

# American Library Cooperation in Review

FOR TWO or three generations American library leaders have been urging various types of joint effort. The potentialities of library cooperation are widely recognized and, for certain fields, accomplishments have been notable. In bibliographical enterprises, for example, no profession can point to finer cooperative achievements than *Poole's Index*, the *Union List of Serials*, the National Union Catalog in the Library of Congress, and similar undertakings successfully carried through by American librarians.

On the other hand, certain phases of library cooperation have made slight headway, though vigorously and convincingly promoted. Perhaps the time has come, therefore, for realistic stocktaking to see if we are proceeding on the right track and to determine as objectively as possible in what directions future efforts are likely to produce the most fruitful results. As a preliminary, an attempt will be made here to summarize the various kinds of cooperative arrangements developed to date, with some indication of their present status.<sup>1</sup>

## Union Lists

Union lists have met with a more cordial reception than any other sort of library

cooperation, and it is not difficult to perceive the reasons why they have been prolific for the past seventy-five years. Such lists do not call for indefinite commitments on the part of the individual library, they do not require the library to give up anything, most of them are of immediate practical use, and it is a matter of considerable pride for the institution's holdings to be well represented. These factors have aided in the creation of monumental works like the *Union List of Serials in Libraries of the United States and Canada*, *List of the Serial Publications of Foreign Governments*, *International Congresses and Conferences, 1840-1937*, *American Newspapers, 1821-1936*, and Brigham's *Bibliography of American Newspapers, 1690-1820*, not to mention hundreds of similar lists restricted to smaller regions and special subjects or types of material.

Union lists of books which have thus far appeared have been mainly concerned with large sets, early imprints, and specialized topics. Among recent examples are Stillwell's *Incunabula in American Libraries*, Bishop's *Checklist of American Copies of "Short-Title Catalogue" Books*, Thomson's "Monographic Holdings of American Libraries in the Medieval and Renaissance Fields,"<sup>2</sup> Historical Records Survey's numerous publications in the American Imprints Inventory series, Emeneau's *Union List of Printed Indic Texts and Translations in American Libraries*, Gardner's *Union List of Selected Western Books on*

<sup>1</sup> Several previous studies proved helpful in the preparation of this review, especially: Bishop, William Warner. "Resources of American Libraries." *Library Quarterly* 8:445-79, October 1938; Wilson, Louis Round. "Resources of Research Libraries: A Review." *College and Research Libraries* 5:259-66, June 1944; and a more general report, "Cooperation and Coordination in Higher Education." *American Council on Education Studies*, series 1, vol. 2, no. 5, April 1938.

<sup>2</sup> *Progress of Medieval and Renaissance Studies, Bulletin* 18:28-52, June 1944.

China, and Karpinski's *Bibliography of Mathematical Works Printed in America Through 1850*. The manuscript field has not been neglected: extensive lists were issued by the Historical Records Survey, and there are more limited works, as Poleman's *Census of Indic Manuscripts in the United States and Canada* and De Ricci and Wilson's *Census of Medieval and Renaissance Manuscripts in the United States and Canada*. Obviously, the number of union lists pertaining to specialized subjects and categories of material can be, and is likely to be, expanded indefinitely. In fact, many are in preparation; an important instance is the checklist of about twelve thousand Russian titles in American libraries, now being compiled in the Library of Congress. The chief drawbacks to union lists of the character mentioned are the considerable expense to libraries in checking their holdings for inclusion, the fact that the lists soon go out of date and require revision, the small editions in which issued, and the danger of excessive multiplication of lists dealing with minute segments of knowledge.

### *Union Catalogs*

Berthold's "Directory of Union Catalogs in the United States"<sup>3</sup> records a total of 117 catalogs now functioning in this country, divided among several principal types: national, regional, local, subject, exchange, and Library of Congress depository catalogs. The oldest of these, the National Union Catalog in Washington, dates from the beginning of the present century. Only one regional catalog, that of the California State Library, antedates 1930. The vast federal relief program of the 1930's furnished the stimulus for dozens of new union catalogs—city, county, state, regional, exchange, and subject—widely distributed

over the nation. For several years a mass of free labor from federal government relief agencies was available for compiling catalogs. The gradual, and finally complete, withdrawal of this aid has placed some of the catalogs in a difficult financial position, forcing them to carry on with restricted budgets and staffs.

