MANUAL OF LIBRARY ECONOMY

a conspectus of professional librarianship edited by

R N LOCK

Manual of library economy

Manual of library economy

a conspectus of professional librarianship for students and practitioners

EDITED BY

R Northwood Lock

FLA

CLIVE BINGLEY
LONDON

&

LINNET BOOKS
HAMDEN · CONN

FIRST PUBLISHED 1977 BY CLIVE BINGLEY LTD
16 PEMBRIDGE ROAD LONDON W11
SIMULTANEOUSLY PUBLISHED IN THE USA BY LINNET BOOKS
AN IMPRINT OF THE SHOE STRING PRESS INC
995 SHERMAN AVENUE HAMDEN CONNECTICUT 06514
SET IN 10 ON 10 PRESS ROMAN BY ALLSET AND
PRINTED AND BOUND IN THE UK BY
REDWOOD BURN LTD TROWBRIDGE & ESHER

BINGLEY ISBN: 0-85157-226-X
LINNET ISBN: 0-208-01538-8

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data
Main entry under title:

Manual of library economy.

Includes bibliographical references and index.
1. Library science. I. Lock, Reginald Northwood.
Z665.M653 020 77-5034
ISBN 0-208-01538-8

Contents

Preface

The dozen years since the passing of the Libraries & Museums Act in 1964, encompassing local government reorganisation and the implementation of the British Library Act 1973, have seen a dramatic transformation of the library scene in the UK, and it is timely to present a summary of the effects of some of the changes as they affect the structure and practice of librarianship.

The period has seen the decline, unmarked by substantial comment, of the study of classification theory from its former pre-eminence to a position where its main value lies in the research work that supports the national bibliography, no less than the abolition of a large number of independent library authorities. It has seen the successful introduction of computer systems into library routines. There are signs that it may be inaugurating a period in which university libraries face the end of the conventional concept of unlimited expansion, while still to be harvested are the fruits of the most extensive, continuing research programme into library and bibliographical science yet mounted outside the USA.

This book, a collection of chapters on specific topics, written by men and women who are experts in their fields, seeks to set out what a practising librarian should know of his craft--not the precisely detailed minutiae of routine appropriate to a staff manual, but expositions of current practice in, for example, reference libraries, work with children, library cooperation and so on.

References to existing literature have deliberately been kept to a minimum, for they may distract the intended reader of this work, who may in any case find them difficult to follow up. The contributors have attempted to reveal the nature of library service today, with particular emphasis upon those aspects of it which are likely to be of most value to younger staff and students of librarianship, as well as to include some ideas and information which may be novel and a stimulus to more experienced librarians, and especially those working in isolated library conditions.

Worthing, Sussex
August 1976

R NORTHWOOD LOCK

PART ONE

Libraries for all

INTRODUCTION

R Northwood Lock

By tradition, libraries have been considered primarily as collections of books, handwritten or printed, with perhaps the embellishment of additional materials–engravings, drawings, medals and coins. These latter have for the most part now found their place in museums or art galleries, but the stores of books have been extended to include all manner of new methods of recording knowledge, transmitting information and of providing new media for recreation. Such extensions of the basic library have not always been accepted by librarians, attitudes tending to vary with the general purpose and with the readership of the library; but these new materials are a force to be reckoned with and must be included in any consideration of library methodology.

The new media–universal agreement on nomenclature has not so far been achieved–include photographic film in a variety of formats, magnetic tape recordings, gramophone records and cassettes, as well as pictorial matter presented in experimental forms. Also found in this immense group are familiar forms such as microfilms, microfiche, colour transparencies and video-tape.

As yet there is no widely accepted term by which all the possible constituents of the resources of libraries may be described without tedious periphrasis; it should therefore be assumed that, unless the contrary is explicitly indicated by the context, 'books', 'book stock' and similar words will include the audio-visual media.

Collections of books are not in themselves libraries, nor does the mere existence of a few shelves displaying books give any indication of value to any group of people. Libraries must be organised for use; they must be available to readers; they must be financed on some permanent basis. Staff are needed to ensure that the equipment of the building, the organisation of the books and the service to the users will be effectively and economically maintained. This is the basic art and science of librarianship, and forms to a great extent the subject matter of this book.

There are, however, further fundamental elements to be considered, some of which await the results of investigation and research and which will, when available, be found discussed in report literature and special monographs. These can only be given passing mention in a general work, and the interested reader will find no difficulty in exploring in further detail those ongoing developments in librarianship which are of most professional concern.

