



Librarianship in the New World and the Old: Some Points of Contact

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THE AIM of this paper is not to examine foreign influences on American librarianship, for although these influences did exist, despite isolation, they were thoroughly absorbed and transformed. Nor is the nature and extent of the influence abroad of mature American librarianship at issue, although in some regions of the world this has been profound. The purpose of the paper is less formal: it is to touch selectively upon points of contact between the librarianship of the old world and of the new in order to indicate modes of interrelation and channels of influence through which different kinds of effect have been produced. The presence of significant individuals, the cooperative development of tools, techniques and organizations, and threads of ideas and influences that have contributed to the creation of the complex phenomenon of American librarianship are the subjects of this discussion.

BEFORE 1876

Both during the later part of the colonial period and afterward in the United States, whenever there was an acknowledged need for libraries, they were established in form little different from those in England. They were, although small, a necessary part of the colleges gradually erected in each of the colonies and states. As local and state scientific societies and institutes were created and began to sustain some healthy signs of life, they collected books and specimens which led to the formation of libraries and museums.¹ Occasionally public libraries attached to village and town governments were created as a result of gifts and bequests, but they were, in general, little used before mid-century and continuous support was not provided for

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them.² Above all, subscription and circulating libraries appeared in the eighteenth century and persisted well into the nineteenth as they did in England. Benjamin Franklin's Library Company of Philadelphia grew out of his attempt to provide a library for the scientific discussion and debating society, the Junto; later there were commercial rental libraries in bookshops and subscription libraries or social libraries of various kinds, some for the use of scholarly and wealthy men, many for the use of working-class youths and clerks, shopkeepers and mechanics. Shera³ and Joeckel⁴ have discussed them, and in organizational patterns and range of function and clientele they are little different from their counterparts in England described by Kaufman,⁵ Kelly⁶ and Altick.⁷

It is interesting to note that the public library in its modern, freely accessible, tax-supported form emerged both in the United States and in England in the mid-nineteenth century. Underlying its foundation in both countries were a number of similar beliefs, but it is not clear there was much, if any, mutual influence. There was something local, gradual, piecemeal about the evolution of public libraries in the United States; Britain's rigidly defined social structure, central parliament, and blanket enabling legislation produced the Public Libraries Act of 1850, which was drafted to extend the provisions of the Museums Act of 1845. After the establishment of the Boston Public Library, the public library movement developed more swiftly and variously in the United States and, at least until after World War I, was more successful than in Britain, although the difficulty of making comparisons between the two nations in this matter should be recognized.⁸ In both countries, however, the public library was seen as helping to complete the educational system as it then existed. It was considered to be a source of solid and nourishing intellectual food for a class of persons only just advanced to the stage of readiness for such sustenance. It was believed that by providing a selected collection of books, public libraries were a useful, if novel, apparatus for encouraging that self-knowledge which would lead to heightened respect for the existing social order and contented acceptance of one's place within it. Moreover, the public library presented a beguiling alternative to the temptations of drunkenness, criminal folly and vice. Above all, it was widely accepted in both countries that public libraries could offer significant aid in preventing public disorder: "The principal argument in favor of rate-supported libraries was that they were the cheapest insurance against a revival of the public disorders which had lately culminated in the Chartist alarm of 1848."⁹

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Michael Harris has explored at some length the patrician attitude of the Boston Brahmin towards the common man.¹⁰ He has argued that the founding of the Boston Public Library by Everett, Ticknor, and others—the event from which the public library movement in the United States is generally seen as stemming—was not a philanthropic expression of a Jacksonian, democratic belief in the essential goodness and perfectibility of the working man. In his view, it partly expressed a deep-seated fear of the consequences of the immigration to Boston of a large body of Irish peasants fleeing famine. Libraries were one of the instruments of social control available to the authorities, although, of course, useful only against the literate. Harris contends that behind both the founding and subsequent development of public libraries in nineteenth-century America lay the firm belief of an authoritarian, intellectual and power elite that the common man, like his counterpart in Britain, was to be distrusted and had to be educated sternly and for his own good by his betters. It was necessary that he be able to read and have uninhibited access to improving literature to ensure his continued moral development and effective socialization. In this way he would be protected from demagoguery and the havoc that could be wrought by ignorance and disaffection in a society in the throes of accelerating change.