It would be a fair statement to say that most union catalog sponsors have not been particularly concerned with fitting their catalogs into any kind of national plan, and, consequently, some duplication of effort, questionable regional divisions, and other lack of integration are evident. A comprehensive survey of the union catalog situation was made in 1940-41 by a group of investigators under the sponsorship of the A.L.A. Board on Resources of American Libraries and was subsequently published.<sup>4</sup> Recommendations were made therein for the future coordination and development of union catalogs, to insure thorough coverage of every portion of the country without needless overlapping and with due consideration to fiscal support.

Standing at the summit of our system of union catalogs is the great National Union Catalog in the Library of Congress. It is generally agreed that the maximum development and expansion of this catalog should be the primary objective of any union catalog program for the country. A committee of the Association of Research Libraries was appointed in 1942 to study ways and means of obtaining a full record for the National Union Catalog of all titles held by libraries in the United States.<sup>5</sup> The committee came to the conclusion that publication in book form of the *Catalog of Books Represented by Library of Congress Printed Cards* offered a possible solution to the problem; approximately one hundred selected libraries

<sup>3</sup> Downs, Robert B., ed. *Union Catalogs in the United States*. Chicago, American Library Association, 1942. p. 351-91.

<sup>4</sup> *Op. cit.*

<sup>5</sup> Downs, Robert B. "Expanding the National Union Catalog." *A.L.A. Bulletin* 37:432-34, November 1943.

were asked to check volumes of the published depository catalog and to report any titles not recorded to the National Union Catalog. A favorable response to the proposal was received from a majority of libraries approached. By reason of difficult wartime conditions, especially labor shortages, the process of checking has not proceeded as rapidly as originally hoped for, although substantial contributions have been forwarded to Washington. A further step in the growth of the National Union Catalog is the incorporation of entries from the leading regional union catalogs. An appropriation from Congress in 1943 is making possible the checking of the Cleveland and Philadelphia catalogs for this purpose, adding the holdings of hundreds of individual libraries. That we are far from the goal of a complete record in the National Union Catalog of all books in American libraries is strikingly demonstrated in LeRoy Merritt's study contained in *Union Catalogs in the United States* which, on the basis of extensive sampling, shows about four million titles thus far lacking.

### *Bibliographical Centers*

Closely related to but broader in scope than the union catalog is the bibliographical center. The pioneer organization of this type is the Bibliographical Center for Research, Rocky Mountain Region, at Denver, which grew out of various experiments in library cooperation. Creation of the Denver center was begun in 1935, and since that time the development has been rapid. Thirteen institutions in Colorado, Wyoming, Utah, and New Mexico are now contributing financial support. The center's most basic tool is a union catalog, comprising a Library of Congress depository catalog, printed cards issued by John Crerar, Folger Library, and Princeton University, and records of holdings of some thirty libraries in the Rocky Mountain states—a

total of 3,400,000 cards. In addition, there is a collection of ten thousand volumes of national, trade, and subject bibliographies, library and sales catalogs, and several special card files. Present activities of the Denver bibliographical center fall into these main categories: location of books and other printed material, serving as a clearinghouse for interlibrary loans in the region, supplying cataloging data, and promoting cooperative book acquisition. Records show the center is being used constantly by a variety of persons, among them college faculty members and other teachers, students, businessmen, government officials, authors, and adult study groups. Over thirty thousand inquiries were received in 1943, according to a recent report.<sup>6</sup>

Patterned after the Denver center are the Pacific Northwest Bibliographic Center at Seattle and the Philadelphia Bibliographical Center. The first is sponsored by the University of Washington and the second by the University of Pennsylvania. The resources, types of service, and general objectives are similar in all three centers. There is an unmistakable trend on the part of other union catalogs to expand and take on the functions of a bibliographical center, for they find, sooner or later, that their card files are insufficient to furnish the wide range of information for which they are called upon and they must develop other facilities in order to provide satisfactory services. Because of time and transportation factors and relatively inadequate collections for research in the Pacific Northwest and Rocky Mountain areas, the bibliographical centers in those regions are particularly vital, giving them resources far beyond the capacity of any single institution.

