduate degree, the importance of research in the first-year program, standards for admission to the graduate year, the dimensions of core programs—all are typical of problems which have many varied expressions in existing schools, and which probably will not find common solution until the schools have had further experience and time for experimentation, and until the employing profession is able to make evaluations in terms of the graduates it has employed.

Perhaps the principal gain that is already discernible from the curricular changes since World War II is in the emergence of the more general approach to library education rather than the specialized program. Special programs for children’s librarians, catalogers, reference service, school library service, and so on, in which the student became “typed” not only in his own mind but through the processes of placement and employment, have tended to disappear. Too frequently the student who prepared himself in a specialty, such as work with children, found that in the placement process another far different specialization, such as reference work, was more suitable and attractive. Too frequently, also, the person who might have been eminently suitable for one kind of position was passed over because, through specialization in the library school, he had become irrevocably identified with some other particular area of librarianship. The disappearance of the specialized program in favor of the general program follows naturally from the increasing tendency in library education to minimize the techniques and skills in favor of a more philosophical and theoretical approach to librarianship and the disciplines to which it is basically related, and upon which it depends.

Meanwhile, for the student needing it, the opportunity for specialist training is increasingly being provided by flexibility of programs to meet individual interests and needs. Some schools have undertaken joint programs with adjacent university departments and schools so that instruction may be provided jointly by the school of library science and the faculties of business, music, fine arts, science, or law. More important, a survey of library school catalogs will indicate that even when such joint programs have not been formally developed there are few instances among the stronger schools where courses
related to the individual student's objectives may not be taken outside the library school, and there is an increasing tendency to bring instructors from other academic areas into the library school program.

Perhaps because of their more obvious relation to subject fields, the research librarian and the special librarian have seemed to have had undue attention, one way or another, as compared to the public librarian who frequently succeeds or fails in terms of his understanding of the people he deals with rather than his mastery of the subject. The importance of strong preparation in the social sciences—especially psychology, sociology, and education—for the public librarian, whose fundamental problem is one of understanding, guiding, leading, and communicating with human beings, has not been sufficiently emphasized.

It is both natural and appropriate that there be a relation between the kind of professional education offered in library schools and the kind of professional training that library employers look for in the graduates that seek to join their staffs. The late Pierce Butler in discussing professional training for catalogers pointed out very clearly a historical dilemma of library education when he indicated that the school could produce "a person who on being hired and assigned any job whatever in a library could hang up his hat and sit down to work just as fast and just as effectively as any departmental veteran," or a person who is able not merely "to see the library as a whole, but to see it as an essential component of civilization." This dilemma is not merely one in which the professional educator has been historically castigated, but a very present one that may simply be an inevitable characteristic of librarianship. As rapidly as professional and non-professional functions are separated in libraries, as rapidly as the specialist functions of the librarian emerge in library positions, as rapidly as the profession emphasizes leadership and imagination rather than skill, those distinctions will be reflected in professional education through admissions standards, curriculum, and instruction. On the other hand, as long as employing libraries fail to move in those directions recruitment, admission standards, and instruction—and the graduate who is the present product of them—will tend to be in technical rather than professional terms.

Library placement is discussed in full on pages 22-31 in this issue. Suffice it to say here that library schools have a long tradition not only for counseling and placing their current graduates, but also for providing extensively for their less recent graduates. The costs of placement personnel, the maintenance of adequate files of up-to-date in-
formation, and the extensive correspondence involved, all are items which appear as charges on most library school budgets.

The absence of any kind of general national placement service has placed the burden upon schools of library science which by their very nature are not equipped to provide the services which are needed. Both from the employer's as well as the school's standpoint the placement processes for each position which is available must be repeated for each of the thirty-eight schools on the accredited list. It is clear that this repetition may have greatly exaggerated the need expressed since the last war for trained and experienced personnel. Certainly it has left the school with an undue and costly burden for the placement of the experienced graduate, and for seeking candidates for the position which requires careful evaluation of experience after graduation.

It should be said that certain responsibilities for placement on the part of the library school are desirable or are, in any case, inescapable. The relationship of placement of current graduates to recruitment of students is one which schools must view realistically. The importance of successful choice of a first position is one for which most schools devote long and careful orientation, and which few would wish to delegate to an outside agency. On the other hand, the tightening fiscal pressures upon colleges and universities are producing strong pressures in turn upon the schools to decrease the extent of placement services and their costs. Except for initial placement of graduates, placement is primarily a matter of interest for employers and applicants, and there is perhaps real justification in the increasing feeling that the costs and burden of such services should be borne by those parties rather than by an institution whose identity and responsibility are primarily educational.

Finally, it should be noted that the rapidly increasing tendency for placement through competitive or evaluative examinations has added to the complexity of the placement process—especially the placement of current graduates of library schools. With the increasing requirement of examinations by state and national civil service agencies, state certification boards, and individual libraries it is frequently necessary for the recent graduate to arrange to compete in six or more examinations in order to be considered for positions for which he might wish to be an applicant. Since an interview subsequent to examination is also a frequent requirement, examination as a personnel device falls of its own weight.

It seems clear that the library profession is in need of new machinery for personnel evaluation. There is increased recruitment from
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new and unaccredited institutions for which evaluative machinery is lacking. Library schools vary radically in both their objectives and curricular philosophies. Certification standards and, more important, the enforcement of those standards, vary greatly from state to state. Evaluation through examination by individual agencies tends to defeat the very purposes which such examinations are designed to serve. It may soon be time for the library profession to consider other devices such as national examination of library school graduates and national certification—devices which have long been successfully employed by sister professions.

References

Placement

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One effect of the present acute shortage of trained librarians has been to bring the placement process up for very close scrutiny and, inevitably, for considerable criticism. The Subcommittee on Placement Service of the Board on Personnel Administration, in transmitting its report to the Executive Board of the American Library Association, defined "placement" as "... any type of activity which brings together the employer having a position vacancy and the individual seeking a job. It further agreed that good placement could be defined as selecting qualified individuals matching the position's requirements, furnishing supporting data to employers and individuals, and providing counseling to both groups."¹

There are clearly, then, three aspects of placement: first, the individual librarian’s concern with starting or forwarding his career; second, the employer’s task of discovering candidates suitable either to immediate position vacancies or to his ideas about what types of staff members the organization may need in the future; and third, the responsibility of the professional organizations, the schools, and other agencies toward assisting both the individual and the employer.

In order to define the scope of this article, it seems advisable to note that "placement" is to be considered broadly, but will be separated, as far as possible, from the placement of staff within any particular organization. The chain of events in the total personnel effort may be listed as: first, recruitment of prospects for the field of librarianship; second, the education and training of students in the library schools; third, the selection of graduates by employers; and fourth, the advancement of successful staff members (either within the library in which they are originally placed or in some other system) through training programs and meaningful experience. The capacity and incentives of the individual, the training which he receives in school and on the job, the care with which the personnel system in which he finds himself has been constructed, and the attitude of the em-

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ployer toward his organization, all influence the placement of individual librarians within their profession. Some combination of these factors may influence one person to develop as a librarian and another to develop a distaste for librarianship. Another combination may result in unequal development of individuals with more or less equal talents, or may enable one library system to gain a fine reputation for excellent service while another library gradually declines in importance. Formal placement activities, then, though an important factor in the development of good librarians, is perhaps not so large in importance as it may seem during the current shortage of personnel. Possibly because of that fact, there is no single work in the literature of librarianship which deals with the entire scope of placement.

The substantial works dealing with even a part of the library placement process are very few. Under the heading "Selection of Employees," Ralph McCoy reviewed a considerable number of articles and books which pertain in some way to library placement. Of the sixty-six references in the bibliography for that chapter, only thirty-seven may be considered as directly and solely applicable to librarianship; and of those, most are concerned either with the qualifications needed for this profession—or some part of it—or with methods of personnel selection. E. A. Wight, reviewing personnel and financial administration in public libraries, does not cite even one item which bears directly, not to say exclusively, on library placement. The most comprehensive review of the current status of placement in librarianship—the appendix to the report of the placement subcommittee referred to above—is, unfortunately, not generally available.

The bulk of library placement has been carried on by the library schools and the professional library associations. Virtually every library school makes some attempt to place its students upon their graduation, and many endeavor to maintain lists of available positions for their alumni and rosters of graduates who may be interested in locating new jobs. Many schools designate a staff or faculty member to be responsible for placement activities. In a few instances, the central placement office for the institution of which the library school is a part handles this function. Harold Lancour has summarized the history of library school placement activities, and Gertrude Wulfekoetter presented a picture of those activities as of 1945 (which probably has not changed substantially since that time).

Though the American Library Association does not now have any formal placement service, many other professional library organizations do. The Special Libraries Association, Law Library Association,
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Music Library Association, and Medical Library Association, for example, have more or less formal placement offices which serve to bring employer and employee together. The American Library Association did operate a placement service, under various titles, from 1917 until 1948, and the placement subcommittee is studying the possible means by which placement assistance might again be offered by that association. Rezia Gaunt has presented a summary of the plans offered and the problems encountered by that group and the reaction of the A.L.A. Executive Board to its report.

The professional schools and associations are by no means the only agencies which offer employment information and advice to employers and job applicants. Commercial placement agencies contribute some valuable efforts. School administrators, particularly, turn to teacher employment agencies when seeking school librarians. Of the total placements, however, the commercial organizations probably account for a very small percentage. Personal contact with other librarians, including members of library school faculties, undoubtedly results in many more placements, especially for positions on a relatively high level.

Another means of locating employees or positions is through the advertising columns in the professional journals, such as Library Journal, A.L.A. Bulletin, and Wilson Library Bulletin. Advertisements placed in these periodicals were once scorned as the last resort of the unsuccessful. As a matter of fact, they are probably more satisfactory, at least in attracting a relatively large number of candidates, than are letters to a half-dozen or so library schools. It is, of course, difficult to describe fully in an advertisement either a position or an applicant's complete qualifications. As a result of that fact and of an apparent lack of attention to the importance of careful wording in classified advertisements, this method of placement is often unsuccessful. A. J. Vennix has made a study of classified advertisements in an effort to assist both individuals and employers to make effective use of this approach to placement.

Yet another type of placement agency is the state library or state library extension agency. The Washington State Library, the Missouri State Library, and the California State Library are among the many that maintain lists of persons wishing to locate positions in the various states. They also invite libraries to send in notices of vacant positions. For the most part, these state agencies operate on a "referral service" basis. That is, they do not attempt to maintain complete records on the qualifications of the individuals registered, but merely serve to
send employer or employee appropriate notices as available. There are, of course, exceptions to that statement; occasionally a state librarian will compile a list of vacant positions and circulate it among the library schools of the country, and also gather reference reports and full records for candidates. In recent years several state librarians have arranged to post notices of vacant positions and to interview candidates at A.L.A. conferences or on visits to library schools. These efforts have not ordinarily met with great success, but may be an indication of future developments.

None of the foregoing agencies are completely satisfactory, since successful placement work is dependent upon both employer and employee for the supplying of facts about positions and candidates. It is virtually impossible for a single office to gather full information on a national scale about either the positions which are to be filled or about the persons who may be interested in locating jobs. Some employers have tried to save time in filling positions by duplicating letters and job descriptions by mechanical means, only to find that their messages have lost the personal touch which has become so important during the current employee shortage. A few large libraries, such as the Detroit Public Library, the Enoch Pratt Free Library, and the University of California Library, send a recruiting representative to a number of library schools over the country each spring. More frequently the head librarian of the small or medium-sized library writes or travels to the schools within a few hundred miles and recruits staff members himself. A surprising number of libraries will hire staff members on the basis of written recommendations alone, especially for jobs at the entering professional level. In short, the placement process as it now exists is costly and frequently quite unsatisfactory.

From the employer's point of view, the current placement scene exhibits two major faults: first, an insufficient number of candidates is available; and second, there are so many possible sources of recommendations of candidates that exhausting them consumes a great deal of time. Further, it is often difficult for the employer to place the proper evaluation on the recommendations which he receives. If he writes to eight or ten library schools, he inevitably is attempting to recruit personnel from a large geographic area, and ordinarily he is in correspondence with persons whom he does not know well. If he places an advertisement in a professional journal, he must expect that up to 90 per cent of the letters he receives will be from persons not qualified for the job. If he writes to professional or state agencies, he
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frequently receives only sketchy information about potential candidates and must enter into lengthy correspondence to discover the particular talents of the applicants. Meanwhile, if he does not move quickly, and frequently, even if he does, he stands a good chance of seeing the candidates disappear into other libraries. Worst of all, he has no assurance that all his labor will produce even one truly good employee. Remembering the pressure which any administrator feels from his departmental supervisors to keep professional positions filled, it is small wonder that the other important tasks of personnel administration, such as proper placement of staff members within the organization, often become submerged.

The individual seeking to advance his career in librarianship is in a somewhat better position in regard to placement than is the employer. As the shortage of personnel has persisted, employers have circulated notices of vacant positions to more and more agencies. Thus, the library school placement office, the professional association, and the specialized agency have all been aware of a wide variety of jobs which are to be filled. Furthermore, in some instances schools and associations have been so concerned with their responsibilities to the entire profession that they have not restricted their placement services to their own graduates or members. Placement officers, for a decade or more, have frequently recommended as candidates individuals who have been willing to work beyond the limits of the position they hold and who have prepared themselves for opportunities which might arise even when they have not actively sought assistance.

The library school student about to begin a career has had available through the faculty and placement facilities of his school sources of sound advice and, in recent years, a remarkable array of notices of job vacancies. He has had a relatively wide choice of type of library, field of specialization, salary level, and geographic area. Many school placement officers, consequently, have been able to advise students to consider each position in relation to three questions. First, does the institution offer professional stimulation and opportunity for growth? Second, is it in a community where one may find personal and professional interests? Third, does the salary scale offer both an equitable entering rate and opportunity for advancement? In short, the career possibilities of each position have played a more important part in the placement of library school students than was the usual case before World War II.