If the old-fashioned view of the public library smacks too much of sweetness and light, the revision proposed by Harris is salutary, although in itself not sufficient as complete explanation, nor surprising if one examines the context of the time or is aware of English parallels. What is important from the point of view of this paper, however, is that the public library movement in the United States particularly was as much a library movement as it was public, and was informed by reference abroad. In England, continental librarians testified before the select parliamentary committee that inquired into library provision in 1849 and Edward Edwards buttressed their observations by vast compilations of statistics.¹¹ This was a typically British procedure, facilitated by the presence of some of the foreign experts already in England (for reasons of political expedience). Only Alexandre Vattemare had come to the United States, finding throughout the country a lack of libraries in which he could arrange to deposit foreign publications. In 1841 he suggested that a number of existing libraries combine to form the public institution he thought a city like Boston needed, which created a flurry of interest and was acknowledged to have played a considerable part in the city's eventual authorization of the formation of a public library seven years later.¹²

If the presence of foreign library experts was minimal in the United States, knowledge of foreign libraries was not. A group of well-to-do, scholarly citizens had begun to take the American equivalent of the grand tour of Europe and were soon poignantly aware of the absence of adequate libraries at home to support the scholarly research and writing in which they wished to engage themselves. The excitement generated by their exposure to the great universities and libraries of Europe is conveyed in the letters they wrote home and in what they attempted to achieve on their return. Longfellow, for example, writing from Göttingen to his father, reviewed his experiences in Europe and was emphatic that universities on the German model, not colleges, were what the United States required, and declared: "let the Library be made *public*. . . . Let a librarian be appointed by the *town*, with a moderate salary. Let his duty be to attend the library rooms daily—morning and afternoon. Let the Library rooms be furnished with tables and chairs—and writing materials:—then throw open its doors—and let it be as public as the town pump."¹³ Fifteen years before Vattemare had suggested that Boston should have a public library, Ticknor had made a similar suggestion, but his mind had been filled with the educational potential of such an institution for all of the public. His model was Göttingen:

I have a project, which may or may not succeed; but I hope it will.

The project is, to unite into one establishment, viz. the Athenaeum, all the public libraries in town; . . . and then let the whole circulate, Athenaeum and all. . . . To this great establishment I would attach all the lectures wanted, whether fashionable, popular, scientific—for the merchants or their employees; and have the whole made a Capitol of the knowledge of the town, with its uses, which I would open to the public, according to the admirable direction in the Charter of the University of Göttingen.¹⁴

As Borome has said, "The serious student turned a longing eye toward Europe and the well-selected and invaluable" libraries in the major centers there. By 1846, he says, "the striking inadequacies of American libraries had more than once been the subject of public, not to mention private, regret, and the *North American Review* had called for remedial treatment."¹⁵

At this time, three notable figures helped to mediate the bibliothecal experience of Europe and the new world. Of these, Vattemare is perhaps of least interest, but he had some influence in

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promoting the development of libraries (although upon no particular model) in the United States. Moreover, his scheme for implementing worldwide exchange of publications had some impact on the occasions of his two visits in the early 1840s and in 1848-49.¹⁶

The other two figures of the period who stand out as having interests spanning the two worlds and whose influence reaches beyond the period of 1876 are Henry Stevens of Vermont and Charles Coffin Jewett. As librarian at Brown University, Jewett visited Europe to purchase books and, seizing the opportunity thus presented, made it his business to study European librarianship in practice and to make the acquaintance of librarians such as Antonio Panizzi, the controversial Keeper of Printed Books and later Principal Librarian of the British Museum, with whom he formed a sturdy friendship. Jewett has a dual importance in the context of this paper. His work may represent the beginning of systematic book-collecting in Europe for American university libraries; he is therefore a forerunner of the more aggressive righting of the bibliothecal balance between Europe and the United States conducted by the recently established University of Chicago in the 1890s and by the University of Texas, among others, after World War II. Perhaps more important, however, is Jewett's work as assistant secretary of the Smithsonian Institution. It is difficult to say how much of what he attempted to do at the Smithsonian, ultimately so unsuccessfully, was influenced by his study of the British Museum Library and his knowledge of Panizzi's work. Certainly, Panizzi's famous "ninety-one rules" had considerable impact in America and influenced Jewett's preparation of his own cataloging rules, which were intended to facilitate the construction of a national union catalog by a method of stereotyping titles.¹⁷ However, Jewett's vision of the Smithsonian as a great national library, deriving much of its collection from copyright deposit and housing a carefully constructed catalog representing the nation's bibliographical riches, similar to Panizzi's vision of the role of the British Museum Library, but with appropriate differences. Jewett's desire to formulate a nationally accepted code of rules was not merely a precursor of the codes promulgated in and after 1876 by the American Library Association, the (British) Library Association, and the Library of Congress, but was one of the channels through which foreign library practice was introduced into the United States and transformed.