### *Descriptions of Resources*

Another device for providing information

<sup>6</sup> *The Bibliographical Center for Research, Rocky Mountain Region.* (City Club Pamphlet, No. 27) Denver, 1944, p. 42.



about library resources is descriptions of holdings. The first attempts of this nature were limited to lists of special collections, perhaps with brief notes, such as those by Johnston, Mudge, and Richardson. More recent examples have generally been planned on a broader scale, to cover resources as a whole, not simply special collections. They vary in comprehensiveness from reports on single libraries to surveys national in scope. Among the best of the guides to individual institutions are those for the New York Public Library,<sup>7</sup> Harvard,<sup>8</sup> University of Pennsylvania,<sup>9</sup> and American Antiquarian Society.<sup>10</sup> The same procedure has been applied to cities<sup>11</sup> and to regions.<sup>12</sup> In the city and regional studies all types of libraries and all important subject divisions represented were described. Several country-wide investigations covering a variety of fields have also been completed or are in process. These include the Joint Committee on Library Research Facilities for National Emergency's survey of materials in science and technology potentially useful for war purposes,<sup>13</sup> and the Special Libraries Association's projected four-volume work, of

which the first has been issued.<sup>14</sup> An annual report on notable materials added to American libraries has appeared in the *Library Quarterly*, beginning with 1940.<sup>15</sup> An attempt was also made simply to list, on the basis of opinions by specialists, the principal collections in libraries of the United States.<sup>16</sup> From the point of view of the subject expert, surveys concentrating on limited fields are perhaps of greatest value, and the number of such studies is steadily increasing.<sup>17</sup>

The techniques followed in these various surveys of resources have differed widely. Some have depended entirely on questionnaires and correspondence, others on personal visits by outside investigators or local library staffs; most have followed careful plans, a few have developed haphazardly. Their usefulness to the research worker naturally varies in accordance with their completeness, the importance of libraries included, the amount of specific detail, the convenience of arrangement, and similar factors. The library resources survey should be regarded as complementary to the union catalog, neither taking the place of the other.

### *Library Specialization or Division of Fields*

We come next to a type of library co-

<sup>7</sup> New York (City) Public Library. *Guide to the Reference Collections of the Library*. New York City, New York Public Library, 1941. 416p.

<sup>8</sup> Harvard University Library. *Library of Harvard University*. (Special Publications, 6) Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1934. 186p.

<sup>9</sup> Bibliographical Planning Committee of Philadelphia. *Faculty Survey of the University of Pennsylvania Libraries*. (Philadelphia Library Resources, No. 1) Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 1940. 202p.

<sup>10</sup> American Antiquarian Society. *Guide to the Resources of the Society*. Worcester, The Society, 1937. 98p.

<sup>11</sup> Downs, Robert B., ed. *Resources of New York City Libraries*. Chicago, American Library Association, 1943; *Library and Reference Facilities in the Area of the District of Columbia*. Washington, Library of Congress, 1944. 95p.; Bibliographical Planning Committee of Philadelphia. *Philadelphia Libraries and Their Holdings*. Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 1941. 46p.

<sup>12</sup> Downs, Robert B., ed. *Resources of Southern Libraries*. Chicago, American Library Association, 1938. 370p.; Van Male, John. *Resources of Pacific Northwest Libraries*. Seattle, Pacific Northwest Library Association, 1943. 404p.; Carlson, William H. "Library Resources in the Land of Little Water." *A.L.A. Bulletin* 34:617-27, October 1940.

<sup>13</sup> Joint Committee on Library Research Facilities for National Emergency. *Guide to Library Facilities for National Defense*, rev. ed., ed. by Carl L. Cannon. Chicago, American Library Association, 1941. 235p.

<sup>14</sup> Special Libraries Association. *Special Library Resources*, ed. by Rose L. Vormelker. New York City, Special Libraries Association, 1941. vol. 1. 764p.

<sup>15</sup> *Library Quarterly* 10:157-91, April 1940; 11:257-301, July 1941; 12:175-220, April 1942; 14:132-58, April 1944.

<sup>16</sup> Downs, Robert B. "Leading American Library Collections." *Library Quarterly* 12:457-73, July 1942.

