Catholic Theological Seminaries and Their Libraries

JOHN H. HARRINGTON

The title assigned this area of the general topic under consideration in the current issue of Library Trends reflects an educational situation which is in the process of change and development. As the broadening concept of the role of theology in general education gains wider acceptance the problems and procedures described in these pages may soon become part of the professional life of the public and college librarian. Although there never was a formal limitation of the scientific study of theology to those destined for the service of the altar, until recent years this restriction was generally the case. It has been difficult for the layman to pursue theological studies within a framework of education designed for the preparation of candidates for the priesthood. At the present time there is a growing conviction that the study of religious truths on an advanced, but not professional, level while limited in penetration should not be restricted in the manner of presentation or in the scientific development of the subject matter.\(^1\),\(^2\)

The need for competent teachers of sacred doctrine led to the formation of graduate departments of theology in at least twenty universities which can in no way be considered seminaries. Such institutions as Fordham, Notre Dame, St. Mary's to name but a few, grant a master's degree in course to all who complete the requirements. The subjects offered may be described as theological in the strict sense of the term, and without apology we may refer to the graduates, lay and religious, as theologians. To provide an organization for professional discussion, in 1955 these theologians held the first meeting of the Society of Catholic College Teachers of Sacred Doctrine. The Society now has 550 members who represent 250 institutions of higher learning.\(^3\)

\(^{1}\)\(^{2}\) The author is librarian, Archbishop Corrigan Memorial Library, St. Joseph's Seminary, Yonkers, New York.
On the undergraduate level the scientific approach to doctrine has resulted in an interest in theology and the professional tools of theology which is gratifying, if at times startling. It takes some adjustment to become accustomed to collegians who cite texts from the Fathers of the Church, the Councils, theologians, and generally handle the sources of theology with a confidence usually associated with the secular disciplines. The library implications of the program are equally startling, if more subdued as becomes movements associated with the quiet of the main reading room. One immediate result has been the growth of collections, if not proper libraries, of theological materials in a variety of non-ecclesiastical situations throughout the country. Against this background it would be interesting, after the manner of the “schools,” to develop a definition of “theological,” and then “library” by way of limiting the topic of this paper. To avoid the perils of any such procedure we shall simply attempt to sketch the outlines of an educational system which has contributed to the formation of the 53,796 priests now working in the United States and has at this moment 42,629 seminarians in its care. To include all the elements of the subject the concept of “theological seminary” will be broadened to include all major houses of religious formation which contribute to the development of those advancing to the priesthood.

In Judaism the written word occupied a central place in the transmission of divine revelation, and there are not wanting examples and customs to indicate the high reverence in which it was held. The sacred books were a precious charge, and those who wrote and those who studied the word of God were a group apart. With the advent of Christianity this reverence for reading and writing was intensified and extended to written materials which were not necessarily directly concerned with the preservation of divine revelation. All writing which was helpful to the formation of the children of God was seen as a necessary thing, and to read such books was to perform an act of virtue on the same level as fasting and prayer.

From the literacy test required of candidates who sought admission to the monasteries of Pachomius in the fourth century, through the “stout brethren” of the Benedictine monasteries who enforced strict silence in the cloister during the hours devoted to reading, to the somewhat elaborate testing programs of today, there runs the deep conviction that reading, writing, and books are essential to the life of the spirit and the service of the church. The organization of library service has ever been a part of the church’s concern, and many
Catholic Theological Seminaries and Their Libraries

are the ways devised to provide it. Fortunately, some of the procedures have been abandoned, as for example the rule which required the reader to pass an oral examination on the contents of the books he was returning before he was permitted to borrow others! The monastic scriptorium, the university stationer, the early presses of the Brothers of the Common Life, the modern paperback, microfilm and microcards has each made its contribution to theological study, spiritual development, and priestly formation.

Theological study and spiritual formation are the essential goals in any system or program which assumes responsibility for the preparation of men for the priesthood. Both elements of study and prayer must be served and the wreckage of systems which neglected the one in favor of the other may be seen by even a casual backward glance. Reference is frequently made to the fine balance between professional knowledge and personal piety which must be maintained in any system of seminary training. Actually there exists not so much a balance as a hierarchy in which knowledge is seen as a cause of priestly holiness. Learning is essential for the proper discharge of many of the duties of the sacred ministry, but it also is an important element in the development of sacerdotal perfection. Given these goals of seminary training, the librarian, no less than the theologian and spiritual director, must make his proper contribution to learning and holiness.