Even more instrumental in facilitating the flow of European books—sometimes in the form of complete libraries—to the United

States was Henry Stevens of Vermont.¹⁸ He had arrived in London in 1845 and his subsequent career was brilliantly successful. He became the British Museum's agent for American books, and later the London agent for the Smithsonian Institution. For the British Museum, he was responsible for seeing that it acquired a copy of every important American work. For the Smithsonian, he distributed materials from the exchange service to participating English libraries and dispatched gifts of books to Washington. He was a conduit not only of materials but of professional knowledge. He testified about the American experience before the 1849 select parliamentary committee inquiring into library provision in Britain. His emphasis on the superior literacy of the American reading public and the vigorous movement to create public libraries in the United States may have had some influence in its implications of inferiority of the English system. Not only was he intimately acquainted with such famous British and American librarians as Panizzi and Jewett, he was sympathetic to and well informed about library problems, not least about matters of the bibliography and cataloging of rare books. He prepared a catalog himself and was involved in the preparation of a number of others. He was actively engaged in the 1877 conference of librarians in London at which the Library Association was formed. His paper "Photobibliography" was widely discussed at the conference; his biographer has suggested that it revived many of the ideas Jewett had formulated a quarter-century earlier on the subject of national bibliography. Stevens's career (he died in 1886) spanned the adolescence and young adulthood of American librarianship and he contributed to the growth of scholarly libraries both in the United States and in the United Kingdom, and to mutual bibliothecal understanding.

Curiously, there are few careers similar to Stevens's in their wide experience of and personal contacts in book and library circles both in Europe and the United States. One which deserves mention, however—because it provides a complement to Stevens's Americanness and antiquarianism—was that of Cedric Chivers in the next generation. Chivers was not so much a rare book dealer as he was a bookseller and library jobber. He acted for a time as the London representative of the Boston-based Library Bureau, and in this capacity supplied Paul Otlet and Henri La Fontaine with their first copies of Dewey's *Decimal Classification*, from which they developed the Universal Decimal Classification. His principal achievement, however, was the invention of a swift, relatively inexpensive mechanized method of binding. In pursuit of his various professional and

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commercial interests he allegedly crossed the Atlantic 120 times in the course of his life (1856-1924), and visited more public libraries in the United States than any other man. The effects of such peripateticism are imponderable but are unlikely to be negligible.¹⁹

AFTER 1876

John Metcalfe, an Australian librarian vitally aware of the influence of American librarianship on antipodean library provision, has described 1876 as an *annus mirabilis*. It was the year of a massive official survey and report on libraries in the United States. It saw the publication of Cutter's *Rules for a Dictionary Catalog*, an edition of Melvil Dewey's *Decimal Classification*, the founding of the American Library Association and the creation of a professional voice, the *Library Journal*. In a sense, 1876 is the year of the majority of librarianship in the United States. Henceforth the dictionary card catalog, which contained subject entries formulated according to Cutter's rules for specific entry, would become standard throughout the country. The *Decimal Classification* continued to be widely adopted for the arrangement of books on shelves, and only the development at the turn of the century by the Library of Congress of a program of national bibliographic activity as an extension of its own much expanded work was lacking to complete a picture whose outlines have remained largely the same to the present.

Henceforth, too, there was less looking abroad for example. The pattern of foreign relations gradually modified to the present formalization of international cooperation in terms of nongovernmental activities mediated by the American Library Association and governmental activities mediated by the Library of Congress or other U.S. government agencies. At first, there was little formality. The trip of a group of distinguished librarians to the international library conference in London in 1877 has been described as a "great junket."²⁰ Individually and collectively, this group had some influence on their English colleagues who had mixed opinions about their generally more liberal attitudes toward professional matters; nor was it by chance that the Library Association was formed on this occasion.