High among these questions are some which were not included in earlier outlines of the basic art of librarianship; they are concerned with the relationship of the reader to the library, the degree of satisfaction which he derives from visiting the library, the motives which impel readers to seek libraries, the extent to which the total provision of libraries in a country is necessary, economic or capable of improvement.

For there are libraries of many kinds, frequently unknown outside a relatively small circle of users. Some may be world famous national libraries such as the British Library, university libraries with satellite departmental libraries, libraries in educational institutions such as polytechnics, colleges, schools, libraries formed by research associations, learned societies, industrial and commercial undertakings, specific foundations such as the London Library (a private library society supported by the subscriptions of members), and, best known of all, the ubiquitous public library, supported usually by locally raised taxes, but sometimes, especially in the more recently developed countries, part of the government education service.

All these libraries exist for definite reasons and none is used exclusively by any given category of reader. Thus the research worker who seeks very specialised subject information in the departmental university library may equally use a library supported by his own employer. He may also start at the public library (particularly if the enquiry involves topics beyond the scope of the two previous libraries) and thereby gain access to further sources of information. At the same time, he may also find in the public library recreational literature to allow for mental relaxation. Others may find their recreational reading in the specialist library. Interplay of readers between many types of library seems natural and desirable. There are several sound reasons for the existence of such a variety of book provision, just as there are numbers of possible objections which the responsible librarian must be prepared to face and, if necessary, must try to overcome.

The matter is complicated at the outset by the vast volume of book (and other) material in which information is contained and by which it

is recorded, transmitted to those who need it and, ultimately, preserved for posterity. Much of this mass (which has grown at an exponential rate for the past four hundred years) may not be frequently used or needed, but no one can tell what may be needed, or by whom, or in conjunction with what other materials. This is of the greatest concern to the national libraries, committed to a policy of archival preservation, and to the universities, who, by definition, are the centres for intellectual activity and for the extension of knowledge. A different emphasis to the problem faces other more general libraries which have different values and objectives.

Further difficulties arise from the tendency of larger libraries (and, by implication, those making a serious attempt to supply more than the most popular or general works) to be established among the large centres of population, leaving great areas of the country without immediate access to firsthand sources of information. In an age of increasingly costly travel and ever rising postal charges, this is a serious problem to which highly complex solutions have been proposed. It should be noted at this point that, there is no solution yet propounded which can meet all the problems of all the library users; what can be done is to increase the efficiency of such services as libraries can offer and to ensure that finances are used to the best advantage. Readers will then need to choose in which of several ways they will (or will be able to) obtain access to the books they require. There can never, however, be any true substitute for free access to a very large well-selected, well-catalogued and well-staffed library.

The sheer bulk of material available does in practice mean that libraries must select what they will acquire and must determine (if possible) whether the collection shall grow indefinitely (if the subject literature does not continue to increase, the specialist library may be spared this problem), or whether to concentrate on achieving excellence in certain areas of knowledge only, or to limit themselves to certain categories of user.

The general scholarly library which, two hundred years ago, could be listed by such writers as T F Dibdin and other bibliographers, and the omnivorous collection of books made by individual scholars, can today be dismissed as impracticable. The former has been rendered obsolete by increased academic specialisation, even within classical humanistic studies, coupled with the need to involve the literatures of many other disciplines, which have themselves become ever more interrelated and over-published. The private collection has been the victim of the uncontrolled expansion of publication by the learned or semi-learned

presses and the impossible cost of forming substantial personal libraries. Libraries–public, institutional or semi-public, supported by state, local or industrial funds–seem the only answer.

On what bases are libraries to acquire books, to offer services to users, to contribute to a competent national libraries system? The temptation is often to select materials most likely to be used by the greatest number (books that will 'pay their way', 'justify shelf space') rather than to acquire on the basis of intellectual content. This latter, the art of book selection, was formerly regarded as the highest example of the librarian's skill, but, for reasons which will be considered later, has for some years been undervalued in the profession.

Generally speaking, the wider the aim of the library in the readership it desires to attract, the lower will be the total intellectual value of the stock. The analogy of the mechanics institute libraries of the nineteenth century and their ultimate conversion to fiction and recreational reading in order to survive may not be completely valid in the changed society of a hundred years later, but few librarians will deny that they cannot be bold leaders in raising the intellectual level of their stock if they remain committed to massive circulation figures as the justification for existence. It is a question of priority of importance when assessing claims on community funds, and librarians might be well advised to reconsider the move towards purchasing new fiction, which began in the 1930s, and to investigate the true cost of purely recreational reading.

Inevitably, libraries are selective in the book stock they can hold and it is only right that exhaustive enquiry should be made to determine where the true reading needs of the community lie and how they should be encouraged to develop through the use of libraries.