The Catholic priesthood is essentially a sharing in the priesthood of Christ and remains unchanged no matter who may receive the sacrament of Orders. Although the priesthood shared and the sacrament received are the same for all, there is a difference among those who share and receive. A difference based not only on individual fitness and such personal elements, but which arises from the juridical state of the individual. Two groups of priests are recognized in the law of the church. Those attached to a geographical unit or diocese, and those who are members of a moral or legal entity within the church which we will call a religious order. This is a completely inadequate distinction between the diocesan clergy and religious priests but it is sufficient for our purposes since it will point up the differences in formation which have library implications.

The selection and formation of men for the diocesan priesthood has always been the responsibility of the bishop of each diocese. For more than a millennium and a half it was possible to have as many ideas on priestly formation as there were individual bishops. The solutions
offered have included gathering the candidates in the homes of the bishop there to receive complete training from him, sending the candidates to monastery schools, enrolling them in universities, etc., etc. The system followed in individual cases depended on the convictions of the bishop, his financial condition, the number of candidates, the needs of the diocese and similar considerations. The Council of Trent in 1546 brought order to the situation by establishing the structure of seminary training which with some modifications exists today. Each diocese is bound to support, educate in ecclesiastical discipline and spiritually form those youths who wish to receive the sacrament of Holy Orders. This is to be done in an institution chosen by the bishop or in one maintained by him. It is not necessary here to describe seminary organization in detail. It will suffice simply to point out that the course of training may begin at any point after graduation from our grammar schools or roughly at the age of thirteen or fourteen. Candidates may enter the seminary at practically any stage subject to local and general regulations. The minor seminary (high school and junior college) may be a day or boarding school, but the major seminary (last two years of college and four years of theology) must be a boarding institution where the activity of the student is closely regulated in terms of the state of life he has chosen.

The growth of the church in the United States had reached a point of development by 1789 which justified the erection of the first diocese at Baltimore under Bishop John Carroll. In 1791 Bishop Carroll opened the first seminary in the country at St. Mary's Baltimore, and placed the preparation of future diocesan priests under the direction of the Fathers of Saint Sulpice. As the church grew new dioceses were established and seminaries founded to supply priests for the diocesan ministry. At the present time in the United States there are 26 archdioceses, 113 dioceses and 93 seminaries. Seminarians number 23,553, of which 8,705 are in the 50 major seminaries. In addition to the four year course in theology the major seminary may provide for the philosophy program. The preparation for the course in theology is the traditional liberal arts program although there is an amount of pre-professional training usually in languages and literature. In addition to the academic work there is, of course, a program of spiritual formation which is the specific difference between a seminary and other educational institutions on the same level.

The contribution of library service at each stage of the twelve year course offers many interesting points for discussion, but it is necessary
to restrict our attention to the major diocesan seminary. The emphasis on professional knowledge and personal sanctity gains momentum at this point and the role of the library becomes increasingly important. It is here that the candidate begins the systematic and scientific study of theology and related subjects. There are required courses in moral, dogmatic and ascetical theology, liturgy, canon law, sacred scripture, philosophy, church history, homiletics, catechetics, music, and biblical languages. These, with some variation, comprise the core curriculum which is to be found in every major diocesan seminary. In addition to these basic studies there usually is offered the opportunity to do advanced work in such secular fields as are related to the work of the ministry, e.g., sociology, education, social work, etc. To put the situation briefly, there is a basic curriculum which must be followed in every major seminary, and to this each bishop is free to add those subjects which he feels are necessary for the work of his diocese. At present, for example, in the archdiocese of New York an intensive program in spoken Spanish has been added to the seminary curriculum. This is supplemented during the summer vacation and after ordination by field work and additional courses at the Catholic University of Puerto Rico.

The essential purpose of the diocesan seminary is to prepare men for entrance into the active ministry immediately following ordination. A percentage of each class may be sent for graduate work in the sacred sciences or in secular subjects necessary for the administration of diocesan activities, e.g., canon law, education, social work, hospital administration and the like, but for the majority ordained no formal return to academic work is contemplated. This situation has an effect on the library program within the seminary and on any extension program initiated for the alumni.