The importance of the 1877 conference lies in the fact that it was the first in a series that became one of the most important points of contact between the librarianship of the new world and the old. The annual conferences of the two associations became forums for exchange of information and for the extension of personal acquaint-

ance, and the relationship between the two was further intensified, at least in the early years, by the *Library Journal's* role as the professional organ for both associations. Later, American representatives attended other kinds of professional conferences—most notably those of the International Institute of Bibliography, which became the International Federation for Documentation, and the meetings of the International Library and Bibliographical Committee, which became the International Federation of Library Associations. After World War I, an international forum both for discussion and work in librarianship and bibliography was created through these organizations and the League of Nations Committee and Institute for International Intellectual Cooperation. Although the United States did not join the league, Americans took an active part in the international institute's work. From this emerged a pattern of international meetings and activity that continues today in UNESCO and allied international organizations.

It is interesting that in the early years, when attending conferences was largely a matter of exchanging official and unofficial delegates at English and American annual meetings, not only positive understanding was achieved; the existence of significant differences between the librarianship of the two countries also became evident. Tedder described them in 1882 in this way:

Whereas the A.L.A. is exclusively practical and technical, the L.A.U.K. has devoted considerable attention to the history of libraries, and some regard to bibliography has justified the retention of that subject as one of our main objects. . . . The American conferences . . . are more interested in methods of actual library management than in bibliographical museums or other curiosities of librarianship. The L.A.U.K. is constituted upon the lines of the antiquarian and scientific societies familiar to the Englishman, with frequent meetings in London . . . and yearly gatherings in different parts of the country. . . . One of the best features of the L.A.U.K. is that, while it has always maintained its distinct professional character, it has the advantage of being able to attract a very large number of persons not connected with library management but deeply interested in library work, and who have given to our discussions a certain breadth of tone that might have been wanting had librarians alone taken part in them.²¹

One major influence in American librarianship mentioned earlier grew stronger as the nineteenth century progressed. Germany was

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recognized as preeminent throughout the world in tertiary education; American and English youths (like Ticknor and Longfellow among hosts of others) flocked there for what Predeek has called "the honor" of a German academic degree.²² In Germany they were able to study subjects of scholarly investigation long neglected at home, and enthusiastically to obtain experience of new methods of research and criticism. Particularly important was the enormous impetus given to the development of the sciences and social sciences. Although the American colonies and states had built colleges often quite early in their development, these colleges had limited curricula. Their libraries were small and would have inhibited research had there been any urgent desire to conduct it. Instruction tended to be by means of textbooks to a student body which was almost entirely undergraduate. The effects of German academic preparation of many Americans gradually became apparent in the 1870s in the United States. One major effect of changes then stimulated in university curricula was the demand that German books and other scholarly materials be made available. Predeek lists the various collections, usually of private scholarly libraries, that were acquired by American universities with increasing frequency after 1850. Moreover, as German or German-American scholars achieved academic eminence in the United States, they frequently built up personal libraries which, by gift or bequest, eventually enriched a number of American institutions.²³

Two other major effects of the German influence were: (1) the institution of graduate schools in which the Ph.D. could be earned, an event representing the beginning of the professionalization of research in American universities; and (2) the creation of new universities strongly adapted to the German model as it was then perceived. Given the strength of the German influence in the development of American scholarship toward the end of the century, one would expect university libraries to have followed the pattern of library organization and provision of the German university, especially in the newer universities. There was, indeed, some influence, especially through the demands of scientists, the most eminent of whom had typically been trained in Germany. Departmental libraries were an important expression of this influence and corresponded to the German seminar and institute libraries. At Johns Hopkins University, "dispersal of library resources to seminar rooms within the main library and to department buildings was an early phenomenon."²⁴ Gilman, then president of Johns Hopkins, "embraced the idea that