For the experienced librarian, existing placement avenues are also relatively fruitful. Developing programs in all types of libraries have
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increased the need for staff members having broad experience in a variety of fields; adult education, indexing of scientific literature, and extension programs are only a few miscellaneous examples. Too, a number of factors, including the personnel shortage and consequent loss of staff to other organizations, have induced employers to examine their organizations with an eye to establishing promotional lines and to increasing the attractiveness of their institutions to the staff. Consequently, the established librarian will seek first to consider his opportunities for promotion within the organization before turning to the placement agencies. What are the requirements for promotion? How may they be met? Is promotion based on merit or solely on length of service? Satisfactory answers to questions of this kind may convince some librarians that they should not attempt to move from one library system to another. In the best libraries, as elsewhere, promotional lines will have been established through careful job analysis and the construction of a system of classifications.

One frequently hears the remark that during the 1930's an unhealthy personnel situation existed in that competition for jobs was keen and salaries, consequently, were depressed. During those years it was generally unnecessary to institute good personnel practices solely in order to attract staff members. Whether the current situation is better is largely a matter of opinion, but it is possible that librarianship may realize some benefits. For example, as the competition for personnel continues, we may hope that the importance of establishing comprehensive personnel policies will become apparent in many libraries where it has not seemed so in the past. It is remotely possible that, as small independent public libraries find more and more difficulty in recruiting staff members, we may see more rapid federation or consolidation of those libraries into larger units of service. The profession might also benefit if the personnel shortage were to result in a reduction in the number of professional positions, providing that reduction were accompanied by a sharper definition of professional duties.

Each of these potential advantages is accompanied by certain hazards. The inadequacies of our present placement agencies may well lead to a general lowering of standards in the selection of personnel. Because placement officers are now able to advise potential employees to select positions on the basis of the strength of the library and the possible career aspects of each available job, the large libraries will almost inevitably attract candidates more readily than the small libraries. The result may well be that the strong libraries
will become stronger and the weak weaker. There is no real evidence of a suddenly increased nationwide movement toward consolidation of libraries, and certainly a shortage of personnel is a rather weak lever by itself to force such a trend. Inability to keep its professional positions filled may merely lead the small library to drop certain services and to water down the quality of others.

Except that there is considerable current interest in the matter of library placement, there seems to be no indication of a trend toward improvement of existing services. There is no doubt that library schools have benefited considerably from the placement work which they have done, as have some of the professional organizations. However, the recent decision to abolish the position in the Columbia University School of Library Service which carried the responsibility for placement and to add those duties to another position seems to indicate further curtailment of placement assistance. Other schools, already inadequately financed, doubtless are being forced to look critically at this activity, formerly accepted as a traditional part of the program.

If the demand for trained librarians remains long at its present level, and if the library schools continue to find it impossible to prepare a sufficient number of candidates for the field, there may develop the use of so-called subprofessional positions as a field of recruitment and training. In areas or specialties where the shortage of personnel is especially acute (for example, work with children) some public libraries have recruited young women who do not look to librarianship for a career, have inaugurated in-service training programs for specific types of positions, and have thus reduced their need for library school graduates. In a sense, this type of solution represents a retrogression and definitely presents certain hazards both to librarianship and to the individuals so trained. However, it also may enable libraries to maintain services which might otherwise have to be curtailed.

As in many other areas, the administrator would benefit considerably from a central source of placement statistics. Information as to the salaries which library school graduates found acceptable, some indication of the number of candidates who might be available for new programs, and similar items could assist the employer in establishing workable salary scales and meaningful personnel classifications. Donald E. Strout is compiling useful presentations, which it is hoped will be regularly continued.8-10

Another trend which may result from the work of the subcommittee of the Board on Personnel Administration6 is the coordination of
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existing placement services. The duplication of effort and lack of coordination now apparent even to the casual observer might possibly be reduced, and the resulting savings in time used to better advantage. It should be remembered, however, that an item in the budget of almost any organization which cannot be directly related to its immediate aims will be quite vulnerable in a period of economy.

Although there is considerable discrimination against women in appointments to top level jobs in public libraries (and doubtless in college libraries, too), there is relatively little prejudice shown in initial selection. A rather subjective analysis of opportunities indicates that women probably have less difficulty in reaching the top positions in special and school libraries and in work with children and young people in the public library field than in other areas. Perhaps a trend which could be encouraged by library schools and others concerned with placement should be toward the acceptance of women as the equals of men at all levels of selection.

Many of our placement problems stem, largely, from the lack of candidates. There will not be more candidates until the nation enters another period of depression or until each librarian takes upon himself the responsibility for recruiting young people to the profession. Successful recruitment involves personal contact with potential library school students and the exercise of considerable initiative on the part of practicing librarians. In very few cities is there a group of librarians organized so that interested high school and college students may turn to them for information regarding a career in librarianship. College and school librarians have the best possible recruiting ground, yet few organized recruiting programs are in effect in schools or colleges, even though recruiting materials are available.

Most potentially promising of current activity with scholastic groups is the library club movement now developing in several states. Of particular interest is the rapidly growing undergraduate library fraternity Alpha Beta Alpha, which brings together college students interested in library work.

In the very important matter of recruiting to librarianship, the profession seems to have been largely talking to itself. The emphasis on career guidance in the public schools in recent years has resulted in the development of a ready-made outlet for information about librarianship at the most appropriate level—the high school. Librarians, if they are to provide the means of solution for the placement problem, must very soon exploit the school guidance program along with all other possible avenues.
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There are other ways, too, in which the practicing librarian may improve the prospects of the profession for recruiting a larger group of prospective students from whom the library schools may select their classes. Alice I. Bryan, in her chapter "Summary and Conclusions," sets forth a six-point program intended to create a more adequate personnel for the public library. If followed, the program undoubtedly would benefit libraries of all kinds by making the profession more attractive to young people of talent and ambition. In broad outline, her program aims to build strong library systems, to define clearly the duties of the professional librarian so that adequate salary scales may be justified and so that meaningful classification schemes may be developed, to strengthen and unite our professional association, and to place education for librarianship on a truly graduate level. If such a program is to be realized, librarians in the field must be prepared to work toward those major aims. The effect upon placement of achieving the program will not be felt immediately, but it is imperative that librarianship be made more attractive as a career field if the problem underlying placement is to be solved.

References

Placement


Selection, Orientation, and Development of the Professional Staff

FRANCIS R. ST. JOHN

The change from the belief that the main measure of the value of a library is its book collection to the realization that a well-trained staff is at least equally important, is a well-defined trend from the beginning of libraries to the present time. As our libraries have become more generally accepted by their representative communities, the need for a full staff, well trained, with all supervisory needs met, has become increasingly evident.

The problem of selection is critical and of first importance. During the past ten years the widespread necessity of recruiting for the library profession has emphasized again our need for careful selection. Selection should mean choosing the best-trained person available at the best salary that can be offered, and usually it does mean this. Unfortunately, many libraries are finding that the term "best-trained person" at the present time is a variable. They must be satisfied with any library school graduate who is available, and most libraries are dependent upon library schools for their professional personnel.

In some of the schools candidates are accepted who are able to meet the scholastic requirements but who possess personal characteristics so negative that placement is a serious problem. Encouragement of students who do not have the required personality for modern librarianship acts as a deterrent to desirable recruits and slows the public acceptance of the profession. Now that libraries of every kind are accepted as important and essential to our educational pattern, it becomes increasingly urgent for us to provide librarians who are recognized as normal, alert leaders. It is the duty of every individual staff member, of every library, and of every library school to encourage able persons to become librarians. It is equally important that they discourage the weak and the futile. Not too many years ago there was a feeling prevalent among librarians that there was a place

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in the profession for everyone regardless of his personal qualifications. Those with weak personalities could be assigned to cataloging or to a small library where the pressure would not be great. This fallacy has revealed itself in increased costs of operation and unsatisfactory service in the modern sense. It is extremely important that all phases of library work be carried on by the most capable, alert, and imaginative people possible.

It will be necessary sometime in the next few years to develop adequate tests to determine the potential success of candidates in the library profession. Several attempts have been made in this direction, none of which have proved especially successful. Most important is the recognition of responsibility by library school admittance officers to insist upon personal interviews with every prospective candidate in a further effort to determine full qualifications for potential librarians. These interviews need not necessarily require expensive travel but could be conducted by representatives of the school drawn from librarians in the local area.

Some of the larger libraries are able to do some of this initial selection themselves. The pattern followed in the Brooklyn Public Library is being adopted by more and more libraries. Under this pattern it is possible for the library to select college graduates who have expressed some interest in librarianship and who can be offered a preprofessional position while they try out librarianship by attending library school. While this is only possible, of course, in areas where library schools are located close to fairly large libraries, it may be that libraries and library schools will be able to enter into cooperative plans which will test future librarians on the job before a heavy investment in education is made by any individual recruit.

Between one-quarter and one-half of Brooklyn’s potential professional recruits are chosen before they go to library school, chosen through an intensive recruiting campaign with colleges and universities on the East Coast. It has been so successful that vacancies among the preprofessional staff are filled as rapidly as they occur. Each prospect has a two-year opportunity to try out library work. Salaries are increased on an incentive basis as the recruit matriculates in a library school and again as he completes the first eight semester points.

The selection criteria for this group is exactly the same as for professional librarians. Leadership qualities are especially sought along with imagination, verve, outgoing personalities, and the ability to work as part of a team. In stressing leadership qualities it is not assumed that every librarian is going to be an administrator, but
certainly that every trained librarian will probably be called upon to
guide the work of others. The person who possesses qualities of leader-
ship is a superior librarian whatever the assignment.

In the future there is bound to be a greater awareness on the part
of the larger libraries of their responsibility for training and for fur-
nishing qualified personnel to smaller libraries. This has been retarded
in the past due to unequal salary scales, but many of the smaller
libraries are now beginning to pay better salaries and often living
costs are less than in the larger cities. It will always be true that a
fairly large number of people will prefer life in a smaller community.
As this system develops, people well qualified to carry on an active
program in smaller communities will be available after a year or two
of experience and training in the larger library. The present accept-
ance of libraries by the public generally has been due to the increas-
ingly fine library service in smaller communities. As a steady flow of
better-trained librarians is available for these assignments, the whole
profession will benefit.

In recent years librarianship has called for increasing specialization.
For many years librarians have developed their experience to the
point where a cataloger would speak only to a cataloger, a children’s
librarian only to a children’s librarian. Library schools have been
hard put to meet the constantly increasing demand for more and more
specialized courses. But as pointed out on page 18 of this issue the
trend away from this pattern is already noticeable in the library school
curriculum, and the profession generally must soon accept the fact
that sound general training can be adapted to the necessary require-
ments of the various phases of modern library service. In many of
the larger libraries candidates are not hired for specific positions,
definite assignments being made only after several months of experi-
ence in various parts of the library system.

Problems of recruiting and selection will always be with us, but as
each librarian develops a better understanding of the broad needs
of the profession and considers himself as a part of the whole pro-
fession, there will be less interference with the movement of staff to
other libraries and better opportunities will be available to the indi-
vidual. Some libraries will even encourage such movement in the
belief that whatever strengthens the whole profession will benefit the
individual library. When that time comes the problem of selection
to afford the best-balanced staff in most libraries will not be as critical
as at the present time, and all libraries will be able to do a better job.

There is an increasing trend in the direction of continued training
Selection, Orientation, and Development of the Professional Staff

after a librarian has finished library school. The education now pro-
vided in many library schools encompasses the philosophies and his-
tories of libraries and attempts to provide the reasons why things are
done rather than the specific how-to-do-it's. This has replaced the
training which was geared primarily to routines. As this change has
taken place there has been a greater acceptance by libraries of the
responsibility for in-service training and for supplementing the library
school program. While it is true that some still believe that library
school training should be complete enough so that a new librarian
can fit into any job with only minor adjustments, there is increasing
realization that this is not possible and should not be encouraged.
Training in specific techniques and methods can best be given by the
library on the job. On-the-job training can and will vary with the
individual library. It may consist of simple and informal explanations
of the library routines and its method of operation in a community.
It may be carried on entirely during staff meetings, or it may be set
up on a more formal basis with regular class meetings over a period
of time. The size of the library staff, the work load, the physical setup
of the library, and the administrative organization will all have a
bearing on the type of training carried on.

One effective on-the-job training device is the annual institute for
the staff as used in the Enoch Pratt Free Library in Baltimore. This
provides an opportunity for the full staff to come together on a holiday
for talks and group discussions based upon a central theme, usually
one that has public interest and represents a current problem. This
type of training has several advantages. It brings the whole staff to-
gether to participate regardless of grade or type of assignment. The
professional and clerical staffs meet on an equal basis. All get a chance
to know one another better by participating in the same discussion.
All have an opportunity of being part of the whole and should come
away with a better sense of belonging than would be possible for
them to develop during the average day's work. Because care is used
in the selection of the topic to be discussed there is an educational
benefit to be derived from thinking out the problem and receiving
encouragement to go further in the study of it after the meeting is
over.

Another form of on-the-job training which is traditional in the field
of children's work and which is carried on in larger libraries consists
of regular meetings of the children's department staff or, in larger
areas, through groups of children's librarians. This kind of meeting,
which is also common among other specialties such as reference work,
cataloging, and young people's work, provides an opportunity for talks on common problems, deciding on the development of new techniques, exchanging ideas of storytelling, exhibits, etc. A third type of on-the-job training is internship, where the new person has an opportunity of working under guidance for a specific period of time in various departments of the library. Successfully developed recently at the Library of Congress, and also in several special libraries, internship is now receiving renewed attention.

Some libraries combine all of the above methods with variations. The Brooklyn Public Library has formally instituted a rounded In-Service Training Program. Each year a group of discussion meetings are held for the new professional members of the staff who have been added during the previous year. These meetings require two hours every two weeks from September to May and are designed to develop the leadership potential of this group. No effort is made to teach routines, although at least one meeting is devoted to background and orientation to give as clear a picture as possible of the policy of the library in relation to its service to the people of Brooklyn. The rest of the meetings are given over to practical discussion of management techniques, personnel problems, and methods of planning.