The granting of graduate degrees in theology by a diocesan seminary is a rare thing in view of its stated purpose, and the academic standards set for ecclesiastical disciplines. Graduate study in the sacred sciences is considered to begin only after the successful completion of four years of post-baccalaureate specialized study which is usually the complete curriculum of the diocesan seminary. This problem of degrees is an important element in the current interest of seminary administrators in obtaining accreditation from secular agencies. The seminary course is terminal for the majority of priests who enter the parochial ministry, and it is a necessary pre-requisite for those who are to proceed to graduate work in theology. The curriculum of
the major diocesan seminary is considered to be undergraduate and no academic recognition is given to those who successfully complete it. This procedure is based on a distinction between professional competence and research achievement. A problem arises, however, in the case of a priest who has had forty hours of formal instruction in moral theology, has had ten years or more parochial experience, and yet is not considered fully qualified to teach introductory ethics in an accredited college because he has not done graduate work in the field. He may remove this deficiency by taking a degree in religious education at one of the universities mentioned above. This situation obviously works a hardship on the individual priest and seriously limits the effective use of the potential of the diocesan (and religious) clergy.

Basically the problem is two-fold and a solution may be found by making adjustments in either of the two areas. There is first, the question of a relationship between an older academic discipline (theology) and a more recent structure of degrees and their significance. On the other hand, there is the problem of expressing professional competence in academic terms. An approach to a solution is now being made in the second area and serious thought is being given to obtaining accreditation through secular regional agencies. Once accredited a seminary could grant the M.A. and/or the M.S. in course and thereby give academic significance to a considerable amount of work done in course.

The seminary library must devise a program which will meet the academic, professional, and spiritual needs of the faculty and student body. It supports a curriculum which is terminal for most of the student body, and yet preliminary for some, and in each student the library must nourish a desire for learning and a love for books which will encourage spiritual and intellectual growth in the life after ordination. This last obligation is not as pressing for those who will enter graduate work as it is for the majority of students who will enter a life which by its multiplicity and diversity of activity has a tendency to engulf and draw a man gradually away from all but the most essential reading and study. The priest is required, by the nature of his work, to keep abreast of advances in professional subjects. This is usually done by subscriptions to a few specialized journals in theology, canon law, and ascetics. The entire question of extension work, or the obligation of the library to its clerical alumni, is to be considered elsewhere in this issue, but it may be of value to point out here some of the implications for the library of the diocesan seminary.
Catholic Theological Seminaries and Their Libraries

The need to keep the clergy informed of current developments has long been recognized by the church, and the solution has not been left entirely to the ingenuity or initiative of the individual. During the first five years after ordination every priest is required to take an annual series of oral and written examinations which systematically cover the entire seminary course. The list of required and suggested readings is kept up to date and the seminary library is expected to supply the necessary titles. Frequently, usually on a semi-annual basis, conferences are held for all the priests in the diocese. Attendance is obligatory and papers and problems are presented in rotation by the local clergy. In the preparation of these assignments the seminary library supplies the required and supplementary reading.

Another opportunity for service to the alumni is available to the library through the annual retreats which are of obligation for the clergy of the diocese. Each year every priest is required to devote a week to spiritual exercises in a house devoted to prayer and contemplation. In many dioceses the facilities of the seminary are used while the student body is on vacation. During these periods when every priest is present at the seminary, many librarians develop displays and lists of all the new and significant titles acquired during the year. These titles are made available to the retreatants during their stay and order blanks are provided for those who wish to acquire books— at a discount! The response to this program has been encouraging and it makes possible the convenient examination and purchase of professional books not readily available.

In addition to these more or less standard practices a variety of extension programs have been devised, including lending by mail, liberal borrowing privileges, circulation of lists of titles, publication of book reviews, and similar projects. In the final analysis the success of any program of library extension depends on the effectiveness of the program of library service within the seminary itself. It is somewhat unrealistic to speak of parish libraries, parish reading clubs, the spread of good reading among the laity unless the clergy are convinced from personal experience of the value of reading as an aid to spiritual and cultural growth. The unity of the program of priestly formation is maintained by the clerical faculty who endeavor to foster the love of God and a love for learning in every student. The librarian must give strength to this unity by showing the student how books can bring him to both a knowledge and a love of God.