books should be as close to professors and students as possible."²⁵ The University of Chicago had no central collection for several decades after its founding: "In Chicago, according to the plan of President Harper, the research institutes and laboratories were to be operated in conjunction with libraries; and there was actually no university library until 1912, for it existed only as the sum total of books in departmental libraries."²⁶ Nevertheless the pattern of German library organization was much modified by local necessity. One reason for this was financial: for reasons of economy, Gilman wished the university to rely heavily on the extensive library holdings generally available in Baltimore; Harper could not secure the university librarian he wanted, and there was the no less pressing problem of finding funds for a central library building. Another reason lay in the fact that American universities, however much influenced from abroad, had strong local traditions that persisted. In Germany, preparation was for a single degree, the Ph.D.; in the United States, the necessity of providing for an undergraduate degree in colleges led to a continuing "peculiar, quite fundamental difference between American academic libraries and related European institutions."²⁷ Ben-David has analyzed the misconceptions American students formed of the German system of institutes in the university, and has suggested that the American notions of academic departments, graduate schools, professional schools and undergraduate colleges as active and essential parts of the university eventually led to a typically American institution which was considerably different from the German university.²⁸ The differences inevitably led to differences in library provision. Moreover, although there was a trend toward departmental libraries and the general dispersion of collections in American universities in the latter part of the nineteenth century, it was followed in the first decades of the twentieth century by a countervailing trend toward centralization. Danton has graphically described the problems that the institute system caused in Germany. He contrasts the dispersion and fragmentation of collections which had a wide range of consequent inefficiencies and inequities with the trend in America toward a centrally owned and controlled library "system."²⁹

Among the tools widely adopted in United States library practice in the last quarter of the nineteenth and the early years of the twentieth centuries were the Decimal Classification and cataloging rules. Moreover, after 1901 libraries were able to rely on the availability of Library of Congress cataloging in the form of purchased cards. Classification, rules and cataloging have each provided an important

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point of contact between librarianship in the United States and that practiced abroad, and have been modified in some ways as a result of foreign input.

It is possible to construct a genealogy of cataloging rules showing the reciprocal influences that led to the 1908 Anglo-American Cataloging Rules. These rules represented direct experience of collaboration and mutual compromise by the two library associations preparing them. Moreover, the venture which led to them was not entirely or merely Anglo-American. Cutter's *Rules*, upon whose notes and examples they drew displays his familiarity with European catalogs and cataloging practice. Moreover, in a paper to the 1908 International Conference on Bibliography and Documentation in Brussels, J.C.M. Hanson of the Library of Congress and chairman of the ALA Catalog Rules Committee remarked that as the committee producing the *Rules* had proceeded with its work, the Prussian *Instruktionen* had been constantly consulted "with a view to a possible future agreement between the new Anglo-American code and the rules which govern in the compilation of the great Gesamtkatalog."³⁰ The committee had also examined the Italian and Spanish codes closely. The aim of all of this international activity was, he explained, an attempt to see generalized the provision of cataloging of the kind provided by the Library of Congress:

We American librarians, who are more and more coming to look to a central agency for at least a part of our cataloging, are prone to look forward to the time when England, Germany, France and other countries may be in a position to supply printed cards or slips for the great sets of monographs issuing from their publishing centers and of which many copies are imported by American libraries.³¹

This is an early statement of what has become a crucial goal of recent work toward the international standardization of bibliographical description, work in which the American Library Association and the Library of Congress have continued to play an important role. A joint committee of the Library Association and the ALA is now revising the *Anglo-American Cataloging Rules* (AACR 1967). The advent of the computer, and the existence of wide international bibliographical effort represented by the work of the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA), which has culminated in the promulgation of the International Standard Bibliographical Description (ISBD), has lent some urgency to the process of revision and

has introduced new elements which must be reflected in the rules. No less important has been the creation by the Library of Congress of machine-readable cataloging (MARC). Although numerous and variously modified MARC formats have appeared internationally, the possibility of recording and communicating bibliographical data in machine-readable form from country to country is now feasible because of them. These developments, mentioned so fleetingly here, suggest that the period which Hanson had believed American libraries were anticipating has now actually arrived and has received expression, for example, in the shared cataloging program of the Library of Congress.

The kinds of cooperation, standardization and national organizational requirements needed for the development of a successful international system have been expressed in IFLA's program for Universal Bibliographic Control (UBC) and UNESCO's National Information System (NATIS) concept. The UBC program represents a distillation of aspirations, ideas and techniques exchanged during the last fifteen years between the United States and other countries. One may venture to suggest, however, that this essentially grew from the card distribution program of the Library of Congress and the cooperative work on the rules for bibliographic description recognized in the first decade of the century as crucial to a viable program. Nevertheless, the international movement in cataloging has involved much reciprocity among the United States, other countries, and international organizations such as IFLA, UNESCO, and the International Standards Organization.