<sup>17</sup> Examples: Wilson, Louis R., and Downs, Robert B. "Special Collections for the Study of History and Literature in the Southeast." *Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America* 28:97-131, 1934; Gilder, Rosamond, and Freedley, George. *Theatre Collections in Libraries and Museums*. New York City, Theatre Arts, 1936. 182p.; Powell, Lawrence C. "Resources of Western Libraries for Research in History." *Pacific Historical Review* 11:263-80, September 1942; Carlson, William H. "Scandinavian Collections in the Libraries of the United States." *Scandinavian Studies and Notes* 15:217-38, August 1939; 16:291-303, November 1941; Poleman, Horace I. "Facilities for Indic Studies in America." *American Council of Learned Societies Bulletin*, No. 28:27-107, May 1939; Hilton, Ronald, ed. *Handbook of Hispanic Source Materials and Research Organizations in the United States*. Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1942. 441p.

operation on which there is less general agreement than for any of the activities outlined above. From a practical point of view it is impossible for even the largest libraries, as they are now organized, to hold more than a fraction of the world's literature. Therefore, acquisition agreements among libraries would appear, theoretically at least, to be the logical and sensible solution. Nevertheless, a considerable amount of skepticism about the practicability of agreements for dividing collecting interests among libraries still prevails. Possibly Fremont Rider<sup>18</sup> has hit upon a fundamental weakness when he points out that the scholar is never reconciled to having his research materials in some other library, but insists on having them immediately at hand. Even Mr. Rider's microprint proposals, however, are based upon a high degree of specialization among libraries. Handicaps to library specialization were described further by Taube.<sup>19</sup> The persistence of interest in the problem, however, is demonstrated by two special conferences, with published proceedings.<sup>20</sup> The first of these, sponsored by the A.L.A. Board on Resources of American Libraries, discussed at length difficulties in the way of agreements but voted unanimous approval of a resolution on their desirability.

The latest contribution to the subject of specialization is the proposal of a committee of the Library of Congress Librarian's Council, composed of Keyes D. Metcalf, Archibald MacLeish, and Julian P. Boyd,<sup>21</sup>

for a thorough coverage of the world's literature by American libraries. This would be accomplished by having cooperating institutions, each of which would have agreed to specialize in one or more given divisions of knowledge, acquire at least one copy of every book of potential research interest published anywhere in the world. The Library of Congress classification would be used as a basis for subject divisions. A second important step in the plan is to have every book thus obtained promptly listed in the National Union Catalog at the Library of Congress. Its sponsors realize their program cannot be placed in full effect until the war's end but are proceeding with preliminary details.

The library profession has a basis of experience extending over a considerable period of time for specialization agreements, though not on such an ambitious scale as the Metcalf-MacLeish-Boyd proposal. In New York City, for example, an understanding between Columbia University and the New York Public Library dates back to 1896; certain fields are definitely allocated to one library or the other, and they consult with each other in the twilight zone not covered by this understanding. Working arrangements also prevail with more specialized institutions in the city. An extraordinarily effective program has also long existed among a group of Chicago libraries: John Crerar, Newberry, University of Chicago, and Chicago Public Library. The original plan became effective about 1895; at that time the Newberry Library assumed responsibility for literature, history, and the arts, and John Crerar agreed to cover the natural, physical, and social sciences. Other assignments subsequently were made to the University of Chicago, Chicago Public Library, and other Chicago libraries. In the South one of the most noteworthy examples of library cooperation is that existing between Duke University

<sup>18</sup> Rider, Fremont. *The Scholar and the Future of the Research Library*. New York City, Hadham Press, 1944, p. 79-84.

<sup>19</sup> Taube, Mortimer. "The Realities of Library Specialization." *Library Quarterly* 12:246-56, April 1942.

<sup>20</sup> A.L.A. Board on Resources of American Libraries. *Library Specialization; Proceedings of an Informal Conference*. Chicago, American Library Association, 1941. 48p.; "Proceedings of the Conference on Library Specialization;" "An Agreement for Regional Library Specialization in the Pacific Northwest;" "Appendix." *PNLA Quarterly* 8:52-59, January 1944.