The results more than justify the time and money required to carry out the In-Service Training Program. For example, it has been possible in several instances to appoint a person who has had this training as branch librarian with only one year's experience out of library school. Also, each year several staff members who have gone through this program leave to accept responsible positions in other parts of the country. Thus the Brooklyn Public Library has been able to assist in the development of the profession generally by giving these people a sounder training than they could obtain under most of the better-known methods.

There is a difference between training and orientation. The purpose of orientation is to help staff members become quickly familiar with the philosophy and methods of a particular library; to help them to know the community; to become acquainted with their fellow staff members. If they have come from out of town, the librarian should make sure that they have satisfactory living conditions and should help them to know the churches, the stores, the various things which can help them get started in a new community. Much of the orientation plan will be similar for all types and levels of staff appointments. Orientation of clerical appointees has been discussed in the article on clerical personnel on page 55.
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For the professional staff members an additional orientation will be necessary, because in addition to the philosophy and methods of the library, they should also be introduced quickly to the philosophy and methods of the particular specialty in which they will be working, such as children's work, young adults' work, cataloging, and readers' services. This orientation can best be accomplished by one individual who can carry through on a friendly basis and act as a special guide to each new staff member, one to whom he can take his special problems and feel that every effort will be made to help him solve them. Part of this can be done by the personnel director of the library if the library is large enough to have such a staff member. Part of it can be done by the librarian in charge of the special phase of work to which this staff member is assigned.

The development of more satisfactory methods of in-service training and of orientation has been intensified during the past several years by the belief that specialized types of library training were not being supplied in library schools. Children's librarians, for example, have felt that the great lack of courses in storytelling techniques in many of the library schools. They are also concerned about the need for more courses in child psychology. There has been an increasing development of enthusiasm for group leadership in some of the library schools, but many libraries have found it necessary to establish special courses in training for group leadership because of insufficient practical training of the students. In both of these cases the responsibility for filling the deficiencies in training has been accepted by libraries, and various methods have been used in solving the problem, sometimes in cooperation with a library school or a university but more often within their own walls.

As librarianship has developed more and more as a real career and as librarians have tended to become nomadic in their conception of a profession on a broad national base, the need to train leaders in all fields of librarianship has increased. Good leaders can in turn develop their own staff members and continue their training. One of the basic reasons for training is to fit a person for promotion more rapidly than is possible under the trial and error method. A staff member must know how to consider unnecessary routines so that they may be eliminated and more time given to more worth-while things. He has to be able to develop imaginative programs geared to community needs. He must know how to analyze problems objectively and to arrive quickly at sound methods for meeting the problems.

This is the kind of training that is hard to accomplish in a formal
program, but it can be done by the personal interest and stimulation of a good leader who believes firmly in the value of the profession as a whole and in the great need for the rapid development of new librarians. These will carry on, making the service of their particular library more satisfactory, more important, and less costly to their particular community. With the increasing possibility for good career service and with the increasing trend toward better caliber librarians, this phase in the developmental procedure of future librarians becomes increasingly important.

Our key librarians will raise eyes above the horizons of their own particular communities and see library service as a broad and all-encompassing educational function of the nation, or even on an international basis. With this awareness of the whole profession, the acceptance of responsibility by the librarians of larger libraries to assist in the development of staff for small communities will increase and with it will come what we have all hoped for so long—a sound program of development of librarians from the recruit straight on through to the head of any particular library service.
Supervision and Morale

AMY WINSLOW

"WHAT IS LESS frequently remembered, perhaps, is that the employee's morale is to a large degree determined by his immediate supervisor."¹ This statement made by the McDiarmids in 1943 and a similar assertion by a nonlibrary authority that "the relationship between first line supervisors and the individual workman is of more importance in determining the attitude, morale, general happiness, and efficiency of that employee than any other single factor"² are sufficiently emphatic to underline the fact that supervision and morale are inseparable and to point up the need for simultaneous consideration.

In this paper the term "supervisor" is considered primarily as referring to the immediate supervisor, to the "middle management" man, rather than to the top executive, though such a distinction has been impossible in many instances. An attempt will be made to single out developments in professional thinking on the subject of supervisor selection and training and on the improvement of supervisory performance and techniques. The term "morale" perhaps requires no definition, but will be thought of as the total of employee attitudes, individual and collective, toward the library, its administration, its objectives, and its work.

Our best literature on this aspect of personnel management continues to be found in nonlibrary publications. Ralph E. McCoy³ devotes a chapter to human relations. Of seventy-seven entries cited, only thirty-four are descriptive of library work, and of these thirty-four items only thirteen have appeared during the last five years.

Nevertheless, there is an encouraging trend toward greater concern with the basic problems of supervision. A search of early literature reveals occasional recognition of the importance of employee attitudes and the need for staff participation, but it was not until the depression with its accompanying unrest and frustration that these important aspects of library administration forced their way into the limelight.

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Those years saw the natural growth of staff organizations, the belated creation in 1936 of the American Library Association’s Board on Personnel Administration, and an increasing understanding (preceded in many instances by irritation) of the needs and desires of the individual employee. There have followed a wholesome ferment, the setting up of modern methods of personnel management in many libraries, and increasing attention to the subject in library literature.

Most striking perhaps is the lack of attention given to the fundamental matter of selection and training of supervisors. Studies in the field of education for librarianship have repeatedly pointed out the lack of training for administration. Joseph L. Wheeler got down to brass tacks when he pointed out: "Half the graduates who stay in library work five years have been put in positions of administrative responsibility to direct the work of others in a department, a branch, a school library, if not as a head librarian. . . . administration is the weakest and most neglected aspect of college, school, and public librarianship, and is chiefly responsible for other shortcomings. . . ."

He pointed out that no school at that time offered any course dealing with the essential elements of administration and supervision. Ernest J. Reece, reporting on his field investigation of the unmet needs in library school curriculums, referred to graduates’ shortcomings "in the training and supervision of subordinates, in the utilizing of individuals’ capabilities, and in the evaluation of accomplishment." Clara W. Herbert pointed out that the highest grades in classification plans are those which carry administrative duties, so that the "librarian whose outstanding work merits recognition is frequently given executive work for which quite possibly he has no fitness."

With this admitted weakness in the basic training of librarians, one might expect considerable emphasis on training for supervision in the in-service training programs of libraries. Yet little appears in print to warrant this assumption. The most impressive evidence is Adra M. Fay’s manual on supervision prepared for use in the Minneapolis Public Library and later published by the American Library Association.

This specifies many of the principles of good supervision, adapted to the library scene. The A.L.A. reports that 2,704 copies had been sold through November 1953. Errett W. McDiarmid pointed out, in 1942, factors in developing library leaders and suggested changes in college and university library organization which would provide administrative experience for a middle-management group. It is interesting to note that as long ago as 1940 one library was reported by Ethel M. DeWitt as using the conference method of training, aimed partially
at development of the supervisory group. Other libraries are known to have adopted this method at later dates, but their experience does not, so far as the author has discovered, appear in print.

Through the years there has been given a fair amount of attention to the qualities needed in the supervisor as well as to effective methods of supervision. F. P. Hill best summarized the attitudes of an earlier day. He recommended unity of command, strictness without favoritism, praise for merit as well as notice of faults, and singled out standards for assistants as courtesy and politeness, system and order, accuracy, faithfulness and attention, enthusiasm, promptness, and regularity. "Even at the expense of popularity," he said, "the librarian must 'keep at' his assistants if he wishes to secure system and order." Certainly no "staff participation" there!

By 1905 the assistant was apparently being given a look-in. Julia E. Elliott included among supervisory techniques encouragement of originality, welcoming suggestions for improvements, communication of plans and goals, making assistants feel they belong. Jennie M. Flexner in 1920 spoke of the "more or less newly recognized right [of the assistant] to have and to express opinions concerning the chief who is to direct her." By 1939 change was in the air. Miss Herbert in her pioneer study pointed out many factors in good supervision, as well as effective supervisory techniques. The McDiarmids made history in 1943 with their general study of administrative practices in public libraries which pointed out many weaknesses in supervisory practices as well as progressive recommendations for improvement. Louis R. Wilson and M. F. Tauber followed in 1945 with their study of the university library favoring "democracy in staff organization." In 1945 also there was an evident awareness of supervisory problems among catalogers. Tauber's paper on personnel in catalog departments cited good factors in supervisory performance, and H. R. Bixler, Personnel Director of the Mutual Life Insurance Company, in an address before the New York Regional Catalog Group, called attention to the increasing importance of the supervisor in training and efficient performance. He mentioned accepted personnel techniques, such as delegation of responsibility, effective communication, and attention to the growth of the individual employee. He also had a word for the assistant, citing traits which militate against promotion, as brought out in a survey of 4,000 office employees: lack of ambition, lack of initiative, carelessness, lack of cooperation, laziness, attendance to outside things, lack of loyalty, tardiness, and self-satisfaction.
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The A.L.A. Board on Personnel Administration in 1940 published *Organization and Personnel Procedure*, followed by revisions in 1952 under a slightly different title.\(^{16,17}\) Although devoted to the entire field of personnel management these contained many recommended supervisory procedures. The chairman of the Board, E. B. Stanford,\(^{18}\) published an article in 1950 on the duties of, and the traits needed by, a library supervisor, which presumably reflected the opinions of the Board.

As Miss Flexner pointed out, the lowly assistant had also begun to speak his mind. Margery Doud\(^{19}\) was one of the first and created a sensation at the 1920 A.L.A. Conference when she proved that the assistant was not inarticulate. Throughout the thirties the profession was made increasingly aware by younger assistants of its shortcomings in the area of personnel administration, and during recent years some attention has been focused on the supervisor. Katherine Prescott\(^{20}\) in 1946, speaking before the Staff Organizations Round Table, discussed those elements in a job besides livelihood which are sought by an employee, factors in supervision which are meaningful to the assistant, and the importance of a fair transfer and promotion policy in maintenance of staff security and satisfaction. At the Cleveland conference Helen Reed\(^{21}\) enumerated qualities which she, as an assistant branch librarian, expected from her branch librarian, and Alex Ladenson,\(^{22}\) also in 1949, discussed the traits of the good supervisor from the standpoint of the assistant librarian in a large acquisitions and preparations department. In 1951 a member of the Pacific Northwest Library Association\(^{23}\) stated with considerable frankness the good and bad aspects of supervision, stressing the need for delegation of responsibility to, and encouragement of initiative in, subordinates.

J. P. Danton\(^{24}\) in 1934 was one of the first to present the case for democracy in libraries, finding some justification for the belief that the trend in internal management was a democratic one, but urging more utilization of staff resources in policy formation and personnel decisions. Herbert Goldhor\(^{25}\) in 1940 presented a brief statement of principles and offered the opinion that the staff organization provided the best medium for “the regular, automatic and impersonal communication of the staff's point of view.” R. E. Krug,\(^{26}\) speaking before the Staff Organizations Round Table in 1942, held that high morale is fostered by the democratic approach, urged open channels of communication, and expressed the opinion that employee organizations had not nearly approached their full capacity to contribute to library administration. R. A. Ulveling\(^{27}\) stated the principle that the chief
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Administrator is and must be responsible for final policy decisions, but believed wholeheartedly in staff contribution toward such decisions. In 1950 R. M. Holmes's article in Personnel Administration, described the facilities for employee participation in the Library of Congress. Those wishing more complete information about the enlightened procedures in the Library of Congress, with its more than 2,000 employees, have welcomed the appearance in 1953 of its Manual of Personnel Policies, describing in detail the operation of such devices as the Staff Advisory Committee and the Staff Forum. A recent Library of Congress Information Bulletin directed at all federal agencies gives suggestions for employee participation. Amy Winslow mentioned in 1952 various devices for encouraging "bottom-up management," such as regular channels for suggestions, staff committees, opinion polls, adequate two-way communications and staff organizations, and in 1953 discussed the why, how, how soon, and how far of staff participation.

The original impetus for formation of most employee organizations was to raise salaries and get better working conditions. Nevertheless, along with this has been the desire for wider opportunity for self-expression and for sharing in management. Opinion regarding staff organizations has undergone considerable change and liberalizing. Prevailing early attitudes, particularly toward library unions, were expressed by W. E. Henry when he stated: "Our people can unionize and change our standards from a profession to a trade and force the hands of the employer. This will move us back of 1876." G. F. Bowerman, however, was an early supporter of the library union and cited its achievements in his own library.

Bernard Berelson's study in 1939 traced the history of library unionization and enumerated the reasons for the growth of unions as the desire for better economic status as well as for democratization of library administration, and for "affiliation with a broad, constructive movement for concrete expression of social attitudes and desires." He urged careful and dispassionate study of the question. J. S. Richards in 1940 discussed staff associations versus unions, favoring the former as a means of developing the individual and enabling him to use his abilities for expansion of library frontiers and for promotion of library action. A recent study by J. J. Clopine traces the history of individual library unions, their aims, failures, and achievements, and summarizes objectively the pros and cons. A comparable study of staff associations remains to be done and is greatly needed.

The Public Library Inquiry reported opinions of administrators and
assistants concerning various activities of staff associations and unions, as revealed by questionnaire. Staff associations were operating in twenty-five (43 per cent) of the libraries reporting. Half of the administrators had "formed no opinion as to the desirability of the activities carried on by staff associations," but of those who held an opinion "the great majority are in favor of all of the activities listed." A considerable larger majority of the employees favored all activities of staff associations. Seven libraries (12 per cent) reported that members of the staff belonged to a library labor union. More than half the administrators were uncertain about the desirability of union activities in libraries and were on the whole less favorably disposed than toward staff associations. Attitudes of employees were likewise less clear-cut, a quarter of those polled being doubtful of the value of library unions and a quarter actively opposed. Approximately one-fifth believed sufficiently in the principle of unionization to be willing to join a library union.

