

Response to Conditions Abroad

THE Library's Response to Conditions Abroad.

The National Central Library, London

The international lending system which was reintroduced in 1946, has now assumed quite large proportions. The figures are rising steadily year by year, and the return flow of loans from foreign countries is very gratifying.¹

France continues to be the only country that lends considerably more than it borrows; it is second only to Germany as a lender of books to this country. Loans to the latter country have decreased, while the number of books borrowed by British libraries has increased. Loans to Eastern European countries continue to be on a relatively large scale, especially to Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland and Bulgaria, the number to Poland having increased from 12 to 70. All these countries have been able to reciprocate to some extent though calls on them have been limited. It is of interest to note that small countries like Luxembourg and the Saar are high in the list of borrowers. Some of the transactions recorded (particularly in the case of the United States) are for photographic reproductions, not for loans.

	<i>Loans to overseas libraries</i>	<i>Loans from overseas libraries</i>		<i>Loans to overseas libraries</i>	<i>Loans from overseas libraries</i>
Anglo-Egyptian			Kenya	37	—
Sudan	8	—	Lebanon	1	—
Australia	14	—	Luxembourg	62	—
Austria	120	1	Malaya	2	—
Belgium	21	36	Malta	1	—
Bulgaria	42	1	Mexico	1	—
Canada	—	1	Norway	33	17
Ceylon	1	—	Poland	70	13
Cyprus	55	—	Portugal	6	—
Czechoslovakia	232	8	Saar	140	—
Denmark	123	9	South Africa	35	—
Egypt	16	—	Spain	1	15
Finland	2	9	Sweden	167	17
France	190	303	Switzerland	86	36

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Germany	609	461	Syria	1	—
Greece	5	—	Trieste	2	—
Holland	65	34	Turkey	10	—
Hungary	212	21	U.S.A.	8	65
India	16	—	West Africa		
Israel	5	—	(Gold Coast)	3	—
Italy	98	66	Yugoslavia	29	1
Jamaica	1	—			
Jordan	1	—			
			TOTAL	2,531	1,158
			To 41 countries; from 19 countries.		

Bibliothèque Nationale, France

All libraries, as with intellectual and educational institutions generally, are subject to the exigencies of world conditions of peace, trade, cultural and scientific exchange, and freedom of speech and movement. The coming of peace after World War II brought the reopening of the channels of trade and exchange by which the printed materials of other countries are procured.

Publications exchange agreements interrupted by the war have been systematically renewed. By 1951 the amount of material received on exchange increased eight-fold over the receipts of 1946. Formal agreements with learned societies by 1951 numbered 183 in 39 different countries.²

Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Florence

The Library has exchange relations with outstanding foreign cultural institutions to which it sends its *Bollettino delle Pubblicazioni Ricevute per Diritto di Stampa*. Received in return are important national bibliographies, or other works of informational character. During the war copies of the *Bollettino* were held for later shipment abroad. Not all foreign repositories, however, did this and as a consequence the Biblioteca's collections have been impoverished. This is the only form of exchange the institution can undertake; the legislation under which the Biblioteca operates does not provide a budget for an expanded program. The *Bollettino* is sent free to any library from which there is a possibility of receiving publications in exchange.

Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Rome

The Library lends and borrows books abroad, exchanges publications with numerous foreign institutions, and makes a gift of some works. The *Centro di Informazioni Bibliografiche* answers questions from students and institutions throughout the world.

Bibliothèque Nationale, Luxembourg

The Bibliothèque Nationale has initiated an exchange and loan service with most of the great European libraries. It acts as: (a) the national exchange center between the libraries and institutes in the Grand Duchy and those abroad; (b) the center of documentation and bibliographical research; and (c) the center for international inter-library loans.

Koninklijke Bibliotheek, The Netherlands

The Library's response to conditions abroad varies between pride and envy as the spotlight is turned onto different countries. Though noting with satisfaction, in an idealist sort of way, improvements and new developments in all fields, it derives but few benefits from them in practice, since overcrowding and limited funds set their own restrictions on what is practicable.

Kungl. Biblioteket, Sweden

As far as materials of Swedish interest are concerned, completeness is aimed at and on the whole achieved. The situation with regard to foreign research material is much less satisfactory. A survey conducted in the spring of 1953 revealed a great number of serious gaps, particularly in the holdings of learned periodicals and serials, and the coverage of several important fields turned out to be very scrappy and uneven. On the basis of these findings a program for rounding out the foreign collection was drawn up and thanks to special appropriations granted by the government is now in the process of implementation. An active exchange program has also been initiated. The material available for exchange includes the bibliographical publications of the Library, above all the National Bibliography, the publications of the Stockholm University (faculties of arts and law) and certain periodicals. The aim is to provide the growing University of Stockholm with the materials needed for teaching and research in the fields for which the Library has accepted responsibility: the humanities with special emphasis on European history and geography, church history, classical and modern languages, fine arts, philosophy, psychology, sociology, anthropology, and comparative religion. A strong Russian collection is being built up.

Schweizerische Landesbibliothek, Switzerland

The Library acts as a center for international loans, checking outgoing orders with the Union Catalog, to make sure that the requested

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volume cannot be found within the country, and directing incoming orders to the proper libraries. The information service answers any questions coming from abroad as freely as the ones emanating from Switzerland.

Millî Kütüphane, Ankara

In the future the Millî Kütüphane hopes to have special exhibits reflecting world conditions, but for the moment the only response to conditions abroad is reflected, in a small way, in the acquisition policy.

The Jewish National and University Library, Israel

The Library has sent material to some war- and fire-damaged libraries abroad, and has filled gaps in Judaica in some European Jewish libraries.

The National Diet Library, Japan

The Library has been greatly influenced in its organization and procedures by the Library of Congress, at Washington; otherwise it has shown no response to conditions abroad.

Biblioteca Nacional, Cuba

The Library conducts correspondence and maintains exchange relations with every part of the world.

South African Public Library, Cape Town

During the past seven years visits have been paid to libraries in Europe and America by the chief librarian, the deputy librarian and two other senior members of the staff. The Library is also in touch with overseas developments through its arrangements for the exchange of publications, but not hitherto, of staff. Owing to its position on an important international shipping route, Cape Town has also, from time to time, the privilege of welcoming librarians from other countries, and so keeping in touch with library conditions abroad.

References

1. The National Central Library. *38th Annual Report of the Executive Committee for the year ending 28 February 1954*. London, Malet Place, 1954. pp. 13-14.
2. La Bibliothèque Nationale. Cain, M. J.: *La Bibliothèque Nationale Pendant les Années 1945 à 1951, Rapport Présenté à M. le Ministre de l'Education Nationale*. Paris, La Bibliothèque Nationale, 1954.