<sup>21</sup> Metcalf, Keyes D., and Williams, Edwin E. "Proposal for a Division of Responsibility among American Libraries in the Acquisition and Recording of Library Materials." *College and Research Libraries* 5:105-06, March 1944.

and the University of North Carolina;<sup>22</sup> included is a division of collecting interests for a number of subject fields, newspapers, and public documents. Another instance is in Nashville, Tenn., where Vanderbilt University, George Peabody College, and Scarritt College have worked out comprehensive plans for developing joint research collections as part of a far-reaching program of library cooperation.<sup>23</sup>

Numerous other illustrations could be cited of successful local agreements for sharing acquisition responsibilities. Of special interest are the following: the arrangement, begun about 1927, among the universities of Michigan and Minnesota, the John Crerar and Newberry libraries for purchasing cooperatively certain publications of European local academies and societies; an understanding among the University of Minnesota, Minneapolis Public Library, Minnesota Historical Society, and Minneapolis Athenaeum in the fields of genealogy, local history, fine arts, music, and Scandinaviana; a similar agreement among Brown University Library and other libraries in Providence, for collecting local history, art, law, mathematics, Latin American literature, American poetry, Lincolniana, and state publications; a division in Cleveland among Western Reserve University, Cleveland Public Library, Western Reserve Historical Society, the Museum of Art, and the Natural History Museum; the centralization of order work for the six libraries of the Oregon State System of Higher Education;<sup>24</sup> a division of the Latin American field among Duke

University, University of North Carolina, and Tulane University; and an extensive cooperative program for preserving state and local newspapers undertaken by the University of Virginia, Virginia State Library, and some two dozen other Virginia libraries. Of a very specialized nature is the agreement among about thirty-four New England and New York libraries for the preservation of advertising sections of periodicals.

### *Photographic Reproduction*

The widespread use of microfilm, beginning about a decade ago, has led to cooperative efforts of several kinds. It was realized early that establishment of a laboratory for film in every library would be uneconomical; hence, experts in the field have urged that a few fully-equipped laboratories be set up to serve a much larger number of libraries. The city-wide service provided by the University of Chicago Libraries' Department of Photographic Reproduction and by the American Documentation Institute's Biblionfilm Service, in Washington, are examples. On a commercial basis, University Microfilms of Ann Arbor, Mich., is performing in a similar manner. A coordination of microphotographic laboratories is under consideration for Philadelphia.<sup>25</sup> Another step toward microfilm cooperation is directed toward making more generally available work already completed; this was one of the purposes of a recent union list.<sup>26</sup>

The possibilities of cooperation in the reproduction of large, expensive works are virtually limitless. Among notable projects of that nature are the filming, for some sixteen libraries, of English books printed before 1550, as listed in the *Short Title*

<sup>22</sup> Downs, Robert B., and Branscomb, Harvie. "A Venture in University Library Cooperation." *Library Journal* 60:877-79, Nov. 15, 1935; Pratt, E. Carl. "Library Cooperation at Duke and North Carolina Universities." *College and Research Libraries* 2:142-45, March 1941.

<sup>23</sup> Kuhlman, A. F., ed. *Development of University Centers in the South*. Nashville, Joint University Libraries, 1942, p. 53-128.

<sup>24</sup> Described in detail, along with various other types of library cooperation, in Mrs. Mildred H. Lowell's *College and University Library Consolidations*. Eugene, Oregon State System, 1942. 136p.

<sup>25</sup> Heilemann, J. J. "Coordination of Microphotographic Laboratories." Philadelphia Bibliographical Center. *Documentation on a Regional Basis*. Philadelphia, 1944, p. 25-26.

<sup>26</sup> Philadelphia Bibliographical Center. *Union List of Microfilms*. Philadelphia, The Center, 1942. *Supplement*, 1943.



*Catalogue*; the microfilming of all extant magazines published in the continental United States before 1800; and the microprinting, in process, of the British *Sessional Papers* for the nineteenth century. Another is the reproduction by photo-offset of the *Catalog of Books Represented by Library of Congress Printed Cards*. It was recently reported that files of approximately 150 major American newspapers are available in film form, and in a substantial number of cases the cost of filming was shared by two or more libraries. Before our entrance into the present war a project sponsored by Harvard University received a representative group of about fifty newspapers from the principal countries of the world and microfilmed them for distribution to American research libraries; war conditions have forced temporary suspension of the enterprise. Also dealing with a special type of material, the Library of Congress and the University of North Carolina Library jointly sent an operator with a microfilm camera to visit libraries throughout the country for the purpose of assembling a complete record of the proceedings of legislative bodies of the American colonies, territories, and states. Going far beyond these relatively limited undertakings is Fremont Rider's proposal to have each important research library become a publisher of microcards in fields assigned to it, the cards to be offered for sale to other libraries.<sup>27</sup>