To acquire and make available the best of modern and ancient
literature in professional subjects requires a sufficient budget, skill in book selection and proper library organization, and the combination of all three is beset by the same difficulties among seminary libraries as elsewhere. The problems are the same and the solutions follow much the same pattern. The challenge of seminary librarianship lies in the necessity of developing an imaginative program of service which will supply the needs of the institution and at the same time develop a habit of continuous reading for personal and professional perfection. It is the task of the librarian to develop in the seminarian a habit of coming to books for inspiration and information rather than to rely exclusively on other sources. The student must be so convinced of the worth of the printed word that it will play a large part in his life, and more importantly, through his conviction he will pass on to others his own love and need for books.

The librarian now has greater odds in his favor with expanding curriculum and the recent insistence of the Holy See on the importance of secular learning in the life of the priest. It is possible for him to appeal to a widening field of interests among the students. In his armory he not only has the materials required by the basic curriculum but he also has the growing realization on the part of faculty and students that the priest must assume an increasing responsibility in community affairs. In housing, immigration, schools and labor the priest is expected to take an active interest and to present the needs of the community to public agencies and to assist in working out a solution. It is possible for the librarian to capitalize on these interests and by the imaginative use of book lists, book reviews, periodical displays and such devices convince the seminarian that books can be “practical” as well as theoretical, and that they can speak of man and his needs with no less eloquence than they teach of God and His Attributes.

To the ordinary tools of book selection there must be added a keen awareness of the interests and needs of the seminary community. To serve the wider purposes of the library it is equally important to have extra-curricular or enrichment reading as it is to supply basic texts in speculative theology and critical editions of the major authors. Growing interests on the part of seminarians must be reflected in a greater diversity of materials in the library collection. And this creates a new field of problems. Growing interests are matched by an expanding literature and whereas it formerly was a good thing to give extended instruction in research methods, today such instruction is
Catholic Theological Seminaries and Their Libraries

rapidly becoming a necessity. The value of a knowledge of research methods and procedures is immediately obvious for those going on for graduate work, but if the value is great, so too are the means at their disposal to supply a deficiency in this area. The need for such instruction is equally pressing, if less well defined, for those who will enter parish work.

Against a background of a widening responsibility for the priest in the parish it is immediately obvious that he must keep up with developments in a variety of fields. This problem is more acute in the larger dioceses where the press of work is heavier and the libraries he knows and can use at leisure are less numerous. He is forced to consult larger and more impersonal collections, and unless he can find what he wants quickly and conveniently he will soon learn to do without! Some seminaries include this instruction as part of the curriculum, while others leave it for more informal and personal instruction which is made available as specific problems arise in the preparation of papers, sermons, instructions, and the like.

To this point we have limited the discussion to the major diocesan seminary and its library. This is but a part of the total picture since there is yet another group of major seminaries which is administered by various religious orders. Before considering these it might be well to mention a few of the distinctions between religious and diocesan priests in terms of their education and formation. Church law recognizes two general classes of priests, those who are ordained for the service of a geographical unit known as a diocese, and those who are ordained as members of corporate bodies or religious communities. Although it would be interesting to discuss at length the distinctions among religious orders, communities, institutes and other groups, it will suit our purpose to group all under the generic title of "religious orders." This term will include all the 159 communities of priests in the United States which have a total strength of 21,227 ordained men, 294 houses of study and formation, and 19,076 students in various stages of preparation.13, 14

All that has been said of the work of the diocesan seminary and its library is equally true of the religious novitiate and house of study save where modifications are necessary and a change of emphasis indicated due to the specific nature of the group in question and the work to which they have given themselves. The possibilities are great, reaching from the great cathedrals of silence so well described by Thomas Merton, a Trappist, to the Maryknoll Fathers who depart.
JOHN H. HARRINGTON

immediately after ordination for service in the foreign missions. While such a variety in function and purpose is bewildering at times, it would be difficult to assess its value, reaching out as it does with a solution for almost every need, and supplying men prepared for almost every form of work. In the face of such diversity it is necessary to limit ourselves to a consideration of the elements common to all.16