In this movement, the work of the Council on Library Resources (CLR) is of some significance. Many of the international developments in cataloging which have had subsequent effect in America have been an outgrowth of American initiatives. Intellectually, there was the work of Lubetsky in the United States, but the CLR helped to fund the International Conference on Cataloging Principles held in 1961, and now provides the major part of the support for the IFLA office for UBC. Perhaps the CLR may be viewed as a latter-day Carnegie for the influence that its generous but carefully selected philanthropy has had on the development of aspects of librarianship both locally and internationally.

The Dewey Decimal Classification has also been the focus of continued international interest. One of the earliest expressions of this was the classification's adoption as the major tool for the work of the International Institute of Bibliography set up in Brussels by Paul

Otlet and Henri La Fontaine in 1895. For these men, the classification made possible the creation of a centralized universal author and subject bibliography which they called the Universal Bibliographic Repertory. They developed the Universal Decimal Classification (sometimes called the Brussels expansion of Dewey) to serve their essentially bibliographical (as opposed to the original classification's library) purposes. A type of cooperation between the Decimal Classification's editorial office in Albany, and later in Lake Placid, and Otlet and LaFontaine and their collaborators resulted. Dewey resisted any attempt to translate the first edition of the Belgian version of the classification into English, but many of the Belgian expansions were incorporated into or influenced successive American editions. The Belgian scheme for obtaining greater flexibility using various combinatorial procedures and auxiliary tables was explained by Dewey in the preface to the seventh edition of the Decimal Classification in 1911. Little real collaboration between the compilers of the Universal Decimal Classification and the Dewey Decimal Classification occurred after World War I, however, although attempts were made to maintain a certain degree of concordance between the two versions.³²

In more recent times, the Decimal Classification has been widely used in English-speaking countries such as Great Britain, Australia, New Zealand and Canada. There has been some competition from the Library of Congress Classification in these countries, but the use of Dewey's system is probably more widespread than the use of any other single system. The *British National Bibliography*, *Canadiana*, and the *Australian National Bibliography* all provide Decimal Classification numbers for the materials they list. The Decimal Classification Editorial Policy Committee in the United States recognizes the importance of the contributions that can be made from these national bibliographies, and collaboration with them has taken various forms. The development of national geographic tables has been entrusted to them and they submit revisions of sections of the classification and comment on other revision proposals as well. The need for mutual, intimate knowledge of editorial practices concerning the development and use of the classification recently led to an exchange of personnel between the offices responsible for it in the Library of Congress and the Bibliographical Services Division of the British Library.³³

International developments similar to those in cataloging have occurred in the area of subject bibliography, although these have not involved the general American library community to any great extent.

Again, there has been a historical evolution toward certain forms of internationalism in which Americans have participated, the requirements of which have led to modifications in American practice. Two early schemes were unsuccessful. While in London for the conference of 1877, William Frederick Poole called for cooperation from English librarians in extending and completing the coverage for English periodicals in a new edition of his famous index, then in preparation. The English set up a committee but it did so little that Poole was scathing in describing the English librarians' lack of confidence both in the "cooperation principle" and in each other.³⁴ The other scheme which failed in terms of international cooperation was the Royal Society's *Catalogue of Scientific Papers*. The suggestion that a catalog of scientific memoirs should be cooperatively undertaken was made in the mid-nineteenth century by Joseph Henry, secretary of the Smithsonian Institution. However, the actual responsibility for the work, which was carried on from 1858 to 1925, was entirely assumed by the Royal Society. It is not clear why Henry apparently sought no active role in the venture he had suggested, nor why his aid was not solicited by the Royal Society. When the Royal Society could no longer support the development of a catalog covering a period beyond 1899, it decided to continue the work by international cooperation. American advice was sought, and the participation of John Shaw Billings in the first planning conference was of considerable importance, partially because he was strongly opposed to the use of any form of the Decimal Classification as the basis for a classification system for the new catalog. The American Regional Bureau of the *International Catalogue of Scientific Literature* was set up in the Smithsonian Institution where it had the support of the librarian and assistant secretary, Cyrus Adler. The bureau was directed by Leonard Gunnell, under whom it became one of the most active and successful of the regional bureaus established in various countries throughout the world.