### *Cooperative Cataloging and Processing*

A cooperative cataloging project, under the sponsorship of the Library of Congress and the A.L.A. Cooperative Cataloging Committee, was initiated in 1932, with the collaboration of libraries in the United States and Canada. During the ten-year period, 1933-43, the Library of Congress

received from cooperating libraries <sup>AN</sup> and edited card copy for about sixty thousand titles, chiefly new foreign books and monographs in scholarly series. It was recently reported<sup>28</sup> that 365 libraries have cooperated in the contribution of titles for catalog entries which have been printed by the Library of Congress. In the same direction the Library of Congress has made arrangements with certain cooperating libraries by which each library is to supply catalog copy for the current official publications of its home state. The plan is to be gradually extended to cover all states. In addition, libraries in several of the larger cities have agreed to catalog the official publications of their respective cities and to supply copy to the Library of Congress for printing. University libraries are being asked to furnish catalog copy for publications issued by their institutions, including doctoral dissertations and the products of university presses.

Another problem of increasing concern to our large research libraries is the huge accumulation of uncataloged materials, arrears from preceding years. A series of recommendations to meet the problem on a national scale was offered by Kellar.<sup>29</sup> A plan for centralizing the cataloging of arrears has been suggested for the Philadelphia area.<sup>30</sup> For the past three years a group of Colorado librarians has had under consideration an even more inclusive program, looking toward the possibility of centralizing technical processes for all types of libraries in the region.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>28</sup> Library of Congress. Descriptive Cataloging Division. *Cooperative Cataloging Manual for Use of Contributing Libraries*. Washington, U.S. Government Printing Office, 1944, p. 50-60.

<sup>29</sup> Kellar, Herbert A. *Memoranda on Library Cooperation*. Washington, 1941, p. 18-29.

<sup>30</sup> Linderth, Mrs. Ruth Witherbee. "Centralized Cataloging Project." Philadelphia Bibliographical Center. *Documentation on a Regional Basis*. Philadelphia, 1944, p. 6-9.

<sup>31</sup> Colorado College and Head Librarians Conference. "First Report of the Special Committee, Centralized Technical Processes and Bookbuying," August 1942; "Second Report," February 1943; "Planning Studies on Centralization." October 1942 (Mimeographed).

<sup>27</sup> Rider, *op. cit.*, p. 176-209.

### *Duplicate Exchanges*

The system of exchanges for duplicate publications which the Medical Library Association has had in operation since 1899 is generally acknowledged to be the most effective scheme thus far tried for disposing of such material. These are the essentials of the plan: lists of duplicates from all co-operating libraries are consolidated in a central office, distributed to association members, and records of wants returned to the central office, with the larger libraries in the organization receiving priority for items available.

In 1940 a Periodical Exchange Union, limited to the problem of duplicate periodicals, was set up under the sponsorship of the Association of College and Reference Libraries.<sup>32</sup> The procedure differs from the M.L.A. plan in several respects, chief of which is that lists of duplicates are circulated among the participating libraries in the order of the size of their annual budget for periodicals; libraries making the largest expenditures for periodicals have priority over others, on the theory that the material needed by them will be more rare and difficult to obtain.

An ingenious proposal for disposing of duplicate publications has been offered by Phineas Lawrence Windsor, of the University of Illinois, and others. The plan, in brief, is to box up duplicates, unlisted, and ship them to the nearest large library; the receiving library would select anything wanted, pass on the remainder to another library, and so on until everything was distributed or any residue could be discarded. Presumably, the duplicates would need to be roughly classified by subject or type under this scheme.

<sup>32</sup> Van Deusen, Neil C. "Periodical Exchange Union." *College and Research Libraries* 2:288, June 1941. Name changed to Duplicate Exchange Union in 1944 and functions expanded. See Thompson, Donald E. "Duplicate Exchange Union." *College and Research Libraries* 6:158-60, March 1945.