The ideal that all libraries of no matter what size should attempt to maintain stocks which present a balanced collection of literature on all subjects is quite impracticable, financially, intellectually, administratively. Can, then, such a definition of library use be evolved that libraries, taken as a whole in any one country, can be made more effective than now? Prolonged research will be needed before a sound judgment can be formed on such a fundamental matter, and much work is actually currently in progress, but there was considerable suprise when, in 1976, the influential University Grants Committee announced a radical new approach to the policy which that body adopts with regard to the university libraries of the United Kingdom. The UGC made a number of far-reaching recommendations stemming from the need to limit

growth of university libraries and to re-deploy capital expenditure intended for new building. The basic concept will be of a library of limited size and in libraries over that size, lesser-used materials will be retired to store or offered to the British Library, to the extent necessary to maintain a determined stock level. There are a number of very careful statements which amplify this paraphrased version of the general policy, but all tend to the same conclusion—that librarians will need to give very much more attention to book selection and to monitoring the use of stock than has been customary.

Clearly, the British Library, formed in 1973, is already having a considerable impact on the libraries of the future and, being in a position to initiate research on a scale never previously attempted in this country, it seems possible that the next decades will see the organisation of a remarkably integrated service on a national basis. The work already done towards using computer technology in library co-operation, the international bibliographical standards which have been successfully launched for books and are now extending to music and maps, the actual work in monitoring the usage of books (as begun at the former National Lending Library, now the British Library Lending Division), are some of the most obvious practical results to date. It remains to complement this work by taking it to a greater stage of sophistication, that is, by studying the reader in the library rather than the staffing and equipment of the library, as has recently been done by LAMSAC.

At present, one of the main points at issue is how to determine the long-term contribution to the vital library service made by each of those libraries which seeks to serve the general reader (the public rate-supported libraries), by the libraries in the educational system (those in universities, polytechnics, colleges, schools), and by the libraries devoted primarily to research in specified areas of knowledge (industrial, research association, learned society libraries).

Good reasons can be advanced for continuing the existence of such a variety of types of libraries, which include all manner of standards of administration, of book acquisition, of size and of financial support; though it may well be questioned whether the location of the libraries is always reasonable, or if the availability and quality of the stock adequately repays the money which keeps the library alive.

On sentimental grounds, many serious readers would greatly regret the introduction of modern methods or the amalgamation of some of these libraries into larger, less personal institutions, but the serious question which must be countered is whether, if a library cannot

support itself (eg the membership of the society cannot always meet increased costs) or cannot maintain previous acquisition policies, or finds its building has become inadequate, that library should be subsidised to continue as a relatively inefficient unit. Or should natural forces be allowed to prevail, with the consequential discontinuance of the library and the dispersal of the stock?

Basic conflict exists between feasibility and desirability, not only in such cases, but throughout the library system of almost any country. Demographic distribution must have some relationship to overall library effectiveness, and, despite the remarkable efforts of librarians (see chapter 16) to make available to the maximum such book provision as there is, it remains possible, even in highly developed countries, to reside in a small town which operates a respected library service and yet be obliged to travel considerable distances to a large population centre in order to gain access to serious literature, or to find subject literatures 'in depth', or to be able to browse around the shelves of a well-selected reference library.

Perhaps the quality of book provision in the national library system needs re-consideration; perhaps the adequacy of the essential bibliographic guides, perhaps the complex problem of transport or transferance of books and information are the central questions. These unresolved questions, all perennial irritants to the systematic reader, particularly if he is not positioned to know those services which do exist to palliate the difficulties or to see future plans, constantly recur in any consideration of library effectiveness. They represent economy in the truest sense.

Emphasis has here been deliberately placed on the concerns of the systematic reader, rather than on those who merely seek a book to engage their attention for a passing while, because it is from the former category that the intellectual vitality of the nation must come and, in yet more general terms, cultural values be maintained. It is also the fact that the provision of purely recreational literature has been (save for the problem of finance) solved by the public libraries of the western world, whereas the more complex requirements of the serious reader are only in the last few years really receiving adequate study.

A final area for exploration lies in the unpalatable discovery of recent years that, despite the expensive educational system, the great variety of libraries, the uncontrolled flood of ephemeral literature and the ubiquitous mass-media of TV and radio, most western countries are confronted by an upsurge of illiteracy. No librarian can be complacent

when even in the United Kingdom, after one hundred years of compulsory state education (supplementary to the private system), illiterates are thought to exceed one million in number. Perhaps it is the responsibility of the educationalists, but to a certain extent libraries have in the past repelled rather than attracted prospective readers, and the format of books has by no means always encouraged the tentative reader of low motivation. The topic is explored in chapter 13, but is introduced at this point to emphasise that, though there are already libraries of many types available to all, it is a small minority of the people which consistently uses them and, on such evidence as there is, based largely on material deduced from the older charging systems, it seems that even the readership changes its constituents within a two-year period.