Historically, the diocesan priest was first on the scene and it was he who preserved and spread the revelation of the New Dispensation. However, it was not long before individuals left home and family to develop a way of life which would free them from all earthly care in their pursuit of union with God. This new life took many forms and it is from the monastic type that there evolved the large number of religious communities present in the church today. The priesthood was not their goal but rather a common life which would bind them one to another and each to God. Each group can trace its origin to a definite need which the founder of the community sought to solve by a particular way of life and special training. And this way of life and this training take them far afield from the work of any parish or diocese to serve the church in a specific fashion and in a definite area, whether it be foreign missions, teaching, hospital work and similar specialized fields of endeavor.

Some of these activities bring the religious into close contact with the use and even the production of books for their peculiar needs, while other works take them far from libraries and reduce the use of the written word to a minimum. There is no need to dwell on the contribution of the religious orders to book making, book collecting, and book use. The preservation of the cultural heritage of the West is the story of the Benedictine scriptorium and the history of the medieval universities is a chronicle of the great theological schools of the Franciscans and Dominicans. This devotion to the written word has grown wider and deeper with the passage of time and changing circumstances of the church. Today, as yesterday, the religious orders are as diligent as ever with the printing press, the library, and equally consecrated to the spread of learning.

Various systems of education and formation have been developed to prepare men to carry on the work of individual orders. Each is different and yet each has much in common with all the others despite the division of work and purpose which exists among them. Essentially, for each group there is a program of formation to prepare a man to be a religious, a priest and a specialized worker in some phase of the
Catholic Theological Seminaries and Their Libraries

church's activity. Each facet of this formation makes specific demands on the library and requires consideration in a program of library service. Basically the major problem of the library of the religious house is the same as the problem of library in the diocesan seminary—how to blend knowledge and piety through the use of books. But because there are gradations of knowledge and varieties of piety there are gradations of library holdings and varieties of library service in both forms of seminaries.

The structure of religious formation may be best explained in terms of a man who wishes to enter a religious order. Soon after acceptance the candidate begins a period of intensive spiritual training which is known as the novitiate. The length of time given to this phase varies but it may not be less than a year and is given over exclusively to the directed practice and formal consideration of the spiritual life. There are studies in the history of the particular group, the rule, customs and the like but beyond this there is little academic work. At this time the novice or candidate is under the immediate direction of the novice master and follows a routine specially designed to develop and strengthen the life of the spirit. During this period when the young man is particularly open to suggestion and guidance the librarian may be able to present a wide variety of materials for spiritual reading and private devotion. Beyond this there is not too much he can do by the very nature of the way of life of the "library public."

Following the novitiate there is a course of study equivalent in length and academic value to four years of liberal arts at the collegiate level. The main emphasis is on philosophy, although the complete program fulfills the requirements for the bachelor's degree. This work is usually taken in a separate and distinct house of the order with its own instructional and library facilities. The problems here, as well as the opportunities, are much the same as those discovered in the diocesan seminary at the same level. The librarian of the religious seminary finds that aside from the adjustments necessary for the particular work of the order he can use the same techniques and procedures employed by the diocesan librarian.

The study of theology begins after the successful completion of the requirements in philosophy. These studies are usually taken in a house of theology which may be entirely administered and operated by the individual order, or it may be administered in conjunction with a university such as the Catholic University of America. The library implications of the religious houses associated with the Catholic
University have been the subject of a masters’ dissertation. Fifty-six houses were included in the survey. The purpose of the investigation was to examine the feasibility of a program to coordinate the holdings of these seminary libraries and to establish a plan of cooperation which would strengthen the individual seminaries and supplement the holdings of the University library. The collections considered ranged from 37,000 volumes to 1,100, and 131 current serial titles, not available elsewhere in the University, were located in these seminaries.16

Depending on a variety of circumstances the student may take all his theology and related subjects completely within the religious group or he may do all his work at the university, and a third possibility is a combination of study within the order and at the university. During these years the librarian continues to make his specific contribution to the intellectual and spiritual formation of the students. The book collection will not differ from the standard collections found in diocesan seminaries or in houses of study within other religious groups. While the core collection will remain the same since the basic curriculum is not altered, there will be wide variations depending on the traditions and work of each group. Teaching orders differ from those given to the work on the foreign missions, and the specific goal of each group will be reflected in the emphasis given to elements of the collection.