Lack of adequate communication between supervisor and staff and between chief administrator and staff has been repeatedly cited as a weakness in personnel administration generally, and no less in libraries. Staff manuals, staff meetings, formal channels for suggestions, staff newsletters, opinion polls, bulletin boards, and official memorandums are among the means which have been suggested, and undoubtedly many libraries make use of all or most of these. The case for staff manuals has been presented by Wilson and Tauber and by Rose E. Boots. Staff meetings are not new to library literature, witness symposiums in the Library Journal in 1907 and again in 1942. Yet Alice I. Bryan found that, in spite of the advantages of staff meetings as a means of effective communication and staff participation, they were held in only two-thirds of the libraries studied. Her conclusion in regard to intramural communications was that: "The general picture, with but few exceptions, is that of a rather un-systematic use of various devices for giving and receiving information, opinions, and suggestions, with little awareness of the need and value of an integrated, effective two-way system of intramural communication between administration and staff." That useful device in supervision, the merit or service rating, has received considerable attention in library literature, yet the Public Library Inquiry revealed that only seven of the nine metropolitan libraries and half of the large libraries (population: 100,000-499,999) were using it. The first comprehensive study of service ratings was made by Lucy M. Buker in an unpublished master's thesis sum-
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marized in Library Journal in 1939. She pointed out the advantages as well as the dangers in use of rating forms, mentioning their function in improving quality of work and supervision in the opportunity afforded for employee acquaintance with the supervisor's estimate of him. F. R. St. John 47 followed in 1940 with a thorough summary of merit rating, describing methods used in business and industry and pointing out the difficulties in finding the "ideal" rating form as well as in application of any system.

W. B. Hoffman 48 urged that service ratings be used primarily as a tool in supervision, a method for periodic discussion with the staff member, rather than as a system for comparing employees. This use of the rating has been too little emphasized, with the result that the service rating is often regarded as an instrument of torture rather than an opportunity for a frank, friendly, and helpful interview. Elizabeth S. Elliott, 49 in an excellent recent study, reaches a similar conclusion, namely that ratings should never be considered the sole basis for making promotions, wage increases, and similar decisions, but regarded rather as a useful tool in guidance and training. There is little question about the value of periodic rating of staff members. Too often the employee does not know the qualities which are considered important by the supervisor—the rating form enumerates them, the interview tells him where he stands. Unfortunately, the ideal form has not yet been devised. The form sponsored by the A.L.A. Board on Personnel Administration 50 was issued in 1948 and needs to be revised. Libraries which use it have learned that a complete change in form at fairly frequent intervals is desirable. Libraries devising their own rating sheets should examine the collection of forms used in American libraries which has been edited by E. B. Colburn for the Division of Cataloging and Classification. 51, 52

Rewards and incentives, often found in industry, have been little used in libraries. Several libraries are known to have established awards for outstanding achievement, but in general the Public Library Inquiry concluded that "many libraries are missing an opportunity to apply incentive measures that will help to maintain morale of the staff." 53 Less happy aspects of supervision—handling of grievances, discipline, dismissal—receive little attention in print. McDiarmid, 54 at the 1945 University of Chicago Library Institute discussed the problem of dismissal in university libraries as related to tenure. The Library of Congress 55 has a well-organized and elaborate procedure for hearing and disposition of grievances and handling of dismissals. In connection with the grievance procedure Archibald MacLeish 56
issued an excellent statement in 1943 giving credit to widespread staff participation in its formulation. *Personnel Organization and Procedure*, issued by the Board on Personnel Administration, treats grievances, dismissals, and suspension very briefly. The Board on Personnel Administration has also formulated statements of tenure principles which have been adopted by the Council of the American Library Association, and which are important in this connection.

Good supervision is so inextricably related to good morale that any discussion of morale becomes to a considerable extent a matter for supervisory attention. The chief administrator bears a large share of the responsibility for staff attitude and *esprit de corps*, but as the following citations frequently make clear, the immediate supervisor, in daily contact with the assistant, is the transmitter and the morale builder.

Our conception of morale and the factors important in its maintenance has undoubtedly changed with the years. But Mary Macmillan stressed in 1903 the importance of making assistants feel that they “belong,” as well as the need for recognition of merit. In 1920 Lora Rich made many points which are still sound, though quaintly submitted under the title “How Can the Beneficence of Libraries Be More Successfully Directed Toward Their Assistants?” The McDiarmids’ study of public library administration mentioned among factors in building morale: a real career opportunity, recognition and advancement, a sound personnel program, stimulating leadership, impartiality, good working conditions, and assessment of staff attitudes. B. B. Gardner’s excellent discussion of morale at the University of Chicago Library Institute in 1945 maintained that this essential element depended not on pat formulas, personnel techniques, nor correct records, but on an understanding of people and human relationships, and of the desire for participation, recognition, and status. Lyndal Swofford, discussing mental hygiene in the college library, painted a doleful picture of the frustration, restriction, and insecurity of the “typical” college librarian and outlined an excellent “mental hygiene program” which would be applicable to any library. R. R. Munn attacked the problem of morale through various methods of staff participation, such as discussion of budgets and cross-sectional committees, and through coordination. He mentioned as factors responsible for low morale, favoritism, rumors, and condescension toward the nonprofessional assistant. Mary D. Herrick, after a survey of morale among catalogers in various types of libraries, reported on factors which are considered important in worker satisfaction. Among those
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rated most essential were proper lighting, interdepartmental cooperation, cordial intrastaff relationships, sufficient and proper equipment, adequate working space, and clear demarcation of lines of authority. She further pointed out that no single factor—even salary—can determine the attitude of a worker, but that “a blending of many elements including security, variety and interest in work, a sense of achievement, and opportunity for friendly companionship” is necessary to insure the most favorable attitude toward a job.

The Public Library Inquiry considered such factors as good physical working conditions, recreational and cultural activities and opportunities, loan facilities and other financial aids, incentives, staff organizations, and the extent of their representation in the libraries. The greatest need in public libraries, it found, is for funds to pay better salaries, but funds are also needed to carry out effectively some of its other recommendations, such as adequate pension systems, elimination of long hours of overtime, and adequate facilities for maintaining staff health, comfort, and efficiency. As the report states: “In our sample a little more than half of the librarians (53 per cent) stated that morale was excellent or good in their libraries; a little less than half (45 per cent) that it was only fair, poor, or very poor. This is not a bad showing. But it leaves much room for improvement. In addition to better salaries, pensions, and physical equipment, it suggests a fuller use than is now the case of all the machinery and means of recognition of staff members as partners in the library enterprise.”

In conclusion, it may be stated with confidence that the library profession is increasingly conscious of the importance of skilled supervision and its close connection with employee morale. The growth of staff organizations, the increasing facilities for individual participation in management, the gradual introduction of improved personnel administration techniques, the important contributions of the A.L.A. Board on Personnel Administration, all indicate a vigorous search for solutions. Our best guides and the most advanced thinking are still to be found in nonlibrary literature, as was made abundantly clear by McCoy, but the array of references cited in this paper is an indication that we have made a good start in recent years.

However, indications likewise point to the need for further search and experimentation. The emphasis in this paper has been on middle management, but it is clear that the chief administrator is to a large extent accountable for the atmosphere in his institution. His is the responsibility for over-all personnel practices and policies. He can afford the staff almost endless opportunities for participation in policy
formation, program planning, and carrying out of experiments and projects. He can create a climate of responsiveness, desire and respect for ideas, belief in the processes of democracy, and understanding of individual aspirations.

Given this attitude and will on the part of the chief administrator, how can he insure that the same spirit permeates the institution and is reflected in the methods and policies of the immediate supervisor? Can we give more attention to supervisory qualities in the selection of supervisors and at the same time devise avenues of promotion for the staff member whose work merits recognition but who lacks aptitudes necessary for supervision? We should explore tests of supervisory qualities used in other fields. The newly created A.L.A. Committee on Measurement and Guidance may be able to devise tests for special groups such as this, though such a broadening of its assignment may not be anticipated at the present time.

Once the new supervisor has been placed, how much guidance does he receive? Is the training spotty, or systematic? Is there provision for group meetings of supervisors, affording an opportunity to discuss mutual problems? Do we give specific training in such areas as performance rating, handling of grievances, delegation of responsibility, development of initiative, and effective communication? What steps have we taken to insure that on-the-job training is systematic? It is a fairly common practice to send the new assistant to a few selected supervisors for initial training because they are expert "trainers." Have we developed training manuals and check lists of duties which would assist the others in becoming expert also?

That is an array of questions to which most of us must doubtless answer "no." We need research, experimentation, pooling of ideas, and collaboration of supervisors themselves in order to reach better solutions. The institute on supervisor training, held at the recent Los Angeles conference under auspices of the Board on Personnel Administration, was a good beginning, and special training programs in some libraries are also an indication of alertness. But if the testimony of many of the authors referred to above may be accepted, we still have far to go.

References

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41. Staff Meetings; Their Organization, Methods and Results. Library Journal, 32:543-554, Dec. 1907.

[ 50 ]
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57. American Library Association. Board on Personnel Administration, op. cit., ref. 16 and 17, Appendix 2 in both publications.


64. Bryan, op. cit., p. 278.
The Clerical Staff

DOROTHY WEBER

Up to the present time comparatively little of the literature devoted to library personnel problems has concerned the clerical staff. In the bulk of published material the clerical worker has been referred to only negatively, as the person to perform the tasks no longer to be done by the professional.

The report by C. C. Williamson to the Carnegie Corporation of New York in 1923 did identify a clerical worker and prescribed for her preparation a short period of instruction in library methods combined with practice to insure proficiency—this training to be done by the individual library and to be training in its specific methods. Again, the report of the Bureau of Public Personnel Administration to the Committee on the Classification of Library Personnel of the American Library Association, generally called the Telford Report, marked out a dividing line between professional and clerical jobs. The suggested classification and pay plans published by the American Library Association in 1939 and 1943 included several categories of clerical workers.

In the above reports the principle of difference between professional and clerical work was apparently accepted, yet it is significant that in 1945 Louis R. Wilson was still looking to the future when he noted that recognition of this difference should eventually lead to the concentration of professional effort in distinctly professional areas. At the University of Chicago Library Institute in 1948 it was re-emphasized that the professional librarian’s training should be directed to the achievement of the library’s functions and objectives, rather than to its processes, and a proposal for the preparation of another person to be responsible for the performance of subsidiary techniques was outlined. Disagreement with this proposal was based on the appropriateness and practicality of the place suggested for training rather than on any objection to the idea of a distinct sphere of activity.

The focus of attention in the immediate past has been on the chang-

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ing direction of preparation for professional librarianship; there has not been a corresponding concentration on training that part of the staff which will carry the responsibility for performance of the tasks defined as "clerical." The concept of the professional librarian as administrator, designer of services, stimulator of reading, leader of public opinion, is taking shape; the outlines of the clerical staff and definition of its place in the functioning whole still remain hazy.

Three things are bringing about a new concern for the clerical staff: first, the growing demand for library service of all kinds, challenging the planning skills of all librarians; second, the rising costs of operation, bringing a demand for the soundest allocation of funds; third, the shortage of qualified professional personnel, making it imperative to use the available supply to the best advantage. These factors reflect the changing attitude toward the function of the library as it constantly broadens its service to its community. From an earlier concept of supplying the demand for books, the library now recognizes and accepts the challenge to take the lead in contributing to an informed public opinion. This reorientation of function imposes upon the librarian, among other things, a responsibility for spending more time on the development of services and on finding ways to increase the library's effectiveness, and less on the details that can be done by individuals with less training. Thus it imposes the need for weighing values in the tasks to be done in order to arrive at a division of tasks that is both economical and productive. The California Library Association's Library Development Committee, faced with the demand for expanded library service, stated its belief that a significant part of the shortage of professional librarians could be eliminated if librarians performed only professional work.

Preliminary to the development of a clerical staff is an examination and evaluation of all library tasks on the basis of a sound definition of what constitutes professional activity. Duties have been considered professional if they involved any knowledge whatever of library methods and routines. Errett W. McDiarmid would make the dividing line one of judgment: "The professional is called upon to make decisions or to do things for which judgment and discretion are required. . . . the distinguishing feature of nonprofessional duties is that they are either (1) performed according to adopted practice and methods or (2) performed under the direction of someone who exercises judgment in deciding how they should be done." A comprehensive, uniformly acceptable definition has yet to be formed.

It has been estimated that two-thirds of the work done in public
libraries, and a large proportion of the work done in university libraries, is nonprofessional in nature, consisting of routines that could be done by instructed clerical workers. The descriptive list of duties prepared by the Board on Personnel Administration of the American Library Association analyzes library tasks in a dozen areas and divides them into professional and nonprofessional categories, a division which, with some local adaptation, could serve as a guide for libraries of all kinds and sizes. The study by E. A. Wight of the assignment of duties between clerical and professional personnel not only suggests principles on which the division can be made, but outlines the steps for a simple self-study. Such a study of tasks in the individual library must precede, and be quite independent of, the study and classification of jobs.

The principle of distinctions between tasks is generally unquestioned today. The problem is one of putting these principles into practice. It has been argued, for example, that the contact of the librarian with the reader at the circulation desk is so valuable that it justifies using professional personnel in a job that is clearly clerical in nature. Instead of using that fact as a defense for assuming the performance of clerical duties, a more constructive solution would be the development of new avenues of contact with readers. Better distribution of duties between professional and nonprofessional personnel must always remain a major administrative goal. Achieving this goal in libraries of limited staff may involve changes in organizational pattern and experimentation in the allocation of staffs in new divisions.

The successful use of clerical workers and their development as an integral part of the library staff is affected by the attitudes of the professional librarians. The clerical assistant must be accepted as an individual with a distinct, if different, contribution to make toward the realization of the library's goals. We cannot ignore the effect on clerical workers themselves of a clearly defined status that carries its own opportunities for growth and advancement and its own place of dignity and usefulness in the whole library service pattern. We cannot hope to attract and hold the type of clerical worker we need if the only inducements are the pay envelope, convenient hours, and a comfortable place to work. Industry, after long observation, is learning that job satisfaction continues to be a strong force in productivity, regardless of the size of the pay envelope. The principle applies in any work situation. In this connection the written job description, with its sampling of duties and specifications for performance skills, not only describes for the employment office the job and the person
who can do it, but serves also to establish the identity of the job for
the individual employee and for his fellow workers.