There are always further areas of activity for the librarian, most of which should perhaps best be explored when he acts within a body which is responsible for a particular social group, but all will agree that the enemies of libraries have always been ignorance and apathy, rather than hostility towards the true nature of the service. The centenary of the birth of the modern public library movement has given much evidence that the means and opportunities exist for establishing a planned national library system. It is greatly to be hoped that some of the enthusiasm of the pioneers can be found to ensure that at least some of the current planning comes to practical realisation.

Chapter 1

NATIONAL LIBRARIES
SECTION ONE: THE BRITISH LIBRARY

Stephen Green

The British Library is the national library of the United Kingdom. The particular needs of Scotland and Wales are satisfied additionally by the National Libraries of Scotland and Wales, which predate the foundation of the British Library. Taken together, these three institutions help to provide at the national level a balanced pattern of comprehensive service to institutions and individuals, irrespective of their geographical location in the United Kingdom. The British Library takes account of the views of its Scottish and Welsh colleagues wherever appropriate, a feature which is reflected in the membership of its Board, its Advisory Council and Committees, and in the less formal channels for liaison.

Just as this working relationship turns to constructive advantage an historically-determined situation, so also in a similar spirit was the British Library itself conceived. The British Library, which began operation on 1 July 1973, could not be planned in the abstract on a *tabula rasa* in Whitehall. The main objective of its creators was to weld into a coherent and flexible entity a variety of national or para-national institutions which had previously functioned independently, in a way which would yield the maximum benefit to the communities they served. It was recognised that central planning and management could eliminate unnecessary duplication, allow new techniques and systems to be developed and used more effectively, provide for a more equitable distribution of the resources available, and could permit the fullest opportunity to be taken of the possibilities for working on a national and international scale. To achieve this, the library departments of the British Museum (including the National Reference Library of Science and Invention), the National Lending Library for Science and Technology, the National Central Library and the British National Bibliography Ltd were brought together to form the British Library. In April 1974 nearly all the functions of the Office for Scientific and

Chapter 2

LIBRARIES IN THE EDUCATIONAL SETTING

John Cowley

The development of user services and an intense interest in the exploitation of library materials have been a feature of recent activities in schools, colleges and universities. The concept of collection-building has given way to one of maximising the use made of stock. Library staffs and duties have been redesigned to establish closer contacts with users, both students and teachers. The fundamental role of the library is now seen to be educational, and its mode of operation dynamic. The collecting and preserving function has some application in the more traditional settings, but all libraries in the educational area are experimenting with ways and means of achieving a dynamic interface with users.

Origins of change and development in some instances relate to the foresight and pioneering methods of librarians operating on both sides of the Atlantic, but it is also true to say that a great deal of stimulation has grown out of the changes in both the structure of education and in teaching methods. Beswick (1) is definite as to the source of the new dynamism in relation to library resource centres. For instance: 'The resource centre idea has developed out of the needs of the curriculum, and it is the teaching staff of the schools from whom the impetus for change has come', and 'the trend towards amalgamation of schools, comprehensivisation and the raising of the school leaving age, has caused schools to re-examine their curricula, teaching methods and educational aims'.

By their very nature, libraries in the educational setting are concerned with the teaching and learning processes experienced by specific communities. The small library serving the needs of primary school children in essence has the same basic aims as one provided for large numbers of undergraduates in a university setting. As Eleanor von Schweinitz (2) suggested, 'There is nothing intrinsically different about the basic elements in the school librarian's job when compared with

Chapter 3

SPECIAL LIBRARIES

Ronald Staveley

Special libraries often differ more markedly from each other than from libraries not called 'special', and some can justly claim to be public, national or academic as well as special. The Dag Hammerskjöld Library, for instance, is special in its purpose, origin and collections; it is a national or international memorial library, provided and maintained by the Swedish government, and attached for management purposes to Uppsala's public library system.

'Public' is no less ambiguous a label in international use, as pleasant recent news about library progress in Mongolia can illustrate. There, the first public library became the State Public Library with rich historical and cultural collections and a stock of 2½ million works and manuscripts, of which a relatively small collection is the lending stock. The strong science reference collections are moreover supplemented by the addition of a branch library of the institutions of the national Academy of Sciences, creating a 'special' library of the greatest possible significance.