The same desire to draw the student to the use of books and to form him in habits of reading and research are present here as in diocesan libraries, and by and large the same means will be taken to achieve the common objective. In fact the similarity of objectives in diocesan and religious major seminaries are so pronounced that generally questionnaires and surveys seldom distinguish between them in reporting. The following discussion of the major seminary library will follow the same pattern and will consider as one the libraries in major houses of instruction and formation.

The Seminaries Section of the Catholic Library Association has recently inaugurated a program of gathering statistics from seminary libraries.17 For the scholastic year 1958–59 forty-four institutions supplied information on their condition and operation. The responses reveal that the approximate median collection has 31,522 volumes, adds 1,050 volumes annually, subscribes to 121 periodicals. More important than these statistics, which reflect a situation not always under the complete control of the librarian, is the fact that more than half the reporting institutions have a full time professional librarian and three
Catholic Theological Seminaries and Their Libraries

have two full time professionals. Of equal significance is the fact that twenty-seven institutions have a separate building or a separate wing devoted to library usage. These two elements, professional staff and distinct quarters indicate the growing importance assigned to the library by seminary administrators handicapped as they are by a shortage of priests and rising costs.

It is not possible to draw accurate generalizations from the results of this first reporting since it is difficult to determine whether the forty-four who returned the questionnaire represent a proper sampling of the field. The entire problem of adequate statistics for the major seminary remains to be solved, and as of the present there does not exist an adequate structure of reporting in this specialized field. There are, of course, reports made to the Congregation of Seminaries and Universities, to various local agencies and the federal government but the basis of reporting, the information requested and other essential elements vary to such a degree that comparisons and conclusions are quite difficult to make and are of questionable value. When this restricted value is measured against the difficulty of searching out these institutions in general listings, the need for a proper system of reporting becomes apparent. The recent survey of the Seminaries Section of the Catholic Library Association, the expanding program of the Seminary Department of the National Catholic Educational Association, and the attention given the problem in graduate library school research, indicate that the problem is under serious consideration and a solution may soon be devised.

This absence of a structure for the reporting of statistics is a clear illustration of the manner in which seminary libraries have developed. The major diocesan and religious seminary, its curriculum and its library are nourished by a tradition and determined by an objective which stand apart from the secular organization of professional and general education. The question here is not the validity or the effectiveness of either solution to the problem, but rather a consideration of the present situation in terms of historical development and current trends. Seminaries have developed in terms of their own peculiar needs and goals and it is to be expected that there will be a wide diversity within the general boundaries set by the law of the church. The autonomy of the local bishop and the major religious superior is reflected in the independent growth and self sufficient existence of both the seminary and its library.

This varied and independent approach to organization and admin-
istration has not affected adversely the growth and development of individual collections. Weston College (Weston, Mass.) has over 80,000 volumes with an important emphasis on Islamic materials resulting from its connection with a college in Baghdad. St. John's Seminary (Brighton, Mass.) has close to 100,000 volumes and is the home of the outstanding Creagh Research Library in Canon Law; Woodstock College (Woodstock, Md.) is well known for its collection of Catholic Americana which forms part of its library of more than 100,000 volumes; St. Mary of the Lake (Mundelein, Ill.) is another seminary library of more than 100,000 which includes an important concentration in theological serials. The Corrigan Library of St. Joseph's Seminary (Yonkers, N.Y.) has 80,000 volumes with a significant emphasis in book arts and medieval studies. St. John's Seminary (Camarello, Calif.) has published a catalog of its Estelle Doheny Collection of Bibles and the collection of late medieval scholastic theologians at Alma College (Los Gatos, Calif.) is well known to scholars in the field. The College of the Immaculate Conception (Washington, D.C.) has a valuable collection of works by Dominican authors and the entire collection makes a distinct contribution to the library complex gathered about the Catholic University of America.

These collections which are mentioned simply to indicate the great variety of emphasis possible in seminary libraries are but an indication of the wealth of materials which have been gathered and organized in terms of local needs and opportunities. These libraries, and a great many others in the field, take an active part in making their holdings available by listing in the Union Catalog, Union List of Serials, Stillwell and other standard research tools.