The goal of any personnel program is the creation of a staff that
is stable, productive, and satisfied. The dollar costs of high turnover
may not be apparent until we are able to pinpoint unit costs and
establish production norms for clerical routines, as is being done in
industry. The costs are expressed now chiefly in the frustrations that
come with the need for constant training of new recruits.

In contrast with the recruiting of professional staff, recruiting
clerical personnel is done locally and in direct competition with busi-
ness and industry in the local labor market. Clerical jobs in libraries
and in business make use of the same basic skills. In building up a
stable, efficient clerical force, selection practices that have been tried
and found useful in business must have some relevance for libraries.
A study of selection practices relating to clerical employees in New
York City reveals trends that have significance for libraries in setting
up clerical selection procedures. The use of clerical aptitude tests
and clerical performance tests to predict success in the job is increas-
ing rapidly. In a study of 628 business firms, 75 per cent were using
tests in the selection process. In another study 80 per cent of life
insurance firms questioned made use of aptitude tests. The rate of
increase in the use of almost every type of testing procedure has been
striking.

Getting the new worker started on the job begins with the induc-
tion interview, where the initial attitude toward the job is established,
and ends with a planned orientation period designed to give him
some insight into his place in the whole organization, as well as some
understanding of the function of the library itself. If orientation is
valuable to the professional staff member, whose formal training has
been directed to this end, it is much more necessary for the clerical
worker to whom the job is just another typing, or filing, or general
office job. Identification of the worker with the new institution is
essential. The question is not whether it shall be done, for the process
we call orientation takes place inevitably. It is a question of whether
the new employee will share our understanding of what is his job
and our common goal, or will perform mechanically the seemingly
meaningless tasks assigned him. It is the difference between effective
integration and just working in the library.

Where there is a recognized career service, and particularly where
employees are selected initially for eventual promotion to a higher
level, a planned program of training is essential. Although in libraries
we make use of the basic clerical skills, the largest volume of library work is concerned with tasks peculiar to libraries. We can expect the basic skills such as typing, bookkeeping, recording, and counting statistics to be acquired in a general business training course, but it remains the responsibility of the employing institution to teach specific techniques such as those connected with the acquisition of materials, cataloging and processing, and maintaining records of library materials and library users. Business recognizes this problem of adapting basic skills to a specific job. Ten years ago, in a study of the work of clerical employees, Thelma M. Potter notes an increasing number of training programs for office employees. A 1952 survey of white-collar workers revealed that some kind of training program for office workers is now in effect in approximately one out of four companies, both large and small.

It has been the experience in business that training needs occur largely in three broad areas: skills and techniques of actual performance, human relations, and supervision. Employees receive training in any or all of these areas because of a deficiency which affects their productive capacity, or for the purpose of promotion. Training is most frequently done on the job, by the immediate supervisor, in the course of assigned duties. Formal training in groups, by a separate training staff, is found to be feasible only in large organizations where a significant number of workers is hired at one time to do an identical job. Psychologically the formal training situation is artificial, and is found less effective than training on productive work. For most libraries training probably will and should remain individual, on-the-job, taught by the immediate supervisor, just as in most business offices. Even the smallest library can, nevertheless, carry out its individualized training on a carefully planned basis.

When training is done on the job by the immediate supervisor, the training problem becomes one of training the trainer. Alice Dunlap experimented with, and strongly recommended, the adaptation of job instruction training techniques that had proved effective in industry to the teaching of library tasks. Films prepared by the United States Office of Education for training supervisors in industry illustrate the principles on which these techniques are based, and can be applied to situations involving office workers.

In training clerical workers no tool is more valuable than the procedure manual. It is precisely in the clerical processes that the procedure manual has its natural place. After policy decisions have been made, the manual provides the breakdown for each task on which
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All instruction is based, whether it is done by the immediate supervisor or a centralized training staff. Where training is completely decentralized the manual provides for uniformity and continuity in procedure. It helps to insure adequate instruction of workers before they are given responsibility for new duties and makes it easier to train competent clerical workers to supervise the work of others doing routine clerical tasks.

It will be recognized that in the development of the clerical staff the supervisor is in the most sensitive spot. This aspect of the librarian's work is treated more fully in this issue in the article on supervision and morale. It is the supervisor who sets the tone of the operating unit and who is largely responsible for the attitudes of its members. It is the supervisor who stimulates the cooperation of staff members toward the common goal so that the task each performs is seen in its relation to the whole function of the library. In the end, it is upon the supervisor's success in developing an attitude of identification with the organization, sound performance, and pride in accomplishment, that the goal of a stable, productive, and satisfied clerical staff will be achieved.

References


The Personnel Office and the Personnel Officer

PHYLLIS OSTEEN

Answers to a question sheet sent early in 1954 to fifty libraries indicate that the trend toward recognition of personnel administration in the organizational structure, which began some time ago, is continuing. The inquiry was sent to the larger public libraries, chiefly those having more than ten branches, and to the largest university libraries. Seventy per cent of those solicited for information returned the question sheet. Of these, 57 per cent reported that their personnel administration duties are now assigned to a special officer. Undoubtedly, this is an increase over what might have been discovered ten, or even five, years ago.

Because recognition of personnel administration as a separate function is relatively recent, library literature on the subject is not yet extensive nor profound, as the evaluated bibliography published last year shows. Many librarians now realize that their traditional feeling of being different from workers in other fields has been an erroneous one. This realization has led librarians to a study of the personnel literature from other vocations where more has been done to develop personnel methods than in libraries. Such study has led them to a fuller recognition of personnel administration as a separate area of administrative endeavor, an area which requires special techniques of the persons performing it, and, in the larger libraries, special offices and officers to perform it.

Difficulties as well as help have come from study of the personnel literature of business and industry. Librarians were too inexperienced in personnel administration practices to assimilate their reading at first. Also, the unfamiliarity of the situations described and of the terminology seems to have annoyed them. Bringing into libraries personnel workers from business and industry, as has been done in a few places, may have aggravated the annoyance instead of furthering

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understanding of universal precepts, as might have been expected. This situation cannot be very widespread, however, since only 20 per cent of the libraries which assign personnel work to a special officer said that personnel training alone was specified for the position. Ten per cent accept either library school or personnel preparation; 30 per cent ask for personnel training added to library school; and 35 per cent require library school alone. The remaining 5 per cent have no training specification at present.

From their writings and discussions, the chief difficulty librarians have experienced from studying business and industrial personnel methods seems to stem from preoccupation with techniques. This may be due to the fact that techniques for their own sake are of great importance in some areas of librarianship. The error of emphasis in this area lies in the fact that personnel administration is concerned with people instead of inanimate materials. All personnel literature states this repeatedly. Even in those phases of librarianship where techniques are of the greatest importance, a philosophy underlying the tasks to be performed is recognized as essential to the proper accomplishment of them. A philosophy of action could be said to be even more important where people, instead of materials, are involved. Regulations, procedures, records, and all the other technical elements are necessary to the performance of personnel duties, but, authorities say, techniques should be kept to a useable minimum, be transcended by a spirit of good will and trust, and sublimate forms to manners. There would seem to be a need, then, for a philosophy of library personnel administration in order to give meaning to the essential actions.

A synthesis of definitions of personnel administration, around which a philosophy might be formulated and on which its accomplishment is based, can be made from a wide variety of writings. It is concerned with but two components: personnel, which means people, and administration, which means responsibility for accomplishment. Combined, the two components indicate achievement of the purposes of the library through its human resources rather than through its operational, mechanical, or financial elements. The two together also determine the objectives of personnel administration, of which there are two, both equally important: (1) to secure, retain, utilize, and develop an adequate staff by which to carry on efficiently the operations of the library; and (2) to fulfill the aspirations and capabilities of the individuals who compose the staff.

The advantages of systematizing personnel administration as a
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separate function, which libraries are recognizing, are inherent in its objectives. There are organizational and economic advantages which apply to the first objective and psychological and social advantages which help to attain the second, if personnel writers are correct. Successful accomplishment in personnel administration, being dependent upon the exercise of heart as well as head, naturally is more indefinable and less susceptible to measurement and control than are those areas of administration which depend upon operational, mechanical, or financial factors. The economic advantages of centralizing personnel matters in large libraries has precedent, however, from other fields of work where the profit motive rules out inefficiency. These can be no less desirable in nonprofit organizations where budgets are fixed and limited and where the motives of both officers and staff are identical.

The psychological advantages of systematized personnel administration are harder to recognize, although much has been written about the emotional needs of people at work. In public service institutions the needs of patrons cannot wait, whereas, it is supposed, those of staff members can. Theoretically, this is true, even though it has become an administrative truism that successful management of any kind of an organization depends largely upon high morale among its personnel. The social advantages are interwoven with the psychological. Experiments and surveys made in all kinds and sizes of organizations have shown that a group of people working together constitutes a social situation in which working conditions and salaries, while very vital, are not as important in end results of good morale as satisfying human relations provisions.

The specialized responsibilities of personnel administration are, in general, the same in all fields of work. They are listed in many writings, one of the most complete lists being found in Personnel for May 1947. A summary of the tasks to be performed might divide them into two areas: technical and coordinative. All respondents to the 1954 inquiry, mentioned earlier, having separate personnel offices indicated that a full range of personnel duties was assigned to these offices. None, for example, limited it to employment functions alone.

The technical functions accomplish the first objective of personnel administration. These are employment, maintenance, training and communication, research, and services. Employment is the securing and assigning of a staff qualified to carry out the operations of a library. Maintenance is the utilizing, regulating, and sustaining of a willing and efficient staff. Training and communication efforts result
in developing, inspiring, and informing the staff so that its individuals may remain willing and efficient. Research is the studying of facts about the staff and matters which affect its support and government. Services promote the personal welfare of the staff so that its energies may be conserved for the work of the library.

The coordinative functions of personnel administration are less tangible than the technical tasks and are, therefore, the ones which are likely to be ignored in the pressure of coping with problems in the technical area. Although they aim fundamentally to accomplish the second objective of personnel administration, they cannot be separated entirely from the technical tasks in actual performance. This is particularly true of the maintenance and communication tasks. And it is by means of the coordinative duties that the psychological and social advantages of centralized personnel administration are made most apparent.

The highest form of coordinative duty is the personnel administrator's responsibility for helping to form policies and plans. This is carried on with the chief librarian in all libraries, and also with other officers in large libraries. Without the exact knowledge of current staff problems and opinions, which the personnel administrator can bring to the chief librarian's attention, policies and plans could prove sterile. Amy Winslow has expressed this clearly in a discussion of staff participation in library administration. The personnel office can be the channel through which participation moves. Overseeing the inauguration, development, and evaluation of policies and plans so that they fulfill the staff's need for justice and consideration as individuals may be the personnel officer's most exacting but most exciting coordinative task. Coordinating policies and plans with changes in conditions also is a responsibility of a high order.

There are three kinds of administrative capacities described in personnel literature, an understanding of which helps to place personnel administration in its relationship to the whole administrative structure. Line administrators are those who have direct control over personnel, operations, and materials. They have the authority to say, "You do this. Do it at such a time, with these tools, in that place." Chief librarians, department heads, branch librarians, and other unit supervisors represent this kind. Functional administrators, represented by special-function directors such as supervisors of children's work, have authority to say, "Do it in this way." Staff administrators are those executives who properly do not have any direct authority in the sense of being able to say, "Do." Instead, they say, "Let
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me help you do it,” and give help by supplying information, reconciliation, correlation, and consultation.

According to personnel writers, personnel administration is a staff responsibility, since it acts primarily in a service capacity to everyone who works in an organization. The responsibility for designated accomplishments related to people is without any implication of ordering, but with the strong implication of guidance. Line and functional administrators are charged with the translation of policies and plans into action. The personnel officer acts chiefly by informing, advising, and guiding line officers so that they may maintain skillful and harmonious interpersonal relations among staff members. Thus, a personnel office is distinguished from a mere collection of rooms, desks, files, and appliances in charge of an officer who makes rules independently, keeps records, and collects statistics. The majority of large libraries, 65 per cent of those having personnel offices, have organized them as staff functions. Twenty per cent assign line authority to their personnel officers, and 15 per cent indicated that both line authority and staff responsibility was assigned.

Personnel authorities urge that the personnel officer be given a status equal to that of line and functional executives under the chief administrator. The organizational level is not always apparent from the titles assigned to personnel officers by the libraries solicited for information. Those having special officers recognize the special function by including the word “personnel” in the titles, for the most part, but there is no great similarity otherwise. “Personnel Officer” appeared three times and “Supervisor of Personnel” twice. The same variance in titles occurs in business and industry, however, without denoting lack of high-ranking status. Rank may be indicated a little more clearly by the salary ranges quoted by the sample. The arithmetical median falls in the $5,000–$6,000 bracket, with the highest figure mentioned just under $8,000. University libraries evidently are not able at present to offer as high salaries for this special work as are public libraries.

The personnel program in a library, more than in many other kinds of organizations, is determined by the form of government under which it operates, as well as by the people who work for it. There can be no exact prescription, therefore, for a program which will fit all sizes and kinds of libraries in all details, nor any magic formula for the selection of techniques, methods, records, or forms, and no required size for the personnel office, although the McDiarmids once mentioned one for public libraries. The American Library Association
also suggested a specification in its manual of personnel organization and procedure. If librarians agree with authorities from other fields, they will conclude that, when working out a personnel program, each library must study its own organization and staff without preconceived ideas of what can or cannot be done, except as it is limited by local governmental controls. It must analyze its own needs, plan an ideal program and likely ways to achieve it, revamp details where and when made necessary by changing conditions, select appropriate techniques and records on the basis of usefulness, draw upon the experiences of other libraries and other fields of work, and meanwhile try not to resort to more than a minimum of temporary expediencies.

