Introduction

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The idea of an issue of Library Trends devoted to a discussion of problems associated with periodical publishing was suggested by an earlier issue of the journal (July 1958) concerned with the publishing of American books. Libraries of all kinds invest a considerable portion—in research libraries, the larger proportion in many cases—of their funds in periodicals. In most fields, and particularly in those areas related to science and technology, periodical literature serves as a medium of latest information, even if, as Shank observes in his paper, it is "perhaps an inefficient and inadequate vehicle for its purpose."

The present group of papers was directed towards the analysis of problems of periodicals published in the United States. This was regarded as a problem large enough in itself, without the complications of the many periodicals issued in the other countries of the world. In most instances the contributors to the issue have adhered to this general limitation of scope. However, Miss Brodman, in her discussion of medical periodicals, and Lewis, in his contribution on art periodicals, have made references to foreign titles, which are regarded by the editors as satisfactory references because of the limited attention paid to specific titles, although as Miss Brodman has observed, medicine is international. The same statement, of course, may be made of many other fields. It may be suggested that the development of periodical publishing in other countries might well be considered in future issues of Library Trends.

Periodicals have had a long history from the standpoint of library collecting. In the humanities and the social sciences, as well as in the sciences and technology, they represent basic sources for research and scholarly study. It is not surprising that librarians have sought to strengthen their resources by completing sets or acquiring new titles.

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These materials require constant attention in libraries not only in respect to the load that they place upon the funds available, but also in respect to special needs of indexing and abstracting, checking records, cataloging and organization, binding and preservation, and storage. Although some attention is given to indexing and abstracting in this issue, particularly by Huff and Jacobstein, other technical matters are not treated in this issue. Reference may be made to Osborn's *Serial Publications*,¹ which provides useful directions in these respects. Huff also has discussed questions concerning translations, which, of course, represent more difficult problems in titles coming from abroad, even though there are periodicals in the United States devoted to the translation of foreign publications.

The number of periodicals a library should acquire, of course, is related directly to the purposes and support of the library. The introduction of new periodicals into a library is a major step, particularly if there is a commitment to continue to receive, bind, and store them. Farber has provided some interesting observations on general periodicals. In the August 25, 1961 issue of *Time* (p. 39), there is a report on "The Newcomers." The brief article deals with the new bi-weekly, *Show Business Illustrated*, and other periodicals started in 1961. Reference is made to 30 newcomers in the field of news and special areas since the first of the year. Questions concerning the need for them and the likelihood of their survival are raised. Titles identified specifically are *Show, USA*, *Aware, Atlas, World, Country Beautiful*, and *The Urbanite*. Note also was made of the demise of *Collier's, Woman's Home Companion*, and *Country Gentleman*, and of the absorption of *Coronet* by *Esquire*. The librarian, of course, has access to various sources concerning new periodicals which need be only mentioned here. *Ulrich's Periodicals Directory* and lists in the *Bulletin of Bibliography, College and Research Libraries* and other journals are well known. The extent to which individuals or groups of individuals establish, edit, and carry on periodicals is referred to in several papers in this issue. Ash has called attention to the part that subsidy plays in periodical publishing, even though it is sometimes difficult to tell just how much a particular title may be subsidized.

The authors of the various papers which deal with subject areas—humanities, arts, social sciences, business and economics, law, medicine, science and technology, agriculture, and librarianship and bibliography—have approached their topics in differing ways, depending
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upon the fields. In general, the purpose of the issue is to provide a review of the developments in publishing during the last ten years as reflected in the literature on the subject, to present an overview of the current conditions of periodical publishing in the United States, and to indicate the directions in which this type of publishing seems to be moving. The magnitude of finances involved in publishing is commented upon by both Miss Welch and Shank in their papers, and reference to this is made by other contributors. The annual cost of publishing a periodical title seems to be large enough to scare off all but the most adventurous and wealthy. Yet, the new titles continue to appear, even in librarianship, as Miss Wessells points out. In agriculture, Brown observes, periodicals are "ever increasing."

As one examines these papers, it becomes relatively clear that librarians have an extraordinary opportunity to explore in greater depth the problems and characteristics of periodicals, not only those published in America but those issued in other countries as well. There have been articles and dissertations written about periodicals or magazines in general, and some of these are included in the references of the authors. However, there have been few studies of specific journals. Usually, such studies have been made in connection with academic departments of universities as advanced dissertations. Mrs. Kirschenbaum calls attention to the interesting development of periodicals devoted to studies of a single author. In the humanities, as in the fields of science and technology, there has been a progressive increase in periodical titles published. How many of these will be source materials for the researchers of the future is a serious question facing all research librarians. It is apparent that with new libraries springing up and old libraries expanding in their coverage, the demand for periodicals will also increase in the future. How to select the best ones, how to assist in the elimination of those that add little or nothing to knowledge, and how to make these materials available for posterity will continue to be among the major problems facing librarians.

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References