Complete freedom of operation has not hampered seminary libraries in their growth or adequacy to serve local needs and requirements. Indeed, even now when the desire to develop uniform plans of operation is growing there does not exist a set of standards or procedures which will adequately meet the needs of the highly specialized work of preparing men for the priesthood. The seminary is a place of spiritual and intellectual formation rather than an institution devoted entirely to education. There is not an exclusive emphasis on academic degrees or achievements as such, rather the students and faculty work and pray together to achieve a goal set in a higher order of being. The student leaves the seminary and immediately enters a life where ideals are as important as ideas, and spiritual strength equal in value to academic recognition. Those who go on for graduate work in
theology find no difficulty in meeting the requirements, while the
others who seek degrees in secular subjects meet and solve their
problems of courses and credits on an individual basis.

In recent years two factors have been working to change this pattern
of individual and independent operation. The general acceptance of
the professionally trained librarian and the growth of accreditation
by secular agencies are gradually bringing about a standardization of
seminary administration and library practice. Progress has been slow
for a variety of reasons. The reaction against novelty plays a part here
as it does in the administration of education generally. There was no
felt need for a radical change, and perhaps most important of all is
the fact that even with any amount of good will there is still need for
much adaptation, and even creation, if general practices and pro-
cedures are to be developed for the accreditation and standardization
of major seminaries. The library school graduate found it difficult to
displace his older brother whose office and duties reached back to
the later Roman Empire. The opposition was based on the fact that the
professional librarian had little to offer which was specifically different
or obviously better than what had always been done. The cataloging
and classification studied in library school were unsuitable for theo-
logical collections and not much improvement over systems already
in use. Faced with a choice among unsatisfactory situations the admin-
istrators quite reasonably chose the least expensive evil and left well
enough alone.

The evolution of the professional seminary librarian has been grad-
ual and is due in great measure to the work of the Catholic Library
Association and the leadership of the Catholic University of America.
The C.L.A. serves as a point of focus for original thinking and through
the Seminary Section has isolated problems of seminary librarianship
and has initiated the research, experimentation, and publication neces-
sary to discover solutions. The Catholic University of America by
research and a program of publication has made it possible for the
professional librarian to incorporate scientific procedures in the ad-
ministration and organization of the seminary library. Routines of
daily administration apart, the basic problems in any libraries are
classification, subject heading, book selection and acquisition. In each
of these areas the Catholic University of America and the Catholic
Library Association have made a significant contribution to Catholic
libraries generally and to the seminary library in particular.

The adequate classification of theological materials has long been a
problem and many solutions have been proposed. Basically, there are two approaches, either devise a new classification scheme, or expand the L.C. and D.C. schedules. Attempts have been made in both directions but it remained for Jeannette M. Lynn in 1937 to lay the foundation for a scientific expansion of the D.C. and L.C. classification. The advantages of this proposal are immediately obvious since it permits the individual library to follow normal procedures except in the areas of specialization which can now be handled within the structure of classification used for the entire collection. *An Alternative Classification for Catholic Books* first appeared in 1937 under the auspices of the Catholic Library Association and was published jointly by the American Library Association and the Bruce Publishing Company. The second edition, revised by Gilbert Peterson, S. J., was published by the Catholic University of America Press in 1954. This second edition has been expanded and developed to the point where it may well be considered a standard for any expansion of the Library of Congress classification schedules.

Although Lynn-Peterson presents a formula for the expansion of the Dewey classification it is not considered satisfactory by all librarians who are faced with the problems of integrating theological materials in a collection classified according to Dewey. Additional study is currently under way by a committee of the Catholic Library Association working with the Dewey Committee.

The Catholic University of America also sponsors *Studies in Library Science*, an occasional series, which is devoted to a detailed consideration of specific problems of library practice. Two numbers have appeared. The second issued in 1953, was *A Manual of Cataloging Practice for Catholic Author and Title Entries*. In this work Oliver Kapsner, O.S.B., offered adaptations and revisions of the A.L.A. cataloging rules and an expansion of the *Norme per il catalogo degli stampati*. This work is now in its second printing. Succeeding numbers of the series will be devoted to problems of book selection and periodicals in the major seminary library.