Governmental determinants of library personnel policies and regulations are partly external and partly internal. External controls may include source of income, permissive legislation under which the library was established, other legislation such as a certification law, civil service jurisdictions, and the supervisory powers of state, county, or municipal bodies. Faculties, boards, commissions, councils, or departments may act for these bodies. Internal controls may include the library's legal contracts with federal, state, municipal, or other governmental divisions; its own board of directors, trustees, committees, or other directing groups; and its constitution or bylaws establishing the powers of its administrative and executive officers. The library's staff affects the details of a personnel program, also, at any given time. Both as members of organized groups, such as associations or unions, and as individuals, they influence the selection of methods as well as the formulation of policies. As members of groups, they may enter into agreements with the library which determine points in its personnel program. As individuals, they are the reason for the existence of a program.

Library literature recognizes that only large libraries can implement a full-scale personnel program, provide a separate personnel office, and make use of even a portion of the techniques, forms, and records which other personnel writers describe. Large libraries could be the laboratory for the profession in the personnel function of administration, discovering and testing the best procedures for use by it. Small and medium-sized libraries may then select, adapt, amend, or expand techniques publicized by large libraries, according to their particular needs. It is possible that the smallest units might make the best actual use of knowledge growing out of large library programs, since their administrators have direct personal contact with all members of their staffs.
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Looking into the future to what seems an inevitable growth of regional and even national cooperation between libraries, effective organization and management of larger groupings undoubtedly will include personnel administration as a special division of administrative structure. Its current recognition by large libraries almost certainly assures that possibility. It will give the same kind of assistance to individual units of the combinations which operational administration is already providing in existing regional setups in functional offices such as reference work and in service offices such as public relations. In addition, it is probable that such an expansion of a specialized field of work will provide ambitious librarians with another administrative level to which they may advance.

There seems to be a general seeking for more stable organization of personnel administration in order to deal effectively with the twin problems of securing adequate staffs for libraries and for keeping staff members working happily at the multitudinous and heterogeneous tasks of which library work is composed. The seeking is good to see, indicating unwillingness to continue on the wavering path of expediency which led nowhere for a long time. It may be a painful period to live through, and puts a heavy burden on the librarians responsible for further developing personnel administration as a specialized function of librarianship. There is no reason to suppose, however, that they will not meet the challenge which faces them successfully.

References


Position Classification and Pay Plans

HAZEL B. TIMMERMAN

In his paper at the University of Chicago Library Institute H. G. Pope stated, "... the position classification plan is a fundamental prerequisite of personnel administration." H. F. Hubbard explained why—"The successful administration of an equitable pay plan, of a sound recruiting and selection program, and of virtually all other personnel functions depends in a large measure upon the existence of a sound classification plan."

Although it was not until 1908 that a governmental unit, Chicago, started a program of classifying positions on the basis of duties and responsibilities, petitions from federal clerks more than seventy years earlier centered attention on the need for a duties classification plan and the gearing of salaries thereto. Their petition of 1838 resulted in a resolution passed by the U.S. Senate and addressed to heads of departments which called for reports showing "the classification of the clerks ... in reference to the character of the labor to be performed, the care and responsibility imposed, the qualifications required, and the relative value, to the public, of the services of each class, as compared with the others ..." At various periods thereafter Congress considered and attempted to find a solution to the problem of uniform compensation for employees in all departments and offices who were doing the same kind of work. With the passage of the Classification Act of 1923 the Personnel Classification Board was set up to deal with the classification of, and pay for, positions in the U.S. departments in Washington. Federal field positions were not covered until several years later.

As library employees were included in the classification and pay plans of governmental jurisdictions, librarians became concerned in the relative placement of library positions in the classification plans and in whether the salaries paid were equitable in relation to duties.

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performed and commensurate with those of other positions having similar levels of responsibility.

In 1920 the A.L.A. Council passed a resolution on the classification of library positions in the federal service. George F. Bowerman, in presenting the resolution, commended the report made by the Congressional Joint Commission on Reclassification of Salaries and stated that although librarians had profited by the classification there were still discrepancies and inequalities affecting the classification which should be eliminated. Three years later, when the Classification Act of 1923 was passed, a committee of government librarians prepared a report containing job analyses of library positions and a brief justifying the claim of librarianship as a profession. A proposal was made by C. C. Williamson to the American Library Institute in 1920 that personnel specifications for library positions needed to be developed which would give a work description of each position and a descriptive analysis of personal qualifications.

In 1922 the Institute for Government Research suggested that its newly organized Bureau of Public Personnel Administration, Fred Telford, Director, in cooperation with the American Library Association make a survey of library personnel. This proposal was approved by the A.L.A. Council in 1923, and the A.L.A. Committee on Classification of Library Personnel was established under the chairmanship of Arthur E. Bostwick. The Bureau served as the technical staff of this committee. More than 150 libraries of various types and sizes cooperated by supplying data on approximately 6,000 positions. The report, Proposed Classification and Compensation Plans for Library Positions, issued in 1927 and popularly called the Telford Report, has made a major contribution to the development of classification and pay plans for libraries. Class specifications were prepared for 170 classes of library positions in public, college, university, normal school, high school, and state libraries. Although these specifications are outdated in some respects due to changing conditions, the student interested in position classification and salary administration will find in them and in other sections of the report material of great value. Some of the findings and recommendations of the report are as pertinent today as when issued more than twenty-five years ago. The sections of the Telford Report dealing with college and university libraries were superseded in 1929 by the work of a subcommittee of the A.L.A. Committee on Classification of Library Personnel.

Included as an appendix to the Telford Report was a preliminary report of the A.L.A. Committee on Schemes of Library Service. This
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committee, appointed in 1922 under the chairmanship of Josephine Adams Rathbone, was established to work out a plan for grading libraries and library personnel. Its work was inextricably tied up with that of the Bostwick committee, and two people were members of each. The Rathbone committee made use of the information collected and digested for the Bostwick committee's use and Telford advised the committee in the early stages of its work. Classes of public libraries and grades for branches, departments, and personnel were established. At various intervals to 1934 the committee reported on refinements of this work and requested discharge in 1934. Its functions were transferred to the Committee on Salaries and Employment, the predecessor of the Board on Personnel Administration.

Several state library associations, such as those in California and New Jersey, developed state-wide plans in the early thirties. The publications describing these not only covered position classification and pay plans but also included a section on the classification of libraries. Thus, they combined at the state level the types of materials covered by the A.L.A. in the work of the Bostwick and Rathbone committees.

The year 1939 marks the publication of the A.L.A.'s Classification and Pay Plans for Municipal Public Libraries. This volume contains four major sections: classes of libraries, branches, departments, and divisions; standards of education, experience, and pay for personnel grades; specifications for library positions; and score card. It seems proper to compare the Telford Report and this volume, particularly their purposes. In the early twenties constant reference was made to standardization of libraries, and the Telford Report reflects this thinking. It was suggested that libraries adopt these classification and compensation plans in whole or in part and administer them substantially according to the rules recommended. The Board on Salaries, Staff, and Tenure in setting up the 1939 plans recognized that standardization to this degree was neither possible nor desirable. The Board emphasized repeatedly that these plans were general in scope, capable of wide adaptation, and must be adapted to meet the needs of the particular library. Thus, they only provided examples. The individual library was to set up its own plan based on its own organizational structure and objectives and according to its combinations of duties and responsibilities into positions and classes of positions as they currently existed.

The plan for public libraries and its companion volumes, first issued in 1943, Classification and Pay Plans for Libraries in Institutions of
Higher Education,\textsuperscript{13} differ in several respects. The basic difference is in the omission of the subprofessional service in the latter publication. This was done after the job analyses revealed that this service was rarely utilized in libraries in institutions of higher education. It had been customary in libraries to recognize three services: professional, subprofessional, and clerical. As the actual duties performed in libraries were studied, it became apparent that the duties themselves were either professional or nonprofessional and that the nonprofessional duties could not be satisfactorily segregated into two services, clerical and subprofessional. A committee of the California Library Association\textsuperscript{14} in 1932 and again in 1941 had compiled a classified list of library tasks and had divided them into professional and nonprofessional. A later study, Descriptive List of Professional and Nonprofessional Duties in Libraries,\textsuperscript{15} perforce recognized the same differentiation. This study not only lists the tasks performed under thirteen activities denoting the major divisions of library work but also describes both the activity and the duty.

The lists of professional library duties which have appeared cover a very wide range and are not limited to those common only to librarianship. Functions such as those of administration, management, and public relations are given as well as those peculiar to librarianship. In the latter group, at times, duties technical in scope are included. Robert D. Leigh\textsuperscript{16} indicates that scientific job analysis and enlargement of library service areas will result in transferring many library tasks from the professional to a nonprofessional-technical category. J. P. Danton\textsuperscript{17} proposes three groupings: technical, middle service, and administrative-specialist.

The subdivision of positions first into services and then into classes has created difficulties because it has not always been possible to make clear-cut distinctions among services. Recently the services have been eliminated entirely and positions placed in one schedule in some jurisdictions (federal, state, and local). In his discussion of the federal government's classification and pay plan, Ralph M. Dunbar\textsuperscript{18} points out that the services have been eliminated and that the General Schedule covers all positions formerly included in the professional and scientific service, the subprofessional service, and the clerical, administrative, and fiscal service. Thus the clerk, chemist, educationalist, stenographer, and librarian may each hold positions of the same grade in the General Schedule provided their duties and responsibilities are of like weight and level. This dropping of the services has done away with one irritant which tended to lower morale. The subdivision into
services seemingly set up in some persons' minds a kind of class distinction. More concern was often expressed over the service to which the position was allocated than to its grade and salary.

As individual libraries began to develop their own classification and pay plans, it became evident that in addition to the A.L.A. and state plans a how-to-do-it volume was needed. Therefore, *Position Classification and Salary Administration in Libraries*¹⁹, a step-by-step manual, was prepared which covers all points in the development and administration of the classification and pay plan commencing with the job analysis process.

Several states have provided guidance in matters of position classification, such as Virginia,²⁰ North Carolina,²¹ New York,²² and New Jersey.²³, ²⁴ The New York specifications prepared by a committee of the New York Library Association were adopted by the Association and approved both by the Library Extension Division of the New York State Education Department and the Municipal Service Division of the New York State Civil Service Department.

There are very few examples in print of a library's complete position classification and pay plan. Primarily sections or descriptions of a plan are available. In 1948 the Library of Congress ²⁵ issued job specifications for representative positions in its various departments. This work included, in addition to the job specifications and salary data, two very pertinent items: an organization chart and a brief description of the over-all work of each unit. The introduction to the descriptions for classes of positions in the Reference Department of the New York Public Library²⁶ is particularly noteworthy as it includes considerable background material on the steps taken and decisions made in working out the project. Yale's plan²⁷ contains data on its administration and samples of forms used in requesting a review of a position. It is impossible to list all plans which have been published in part or described in library literature. The following are mentioned as illustrations: Newark,²⁸ Minneapolis,²⁹ Stockton,³⁰ Gary,³¹ Los Angeles County³² public libraries, and the University of California,³³ Vassar College,³⁴ and Columbia University.³⁵

Although position classification plans are more common in the larger libraries, a goodly number of small and medium-sized libraries are now functioning under such plans. Some of these libraries are parts of governmental units covered by civil service, others are in jurisdictions where classification plans have been set up for the entire jurisdiction including the library, and some are libraries which have prepared plans themselves. Special libraries, particularly those in business
and industry, are often included under the plan devised for the organization as a whole. The value to the organization of a classification plan is not dependent on the organization's size. As Eleanor Hitt pointed out in 1938, the importance of the personnel element does not vary with the size of the library.

Alice I. Bryan found in 1947 that only about one-third of the libraries surveyed in the Public Library Inquiry had kept their classification schemes current and that only slightly more than half of the surveyed libraries had plans. Authorities agree that a classification plan must be kept current to reflect the actual situation. Libraries are not static and their objectives, policies, procedures, and organization should be altered to meet the changing needs of the communities they serve. Such adjustments may require the establishment of new positions, the discontinuance of some, and the reassignment of duties in others. The classification plan can be administered so that these and other changes will be handled as each situation occurs and so that periodic audits of the entire plan are made.

Basic to the establishment of any sound position classification plan is the job analysis. Each person sets down and at times describes the how, where, and why of each duty he performs, indicating the time devoted to each task and the supervision he receives and gives in the duty's performance. Marian McFadden and Helen L. Norris and Jennie R. Greenbaum report on such work; the first for a large public library and the second for a medical library. E. A. Wight explains that the job analysis data may be used to great advantage when a detailed work analysis is not undertaken. He illustrates its use in determining the number of professional and nonprofessional positions needed, in drawing up a work distribution chart, and in planning for redistribution of work including the assignment of professional duties to professional persons and office and clerical work to nonprofessional staff. He points out that unless positions are so set up that librarians do work of a professional caliber, professional pay standards cannot be established and maintained and librarianship cannot develop or maintain professional status.

Although studies had been made of library salaries prior to 1922, the first tables of salary statistics appeared in the A.L.A. Bulletin that year under the sponsorship of the A.L.A. Committee on Salaries. Since that date library literature has made constant reference to salaries and salary problems and has reproduced tables of salaries actually being paid in various types and sizes of libraries. Some of this reporting has been done at regular intervals, whereas for other
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types of libraries it has been irregular and fragmentary. Ralph McCoy in *Personnel Administration for Libraries* discusses the types of salary data published and mentions the sources where recent data can be found in published form. The researcher wishing to trace salary trends will find in addition to these recent data the tables appearing in the *A.L.A. Bulletin* from 1922 through 1943 particularly helpful because of their continuity. *College and Research Libraries* has carried forward the tabulations for college and university libraries from that period. The profession is deeply indebted to Charles H. Compton who initiated this reporting and to the many compilers who have continued this work.