### *Central Storage Warehouses*

For the past forty-two years, since President Eliot of Harvard first advanced it, the idea of inexpensive centralized storage for little-used books has been discussed. Up to now, however, so far as the writer is aware, only one such cooperative storehouse has been constructed, namely the New England Deposit Library in Boston, serving Harvard University, Boston Public Library, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and other institutions in the area.<sup>33</sup> Economy of storage, elimination of duplication, and division of fields among libraries are primary objectives.

A central storage warehouse for the Midwest, with Chicago as a center, has been advocated for several years by President Hutchins, of the University of Chicago, and colleges of the Connecticut Valley have discussed central storage of large reference collections for the college libraries in the district. No concrete development has yet come from either proposal.

### *Regional Library Development*

In several sections of the United States broad programs of regional library cooperation, embodying two or more of the specific types of cooperation outlined above, are under way or under consideration. The bibliographical centers of Denver and Seattle of course have aspects touching on many phases of regional cooperation. In the Atlanta-Athens area of Georgia, Emory University, Georgia School of Technology, University of Georgia, and other libraries have joined in a series of measures to improve and coordinate their resources. Recommendations for combining a group of North Texas institutions into a regional system for cooperative purposes were made by A. F. Kuhlman, on the basis of his

<sup>33</sup> Metcalf, Keyes D. "The New England Deposit Library." *Library Quarterly* 12:622-28, July 1942.



survey of the situation there.<sup>34</sup> Long-range plans for the development of university library centers in the South were discussed at a Nashville conference in 1944.<sup>35</sup>

### Conclusion

It is inevitable that lack of space and lack of information prevent mention of additional examples of, or proposals for, library cooperation which should be included in a complete record. A number of interesting plans are taking shape in the field of indexing and abstracting. The present status of the state document center program, inaugurated in 1930, would be worth investigation for its bearing on questions of library integration. The problem of eliminating unwise competition among American libraries in postwar foreign book buying is a matter of concern now receiving particular attention from the Association of Research Libraries. Plans being formulated for extensive reprinting of publications originating

<sup>34</sup> Kuhlman, A. F. *The North Texas Regional Libraries; An Inquiry into the Feasibility and Desirability of Developing Them as a Cooperative Enterprise*. Nashville, Tenn., George Peabody College Press, 1943. 85p.

<sup>35</sup> Conference of Graduate Deans and Librarians, Nashville, Tenn. *Development of Library Resources and Graduate Work in the Cooperative University Centers of the South*, ed. by Philip G. Davidson and A. F. Kuhlman. Nashville, Joint University Libraries, 1944. 81p.

in Axis-controlled countries will also involve the cooperation of research libraries. "The Checklist of Certain Periodicals" in scientific and technical fields published in enemy territory since 1939, a union list of American library holdings now being compiled in the Library of Congress, will provide a useful foundation for this purpose.

From a close study of accomplishments to date, there would appear to be certain important principles which have influenced the success or failure of various kinds of library cooperation. First, distance is a handicap, and it is easier for libraries not too far removed from each other to work together. Second, regional library cooperation has its greatest opportunities in those areas with inadequate book resources. Third, libraries should not be asked to give up anything but rather to assume positive responsibilities and receive direct benefits. Fourth, agreements must be flexible enough to provide for expansion and adjustment. Fifth, complete elimination of duplication between libraries is not possible or desirable. Finally, only a comparatively limited number of libraries are at present equipped to make any substantial or effective contribution to a general program of cooperation on the research level.

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Comment by CHARLES H. BROWN

## Union Catalogs and Problems of Collecting

It is not easy to add to Mr. Downs's comprehensive inventory of cooperative projects in the field of librarianship nor to comment on most of them. One or two points, however, forced themselves upon the attention of at least one librarian, somewhat like the proverbial sore thumb.

We librarians have not made much progress in reaching understandings on acquisition policies. The reasons are obvious. Without affecting university policies, librarians can agree on union lists of serials, union catalogs, cooperative cataloging, and many other coopera-

tive enterprises. When acquisition policies are concerned, our graduate colleges are immediately involved. So long as university administrators, deans of graduate colleges, and the faculties themselves do not realize the necessity for some agreement on the various fields of specialization in research which their universities should undertake, then the librarians can do little. Fortunately, there are indications that this need is beginning to receive more attention in university circles.

It certainly is more of a credit to an institution to have a few outstanding departments