Subject headings for theological works also present many problems. As in the case of classification, two solutions were possible, either to develop an entirely new approach or to devise a system of headings which could be used with the L.C. and the Sears list. The fourth edition of *Catholic Subject Headings*, edited by Kapsner, published in 1958 by the St. John’s Abbey Press under the auspices of the Catholic Library Association is based on the second approach.
Catholic Theological Seminaries and Their Libraries

The introduction of the Lynn-Peterson classification and the Kapsner headings in Catholic libraries has been facilitated by two series of cards published by the Catholic University of America. There is a weekly series for United States Catholic imprints and a monthly series for Farmington titles and foreign doctoral dissertations. In addition to the obvious value as book selection tools, these cards by reason of their full and proper cataloging for each title may easily be used as a norm for local catalog cards.

To assist Catholic libraries in the selection and use of periodical literature, in 1930 the Catholic Library Association sponsored the preparation and publication of the Catholic Periodical Index. This is a standard index which is limited to Catholic titles. Since 1952 it has been prepared and published by the Association at its Washington office located on the campus of the Catholic University of America. At the present time it offers complete indexing for one hundred titles and partial indexing of one hundred more. In addition to C.P.I. the Association has recently acquired the Guide to Catholic Literature, another basic tool for seminary libraries, which will also be edited at the Washington Office.

There is no need to consider in detail the publications and programs of the Catholic University of America and the Catholic Library Association. The research activities of the University, however, deserve more than a passing mention. For some years it has used microfilming as a supplementary acquisitions device and by making copies available to libraries generally, complete sets of such publications as Osservatore Romano, Civiltà Cattolica, etc. are now within the reach of all. In the near future an expanded program of the microfilming of serial material will be inaugurated in cooperation with the American Theological Library Association. This program together with the St. Louis project now make a large amount of research material available to the seminary library. In addition to the use of microfilm, rare and scattered source materials have been gathered together in Union Lists by the University Library and made available to the libraries of the country.

Through the imaginative and scholarly leadership of the University and the Association there have been forged the tools for the professional librarian to organize and administer the seminary library in terms of the best scientific procedures. As a result the seminary administrators now have tangible proof of the contribution to be made by the librarian and they have not been slow to send their men for adequate
training in the science. In the field of library education, the library school of the Catholic University of America has made a significant contribution. As the only nationally accredited Catholic school of library science this institution has done much to foster the development of seminary librarianship. The curriculum covers the general areas of education for librarianship and there is available an emphasis on work in the major and minor seminary field. It is possible, for example, to elect a minor in theological studies which may be taken in the schools of Sacred Theology or elsewhere in the University. The problems of seminary libraries also have been the subject of research and study by both the faculty and students of the school. Many dissertations have been published in the field and in some instances solutions have been proposed for definite problems. In the area of book selection, for example, the needs of the major seminary received exhaustive study and through the collaboration of seminary librarians and subject specialists throughout the country basic lists in the major subject fields were prepared. These are now in the process of revision and it is hoped to publish them as part of the series of Studies in Library Science.

Accreditation by secular agencies such as the Middle States, North Central and the like, is now being sought by an increasing number of seminaries. This is a significant development and while it concerns the institution as a whole the implications for improved library service are obvious. The growing consciousness of the contribution which can be made to seminary education by the application of secular standards gives promise of even greater progress in the development of programs of service. Some twenty-two seminaries at the present time are accredited in whole or in part, and while not a significant number in itself when it is added to those who enjoy accredited status through affiliation with an accredited university the eventual influence of the accrediting agency on seminary administration becomes apparent.

The function and the purpose of the seminary will continue to keep it apart from the standards and structure of the secular educational system. The present emphasis on the elements which are common to both will in time do much to strengthen the education of priests. The current trend to seek accreditation for the institution as a whole, together with the growth of seminary librarianship as a true specialty will bring great benefit to the seminary library in terms of personnel and programs of service. It is the high privilege of the seminary li-
brarian today to play an important part in an era of seminary training which begins to open before us—may he prove worthy of his charge!

References

11. Lind, op. cit.
12. Ibid., pp. 65-68 et passim.
14. Dukehart, op. cit.,
19. Pettinicchi, op. cit., p. 29 et seq.