Practically no reporting of pay plans appears in library literature. In 1932 Louise Hunt, a member of the A.L.A. Committee on Salaries, prepared tabulations of salary schedules for various classes of library positions in selected public libraries serving more than 25,000 population. The individual pay plans which are published from time to time are helpful, but they do not normally provide sufficient documentary material to make them meaningful. Class titles such as Librarian II, Intermediate Librarian, and Senior Assistant are not sufficient to make comparisons possible. Unless one knows what duties and responsibilities are assigned to the position of Intermediate Librarian in the particular library comparisons with pay plans of other libraries are invalid and meaningless. As long as there is little uniformity in class titles in library terminology, this situation will continue. The position of Senior Assistant in one library may be professional, whereas in another library it may be a nonprofessional position. Much good could be accomplished with little effort if the word "librarian" were included in the class titles of all professional positions. The reader could then at least be sure that he was considering positions which were professional.

This writer would be the last to decry the publication of pay plans in library literature. She instead urges that much more be published and that proper documentary aids be supplied to make comparisons possible. That there is a definite need for such reporting has been demonstrated since administrators of large public libraries are exchanging such data through the Detroit pool; Enoch Pratt Free Library has included some schedules for key positions along with the data on actual salaries paid; and other librarians exchange pay plans informally. The publication of pay plans in state library bulletins as well as in those national in scope would be extremely helpful and would, this writer believes, tend to encourage other libraries to
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develop pay plans based on a sound workable position classification plan. At present many small and medium-sized libraries have no pay plans but rely on making individual adjustments in actual salaries from time to time. The purpose and value of a pay plan do not vary with the size of an organization.

The publication of statistics of actual salaries being paid, while very valuable, cannot substitute for the publication of pay plans. It is not possible to study tables of actual salaries paid and to obtain the salary schedule for a class of position. The library reporting may have lumped two or more levels of positions together to fit the column heading of the table. Even if only one level was reported the library may not at that time have had a person either at the minimum or maximum step of the schedule. Neither is it possible to obtain from data on actual salaries the number of steps and amounts of salary increments for each schedule. The salary schedule denotes how much the position is worth to the institution in relation to the worth of other classes of positions in the institution. The salary schedules for the various classes of positions, therefore, when pyramid on one another, form the pay plan which as a whole shows the pay for the various levels of work which have been recognized in the classification plan.

From the meager information available it would appear that most libraries use a five-step salary schedule, that the maximum salary of a lower grade overlaps or equals the minimum of the next higher grade, and that the amounts of the increments are normally below those of business and industry. Variation in the number of steps is sometimes provided. The theory is often advanced that the number of steps of the salary schedule should be in relation to the time it takes the efficient employee to progress from minimum to maximum performance on the particular job. The step rates between the minimum and maximum rates are established upon the premise that there is a progressive increase in the employee’s value and that these intermediate rates provide reward for increased efficiency.

Dunbar in discussing the latest federal pay plan mentions its longevity provision. Employees in the first ten grades who have reached the maximum salary of the grade are entitled to an additional step increase for every three years of additional service until three such step increases are given. These successive step increases are contingent upon the employee’s continued satisfactory performance.

In establishing a pay plan it is as essential to provide for its administration and review as it is to set up such devices for the position
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classification plan. McCoy indicates that the best available source on salary administration in library literature is Position Classification and Salary Administration in Libraries. This step-by-step manual not only deals with salary administration but also with the factors to be considered in making the pay plan, the mechanics of making it, and its adoption and installation. D. E. Dickason and Classification and Pay Plans for Libraries in Institutions of Higher Education discuss salary determination with particular reference to college and university libraries.

Several state library associations have included suggested pay plans with the classification plan materials. New York State has recently issued recommended minimum plans for professional library positions under civil service.

Since the A.L.A. classification and pay plans were issued, the pay plan sections have been revised from time to time. The most recent revision was issued as “Minimum Library Salary Standards for 1952.” These minimum standards relate directly and only to these volumes. They are minimum salary schedules for the sample specifications used as illustrations of types of positions. The individual library should make its own pay plan to fit its own situation just as it must make its own position classification plan.

This A.L.A. pay plan is worthy of comment because it illustrates several points often considered in pay plan development. A five-step plan is used except for the two lowest grades of clerical service where three steps are provided. The amounts of the increments vary and increase in relation to the worth of the position to the institution. The A.L.A. pay plan consists of a basic plan overlapping at the next to last step, to which has been added a graduated point cost-of-living adjustment, with the highest percentage given to the lowest grades and the lowest to the highest grades. As the plan is published in one unit and as the cost-of-living adjustments are graduated, the overlapping pattern of the basic plan is not clearly evident. The purpose of cost-of-living adjustments is to maintain the purchasing power of a basic pay plan. As the purchasing power of the salaries of a basic pay plan fluctuates with increases and decreases in living costs, the cost-of-living adjustment is increased or decreased as living costs rise or fall. To make such a purpose wholly effective the entire point increase or decrease should be used. By using less than the total point increase and in addition by applying the point increase on a graduated scale, the A.L.A.’s 1952 plan reveals the weaknesses of such manipulation which are not inherent in the basic plan.
The A.L.A. pay plan includes a minimum salary schedule for each sample specification given as illustration. Therefore, minimum salary schedules are provided for each class of chief librarian positions. Although it is not uniformly customary for the chief librarian's position to be included in the pay plan, this position in level and weight bears a definite relationship to the weight and level of all other positions in the institution; thus the salary should reflect these relationships. The chief librarian is a paid staff member; therefore, if there are salary schedules for other positions there should be a salary schedule for his position. There is no more justification for a fixed salary for this position than there is for a fixed salary for every other position in the library. The salary schedule denotes what the position is worth to the institution in relation to the worth of other positions. The chief librarian grows on his job just as others grow and attain maximum performance. When increased efficiency is rewarded through step increases given to all other staff members, why should the chief librarian's position be handled differently? If it is not within the pay plan, increases in salary may not be related in correct proportion to the increments provided for other positions. When the salary of the chief librarian is fixed it can have damaging effects on the setting up of equitable salary schedules for other positions. His fixed salary may make it essential to set salary schedules for other positions considerably lower than is justifiable in order to maintain the proper balance between the level of his position and those of others. The salary schedules of other positions may be equitable and adequate but be too close to his fixed salary to reflect proper balance in levels of work. Although the chief librarian can work for needed salary adjustments for others he is loath to mention his own salary. Therefore, he waits until some member of the board of trustees thinks of it. If his position is included in the pay plan such difficulties and embarrassments do not arise as the pay plan is administered as one unit and proper balance can be maintained among the levels of positions.

In the modern world employees are demanding "equal pay for equal work." A sound position classification plan based on a job analysis and administered to maintain its currency makes it possible to provide such payment for the work done within the institution as a whole. When the employee knows that his pay is equitable in relation to that of his co-workers and that the work which he performs is properly recognized, morale is at a much higher level. The quality of service the library renders to its community is definitely dependent on the level of morale of its employees.
Position Classification and Pay Plans

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Position Classification and Pay Plans


Civil Service and Libraries

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In the field of public administration in the United States, civil service is one of the types or forms of supervisory, over-all personnel control legally imposed by certain major governmental jurisdictions on part or all of their operating departments and subdivisions. Since its inception in the federal government by passage of the Pendleton Act in 1883 it has become the most commonly accepted form of central staff personnel agency at all levels of government in this country. Public libraries, meaning libraries partially or wholly tax supported, are frequently but by no means always included by law within the jurisdiction of the civil service agency.

No one knows exactly how many separate civil service jurisdictions or agencies there are in the United States; nor does anyone know exactly how many libraries in these same jurisdictions are under civil service control. Within the continental and territorial area of the United States there are some 136,5001 political subdivisions or legally established state, county, city, village, township, and other types of governmental units or special districts employing personnel. Among these over 5,400 have some degree or type of civil service coverage. Nearly all of the 48 states and 185 counties out of 3,050 have civil service to some degree or a personnel merit system of some type. At least 845 of the 1,346 cities of over 10,000 population are involved.2

Verner W. Clapp and Scott Adams quote 1952 figures enumerating 133 federal agency libraries in Washington and vicinity and 1,201 elsewhere.3 If the term used is "library units" rather than "libraries," the total outside Washington is cited as 6,766 including Agriculture Department, Air Force, Army, Navy, Veterans Administration, and 37 field libraries of the Judicial Branch of the government. Most of the 133 federal libraries in Washington and the majority of those elsewhere are under civil service.

Inconclusive figures indicate that in nearly half our states the state library staff and the librarians of the state's institutions, other than

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educational, are mainly under civil service. At least 45 per cent, or some 85, of the 185 counties under civil service include the county libraries.

On three different occasions committees of the American Library Association have attempted to gather statistics on the status of civil service in public libraries. None of these compilations have been wholly satisfactory, and accurate, up-to-date figures are badly needed. A recent inquiry by the writer reveals that there are at least 600 public libraries, other than federal, under civil service, partially or wholly, in the entire United States.

Librarians have been debating in print the merits of civil service as applied to libraries for half a century. Briefly stated, the principal arguments may still be summarized as follows:

Advantages.

1. Prevents appointments through political or personal influence.
2. Selects best-qualified candidates through appropriately devised, competitive entrance and promotional examinations.
3. Promotes continuity in office, and protects employees from removal for political or other insufficient reasons.
4. Opens the door of opportunity to all citizens equally.
5. Saves the time of appointing authorities.

Disadvantages.

1. Does not eliminate political and personal influence, especially at the city hall, civil service commission, and library board levels.
2. Limits the geographical area from which candidates may be selected, especially in state and local situations, hence may bar the best available even from competing.
3. Makes removal, even for serious cause, too difficult.
4. Examination content and procedure are too often inadequate, if not inappropriate, and fail to test essential personality factors.

Another disadvantage recently pointed out by library administrators is that few persons with outstanding qualifications will submit to the delays, inconvenience, and exigencies of civil service procedure since they can usually find satisfactory positions without doing so. Also, the better grade people are among the first to leave, unwilling to await the long drawn out and uncertain promotional procedures. This may leave an institution with mediocre quality personnel, particularly weak at the supervisory level.

Statistics of numerical growth of civil service and its spread geo-
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graphically, e.g., from 131,208 positions, or 10 per cent of federal employees, in 1883 to 2,216,230, or 88 per cent, in 1952, certainly indicate, as do comparable statistics on state and local civil service agencies, a growing trend of popular approval of the basic principles civil service stands for in the public mind and greater public and employee confidence in the arguments for rather than against. Though much less, the increase in the number of libraries included under civil service may be similarly interpreted.

Ralph Dunbar's study of federal libraries presents evidence that under federal civil service there have been won better position classification and job description and progress toward the realization of the principle of equal pay for equal work. However, he states frankly that in several most important areas of employer-employee relationships "all is not on the plus side." B. L. Gladieux's fairly recent, highly critical yet constructive article "Civil Service Versus Merit," Dunbar cited for the negative. Yet Dunbar is able to conclude:

Whatever the minus quantities may be, when the conditions of government service are checked against the seven major criteria for employer-employee relationship enumerated at the outset, the net result is surely a solid plus. The principle of equal work for equal pay prevails, the rate of compensation is favorable when compared with that of outside agencies, the tenure conditions are satisfactory, advancement is possible, working conditions are generally good, health is safeguarded, and a retirement system is in effect. It would appear therefore that the civil service recruiting circular was justified in its claims of advantages for federal library service.

There has been a systematic effort, particularly at the national level, toward improving public relations through the publishing of explanatory booklets, speech releases, etc., a valuable example of which is the U.S. Civil Service Commission's *The Librarian in the Federal Civil Service*.

At the local level there is recent evidence in a number of instances of desirable general trends in civil service administration definitely improving library and civil service relationships. These include the delegation of authority by civil service administrators to operating agencies; the use of unassembled examinations; an "open register" and continuous or weekly scheduling of beginning-level professional examinations; participation by the appointing authority in oral examinations; group orals; positive and intelligent recruiting programs; the cooperative sponsoring of library subprofessional or clerical training courses in local junior colleges; improvement in job analysis and posi-
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tion classification procedures; improved salaries; fringe benefits; per-
missive contractual relations for holding examinations between very
small civil service jurisdictions and larger ones, or even with qualified
commercial agencies; selective certification from eligible lists; and
liberalizing restrictive residential requirements. Chicago, St. Paul, and
Los Angeles public libraries, both city and county, report the greatest
satisfaction with these new developments. In certain other places the
absence of these and other desirable improvements in public personnel
administration at the central staff agency level are regretfully noted.

Many of the above developments also apply in the state libraries
and state-wide civil service areas. There is also a growing coopera-
tion with professional associations, especially in New York State and
New Jersey; on-the-job training programs permitting “trainees” to hold
civil service positions without examination while in training; use of
recommended specialists on oral boards; employee award programs;
and development of the “human approach” in various administrative
relationships.

On the other side this writer has current testimony from civil service
authorities themselves that there is too much “system building,” with
emphasis on form rather than substance; confusion in thinking; and
emphasis on needs and wants of the civil servant rather than on the
needs of the service and the government. For example, present forms
of veteran preference too often handicap competent selection. But it
is encouraging to note that both the Civil Service Assembly and the
National Civil Service League have published positive recommenda-
tions designed to mitigate the extreme type of veteran preference
legislation found in some localities, and these recommendations are
reflected in some of the more recent laws of this subject.

From an experienced library administrator has recently come a
letter showing great discouragement over current library and civil
service relations in one state. The chief complaint is that in his state,
civil service is still posited on long lines of people haunting post office
bulletin boards and waiting for jobs to turn up—a failure on civil
service’s part to adapt recruiting procedures to current realities. Long
procedural delays utterly discourage competent candidates. Personnel
“technicians” who seem to be looking through the wrong end of the
telescope at those they should serve are in the saddle. This corre-
respondent concludes: “Less often do the civil service people come to
the harried administrator with the friendly questions, ‘Are you having
trouble? Can we help?’ and more often with the arrogant assertion,
‘You’re in trouble—we’ll fix you!’”
Some details of the New Jersey Library Association's recent cooperation with the state civil service, which operates all civil service in New Jersey, may be worth noting. In 1949-50, the Civil Service Committee of the New Jersey Library Association developed an improved and apparently workable plan with the State Civil Service Commission for all public (state, county, city) libraries in the state under civil service. Two paragraphs from the committee's printed report described this as follows:

Commission staff representatives assured N.J.L.A. Committee members that the main objective was to produce a set of class titles and specifications that would enable an examining division to devise tests that would select candidates well qualified for the specific jobs to be filled in every case; hence titles and specifications should be adoptable in principle and adaptable in detail. For example, the "typical tasks" statement would be illustrative only, not all-inclusive.