World War I marked the end of this venture. Nothing similar was undertaken until recent years, when the advent of the computer permitted the transmission and manipulation of machine-readable indexing data. The two most highly developed, internationally organized and controlled systems in which the United States participates are the International Nuclear Information System (INIS) in Vienna and the Agricultural Information System (AGRIS) in Rome. Each has an organization similar to that developed for the *International Catalogue of Scientific Literature*: decentralized input from national centers of standardized bibliographic data to a central agency,

which produces copies of the merged files on magnetic tape and, as in the case of INIS's *Atomindex* and the trial *Agrindex*, in hard copy. These systems are intergovernmental. The private sector has also displayed considerable interest in the potential of internationally exploited indexing data in machine-held form. The great American indexing and abstracting services, such as *Chemical Abstracts*, *Biological Abstracts*, and *Engineering Index*, as well as agencies such as the National Library of Medicine, are members of the International Council of Scientific Unions Abstracting Board (ICSU-AB), which has attempted to facilitate cooperation, standardization and data exchange. The entire information community has begun to explore the possibilities of a worldwide scientific and technical information system under the aegis of UNISIST, which is jointly sponsored by UNESCO and the International Council of Scientific Unions.

As always, contact between librarianship in the United States and abroad has continued to be mediated by individuals. In the last one hundred years, their number has been legion, but certain figures such as Andrew Carnegie, Ernest Cushing Richardson, William Warner Bishop and Wilhelm Munthe stand out. After World War II the picture is confused by propinquity; thus, I do not propose to discuss on the one hand the influential work of distinguished Europeans, Indians and other foreigners, nor on the other that of the postwar directors of ALA's International Relations Office, Luther Evans (the ex-librarian of Congress and Director General of UNESCO), nor Robert Vosper in IFLA. After the war, much of American activity has been in the third world, commissioned by UNESCO or various American philanthropic foundations, or it has been concerned with establishing mechanisms for the acquisitions of foreign materials—the Farmington Plan, the Latin American Acquisition Plan, and those administered by the Library of Congress, for example.

Andrew Carnegie, of Scottish origins, was in a curious sense the Thomas Bray of the nineteenth century, and the differing philosophies of the devout Anglican clergymen who promoted libraries in the American colonies and the ruthless industrialist and financier of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries may well epitomize differences in their eras. The impetus given by Carnegie to the development of public libraries in the United States, Great Britain and many British colonies was extraordinary. That the motivation for much of his philanthropy may have been mixed is very likely, and that in the final analysis some of its outcomes were regrettable is undeniably true. Nevertheless the very presence of a Carnegie library in a

town brought it into a mainstream of national and international library development, helped to give people an image of libraries as open public places for study and self-advancement, and set public libraries up in a common pattern.

The work of Ernest Cushing Richardson was important in the context of this paper because of his attempts to secure American involvement in the work of the International Institute of Bibliography, both directly and through the League of Nations Sub-committee on Bibliography and the Institute for International Intellectual Cooperation. His efforts were not successful, but he kept alive some interest in the failing fortunes of the institute in the United States from 1921 until 1932. He was supported in this by Melvil Dewey's son Godfrey, who maintained a fairly close association with Otlet in the 1920s and 1930s and attempted to collaborate in securing a measure of concordance between the tables of the Universal Decimal Classification and those of Dewey's Decimal Classification, despite active opposition from some of his colleagues. It is curious how long it took for any active formal American participation in the International Federation for Documentation to occur, or for there to be any appreciation of the philosophy and technique of documentation developed by Otlet and others in connection with it. It was not until after World War II that American membership was secured; and only after Shera and Egan's scholarly, perceptive introduction to the second edition of Samuel Bradford's *Documentation* appeared was a clear account of the European documentary movement made available in America.³⁵

William Warner Bishop may well have been the international librarian of his generation. His work as chief American advisor in the reorganization of the Vatican library, his long association with IFLA, his work in the League of Nations, his guidance of foreign library dignitaries such as the visiting commission from Oxford in 1930, his sponsorship of the international exchange of librarians, together with many other efforts involving international relations in association with the Rockefeller Foundation and Carnegie Corporation, were only one aspect of a lifetime of extraordinary achievement. His reports and writings brought some awareness in the United States of various national and international developments of the period. One interesting association was his friendship with Wilhelm Munthe, who was invited to study American libraries by the Carnegie Corporation and to report critically from his European viewpoint on what he found. The result was the interesting (if rather quirky) *American Librarian-*

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ship from a European Angle,³⁶ which is a fascinating and still useful example of the value of an outsider's analysis. His observations on public libraries, the American college library (the value of which he finds difficult to determine), library associations, and many other topics are fresh and stimulating. The work represents an experiment that might usefully be tried again.

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