The Civil Service representatives also asked the Committee to prepare a statement that would serve to indicate this point of view to the Library Association, to review all proposed specifications in the light of it and to report to the Commission action taken by the Association. The Committee was again assured of complete cooperation on the part of the Commission and staff.

The New Jersey Library Association itself, later, at its convention, took action on the list of class and position titles for libraries under civil service prepared by the Civil Service Commission by approving the list, with one modification, as "adoptable in principle and adaptable in detail," adding, "This approval is given with the understanding that these specifications are to be regarded as experimental, generally descriptive, not restrictive; that they are considered flexible and will be adapted to specific situations, and that the examples of 'typical tasks' are to be considered as illustrative only, not all-inclusive."

The library association was assured that this understanding was acceptable to the technical staff of the Commission and understood it was to the Commission itself. Any other interpretation of a state-wide plan aimed to fit libraries varying from the "one-man" library staff to a staff of over 300 would have been at best a valiant attempt to do the impossible.

This much space has been devoted to New Jersey because it represents one of a growing number of constructive and somewhat successful and continuing efforts on the part of professional associations and the civil service authorities to solve mutual problems, and a mode of procedure thoroughly investigated and reported upon favorably in a
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recent publication of the Civil Service Assembly entitled *Guide to Personnel Activities of Professional and Technical Associations*.\(^\text{15}\) That this New Jersey procedure is still not completely successful is due more to differing interpretations than to the plan itself. In New Jersey, libraries are under civil service in 66 of the 118 local and county governments having this personnel agency control.

New York is another state where the library association and civil service authorities have been working closely on problems of common interest with interlocking committees as in New Jersey. There, too, much progress has been made, and New York has gone further than New Jersey in the field of reconciling certification of librarians and civil service.

The extent to which certification, at first voluntary, then legally permissive, and finally compulsory or mandatory along lines quite similar to certification of teachers, may make it appropriate to exempt librarians from civil service has been a serious issue for some fifty years. John Cotton Dana\(^\text{16}\) opposed both certification and civil service from 1910 on. C. C. Williamson\(^\text{17}\) was one of its earliest and most eloquent advocates. In the 1920's and 1930's the arguments waxed hot. H. S. Hirshberg, urging tentative personnel standards for small libraries in 1926, said, "Standards presuppose certification. . . ."\(^\text{18}\) In the successive editions, 1910, 1923, and 1929, of *The American Public Library*, Arthur E. Bostwick consistently maintained his position as an intelligent opponent of civil service. His brief discussion of certification in the 1923 and 1929 editions shows him as favoring the

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* The following breakdown of the number of separate governmental units under civil service in New York State as well as a statement concerning 228 of the public libraries under civil service in New York State has been supplied in a letter dated April 5, 1954, from Henry J. McFarland, Director of the Municipal Service Division of the New York State Department of Civil Service.

In the 62 counties, 10 are under the administration of State Civil Service, 5 are under the administration of County Personnel Officers and 47 have their own county civil service commission. With the 62 cities, 1 is under State administration, 5 are under the administration of their respective county civil service commissions, 56 are under city civil service administration. The 932 towns, 74 are administered by State Civil Service Commission, 81 by County Personnel Officers and 777 by county civil service commissions. The 549 villages, 44 are under State Civil Service Commission, 49 are under County Personnel Officers and 456 under county civil service commissions. Of the approximately 2600 School Districts, 51 are under city civil service commissions and the remainder approximately 2549 are under State Civil Service Commission administration.

A breakdown of 228 public libraries mentioned in our letter of March 16: two of the public libraries are under counties, 20 are under cities, 42 are under towns, 65 are village, and 99 are school districts.
basic principle. Carleton B. Joeckel favored certification and argued against civil service in 1935 in his *The Government of the American Public Library*.

In an issue of the *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* devoted to "Improved Personnel in Government," it was said, "Librarians are also distinguished for the progress made toward securing compulsory certification." In the same year, writing in the *A.L.A. Bulletin*, Eleanor Hitt of the California State Library said, "So far, civil service has not nullified our present system of certification of county librarians, as the holding of a certificate of the State Board of Library Examiners has been made one of the requirements for the position of county librarian by the civil service boards themselves."

It should be recalled that in California certification has been required for county librarians from the beginning in 1909. The certification requirement was carried over into the revised county free library law of 1911 and has been in effect ever since. County library staff members, other than the head librarian, are appointed by the county supervisors on recommendations of the librarian, without certification. Civil service is involved for those counties under civil service.

In a discussion before the Trustee's Section of the A.L.A., also in 1937, one question asked was, "What are the effects of civil service on public libraries?" Ralph Munn of Pittsburgh, leading the discussion, said at the end, "Certification gives far greater protection than civil service. Although there is difference of opinion, the weight of experience is against civil service."

Civil service administrators regard certification as a floor or minimum qualification on which to build further selective procedures by open-competitive examination, an idea developed and elaborated by G. L. Belsley in 1938 at the University of Chicago Library Institute. But even Belsley, arguing intelligently and cogently against certification as a substitute for civil service, said, "... the trend appears to be in the direction of compulsory certification for all classes of librarians." The A.L.A. committee's excellent pamphlet *Civil Service and Libraries* quotes Belsley's opinion and itself characterizes certification as a valuable complement to, but no substitute for, civil service.

Opinion still varies from the one extreme that considers certification a complete and satisfactory substitute for civil service to the opinion that good civil service administration renders certification wholly unnecessary. At present twenty-four states provide certification for
municipal and/or county librarians by statute; ten have voluntary plans; school librarians are variously treated—usually education department certificates for teacher-librarians are required. As recently as February 1954 the situation regarding certification of librarians was characterized at the A.L.A. Midwinter Conference as "chaotic." The Board of Education for Librarianship has this year asked the Library Education Division to conduct new studies.

According to S. Gilbert Prentiss, Public Library Consultant of the Division of Library Extension at Albany, New York State's current procedure involves the use of a written certification examination to establish civil service eligibility lists for the beginning professional positions in municipal public libraries. For promotional appointments above the level of Senior Librarian I or Library Director I, oral examinations conducted by technical specialists from the library profession under the supervision of the Civil Service Department will be used. "It is the hope of many of us," writes Prentiss, February 1954, "that in time this certification program will be recognized by the Civil Service Department to the extent of allowing the use of unassembled examinations for professional library positions. This would require revision of the present Civil Service law, however." Prentiss also gives it as his opinion that certification in New York State is generally felt to be accomplishing its purpose, with the exception of some minor problems, and is working out reasonably well. The New York State certification procedure is specified in the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education, approved by the Regents. Complementary to this is the fact that the New York Civil Service Department and State Education Department have accepted specifications for library positions formulated by the New York Library Association.

Alice I. Bryan frequently mentions certification in her discussion of civil service and libraries. Miss Bryan sees no likelihood of the civil service merit system decreasing in scope. She predicts, "More and more public libraries are likely to come under its aegis . . ." and that public librarians might better work with other public agencies to improve the adaptation of commission procedures to the peculiar necessities of library management rather than debate the merits and demerits of inclusion under civil service commissions.

In her final summary, where Miss Bryan proposes six elements of a program to increase the adequacy of professional public library personnel, number four reads as follows: "A state-administered program of compulsory certification of professional librarians to hold positions in public libraries that are determined by job analysis to require full
professional training for their performance.” On a later page, however, the author points out that “Certification of professional librarians can be nothing but a pious gesture unless there is a clear definition of library positions of a truly professional character for which formal professional schooling is necessary. . . .” She adds that certification depends directly upon larger units of library service, upon scientific classification of library positions, and upon a system of state financial aid in which grants will be withheld where certification regulations are not complied with.

How to enforce obedience to compulsory certification laws on the part of local boards has been a problem which seems best solved by the threat to withhold all public support, as in New Mexico, not merely extra “state aid.” It is suggested that librarians should study the New York and New Mexico plans and watch for somewhat similar developments in New Jersey. Those who question certification, it is fair to state, will find ammunition for their point of view in Oliver Garceau’s volume, The Public Library in the Political Process.

In professional education for librarianship there is definite need for advanced courses on personnel administration with adequate coverage of all the aspects of modern public personnel administration policies, procedures, and techniques. J. J. Donovan, Associate Director, Civil Service Assembly, in an interview on February 4, 1954, said that curriculums in professional schools for librarianship, social work, medicine, and others, are not providing students with the tools and knowledge necessary for their education in the administrative aspects of their professions. The present writer believes this to be true, feeling also that there is great need for more adequate training for “middle executives” and supervisors.

Donovan states also that, on the whole, there are more and more competent young civil service technicians emerging from our colleges and universities than formerly; that professionalization of civil service is a distinctly progressive and observable trend; and that as more professionally qualified civil service technicians, administrators, and executives are being produced the result is that civil service is becoming more and more firmly established as an acceptable personnel system.

Any appraisal of relationships and trends by one person is open to question as to its validity when the area concerned involves groups of persons with necessarily differing approaches. The judgment of employees, speaking either as individuals or groups, would probably differ from that of both the library administrator and the civil service
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administration even though, actually, the public interest is supposed to be the paramount interest of all three.

The Public Library Inquiry, in addition to presenting data nowhere else available concerning the relationships between civil service and libraries, points out some of the observable trends. Among them are the gradual increase in the number of libraries under civil service and the more favorable attitude toward civil service on the part of libraries operating under it than was the case a number of years ago. Summing up, the report reads, “No librarian reported complete satisfaction with civil service provisions, but a few felt that the advantages considerably outweighed the disadvantages.” “Only two library administrators were completely opposed to all civil service provisions. . . .” 31

Another statement by Miss Bryan which more than one person has found it appropriate to quote, is also pertinent: “. . . whether under civil service control or not, the morale and efficiency of public library personnel depend on recognition by librarians of the importance of adopting the principles and practices of modern personnel management and of developing them as a specialized skill under the direction of personnel experts within and without the library system.” 32

All civil service authorities having libraries under their jurisdiction should read Miss Bryan’s careful study; all librarians operating libraries under civil service also should ponder it. Then, should both groups get together and talk things over, it is quite likely there would be a sudden and possibly 95 per cent increase in the peaceful and intelligent solutions of mutual problems and misunderstandings.

In Leigh’s summary volume covering the Public Library Inquiry, it states, “Very few cases were found in which a strong public library personnel office was co-operating with a progressive civil service commission to adapt the commission’s procedures to library needs and requirements and to decentralize its administration in library hands. This, however, rather than impotent opposition, may be the only road to improvement, inasmuch as the merit system has become a fixed part of local governmental machinery from whose jurisdiction public libraries are not likely to be exempt in larger proportion than is now the case.” 33

After working under civil service well over twenty-five of his total years as a library administrator, the present writer is still of the opinion that civil service as a system of public personnel administration control too seldom aids, as it could, and too often handicaps public libraries in obtaining and managing their own personnel to the best interests of the libraries’ basic service functions.
At the same time, it must be admitted that nowhere do we find a more advanced stand on desirable developments in the field of public personnel administration than in the current publications of the Civil Service Assembly and the writings and practices of civil service leaders in the field. These leaders know as well as anyone the shortcomings of some of their associates. Similarly, librarians look confidently to their own American Library Association and affiliated groups for professional leadership, at the same time knowing full well there are "weak sisters" (and brothers) in the membership whose attitudes and practices do not represent the profession's best nor its ideals.

Mr. Donovan, in the interview mentioned above, offered librarians the following suggestions in the interests of better civil service relationships: first, that librarians inform themselves on the necessary elements of a good modern personnel policy and program, the content, not merely the techniques and procedures; second, that librarians ask themselves whether they have such a program; third, if not, what should be done about it? Mr. Donovan also admitted the possibility that library administrators could select and manage library personnel better without civil service than with it, provided the library had a sympathetic and intelligent library board that would support wholeheartedly the merit system and be strong enough also to resist political and personal pressures, and had a competent personnel officer and office staff. He mentioned the New York Port Authority under Director Austin J. Tobin as the most usually cited proof of this theory. "But," said he, "this theory needs a Tobin!" He added that any good administrator could always make good use of a good civil service system. It is the civil service framework that is needed, in his judgment.

At all times the civil service advocate's answer to his critics has been that given a good basic law there is no evil in civil service that good administration cannot cure, and there are always potential evils lurking in public employment that only good civil service can forestall. Thus, over the years "from the Pyramids to the Pentagon," as W. G. Torpey picturesquely measures time, it is still a case of "What are the alternatives?" The several state legislative investigations of civil service in progress in 1953-54, and the repeated naming of investigative agencies at the federal level, with the Hoover Commission now the agency, indicate both dissatisfaction and a striving for better things.

Achieving the goal of public personnel administration—an ideal public service—is still some distance ahead, but its possible achievement is worthy of, and needs, the harmonized and continuing best
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efforts of our two great service arms of the government, the one aiming to select and administer the best personnel, the other aiming to organize, for best use, published experience and the power of print.

CHRONOLOGICAL CONSPECTUS OF LANDMARKS IN THE EVALUATIVE LITERATURE ON LIBRARIES AND CIVIL SERVICE


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ADDITIONAL REFERENCES


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Library Trends

Forthcoming numbers are as follows:

October, 1954, Current Trends in Public Services in Libraries. Editor: Leslie W. Dunlap, Associate Director for the Public Service Departments, University of Illinois Library.


April, 1955, Current Trends in Acquisitions. Editor: Robert Vosper, Director of Libraries, University of Kansas.


The numbers of LIBRARY TRENDS issued prior to the present one dealt successively with college and university libraries, special libraries, school libraries, public libraries, libraries of the United States government, cataloging and classification, scientific management in libraries, and the availability of library research materials.