The truth is that no single criterion, be it concerned with form of ownership, management, or type of reader, leads to a satisfactory definition of special libraries. Certainly many are of private, professional or commercial character, but many others are owned by the central government or its agencies, while yet others receive government grants in return for some service to the public. The varied character of work in special libraries can be appreciated from the briefest study of the standard Aslib *Handbook of special librarianship* (1).

A high degree of resourcefulness and adaptability is usually needed, especially for work in smaller libraries, whose owners and users by no means limit themselves to small demands. For example, one can still find the small library of, say a modest family firm of solicitors, in cramped and dusty quarters, where the senior members are separated, from each other and the library, by several floors, rickety stairs,

Chapter 4

PUBLIC LIBRARIES

W J Murison

The feature which distinguishes the public library from all other kinds of library is that it is available to all who are capable of using it. It is indeed the only institution to provide so liberal and comprehensive a service for education, information, recreation and entertainment. With such goals, it is the commonest, most complex, yet simplest to use, of all libraries.

Unesco, with responsibilities for education, scientific and cultural development in the pursuit of international understanding, celebrated International Book Year in 1972 with the issue of a revised version of its 1949 Public Library Manifesto, to take account of library progress in the intervening quarter-century. Unesco had defined public libraries as 'those which serve the population of a community or region free of charge or for a nominal fee, (1) emphasising that they may serve the general public or special categories of the public.

'To fulfil its purposes, the public library must be readily accessible, and its doors open for free and equal use by all members of the community regardless of race, colour, nationality, age, sex, religion, language, status or educational attainment. The public library must offer to adults and children the opportunity to keep in touch with their times, to educate themselves continuously and keep abreast of progress in the sciences and arts.' (2)

Of course, education, information, recreation and entertainment are as much the functions of broadcasting as of libraries, and books have their disadvantages, eg their illustrations do not show movement, and the processes of their production and distribution are such as to prevent any immediacy of information by this means alone.

But literacy is desirable, and the sensible promotion of public libraries really lies in recognition of the functions which can best be fulfilled by any particular medium of communication. Indeed, progressive

PART TWO

Buildings and books

INTRODUCTION

R Northwood Lock

Library buildings are of interest in several respects. They reflect the changing role of the library in its community, and deserve study to help clarify the development of attitudes between librarian and reader, to follow the ebb and flow of architectural fashions and, if study is taken to the international level, to reveal frequently mistaken, but more often successful, adaptations to which basically European or American concepts have been driven when confronted by unfamiliar cultures, economic poverty, developing societies and rudimentary education.

Today, libraries, as never before, draw users from all parts of the community, and fulfil many differing purposes, which means that there must be great flexibility of approach to the general problem of housing the books and other materials gathered together to form a library service; yet behind the variety of practice lie certain principles which have to be observed by all, even though emphasis may differ in changed circumstances.

First, the purpose and the method of use of the library must be defined. Is it, for example, a store for little-used material which must be preserved for posterity, an open-access lending library of mass appeal, a reference library for study, or a centre from which all manner of media are made available for personal use, or from which they may be distributed by library transport?

Second, is the building part of a larger library network and able to concentrate its functions, or is it a multi-purpose structure with administrative offices as well as a variety of reader service departments?

Third, is the building a new construction (perhaps with limits imposed by outside considerations), or is it the adaptation of an older structure perhaps erected for some quite different purpose?

Lastly, and perhaps most importantly, does the design of the building assist in efficient discharge of the functions that must be exercised therein, having particular regard to the social and environmental conditions of the area in which the library is sited?

Chapter 5

BUILDINGS FOR LIBRARIES

Godfrey Thompson

It is not given to every librarian to take part in the creation of a new library building, bit it is most important that, if the opportunity does come, he should be well prepared to do so. It is an important rôle, for although a librarian does not draw plans or instruct builders, it is to his conception of the new library–what it is to hold and what it is to do–that an architect creates the final building.

In the first place the librarian has to define the purpose which the library is being created to fulfil, and he has to identify the many and various functions which it has to perform, to show the relative importance of each and the relationship between them. Not least, he has to forecast the future, so that a library can be planned to serve not only today's needs, but the needs of the next twenty, thirty or forty years. This is a serious and complicated task for which the librarian must equip himself; in the first place it is essential that he should attack it in a systematic manner.

Because a library building is created for a specific need, so the whole of the planning and design will differ with the essential difference between libraries. A great multinational library, created to hold millions of books and other materials for a long lifetime, a college library designed to serve the ever-changing needs of students in a technological age, a branch public library to bring books and other materials to a community which has a wide range of reading levels and abilities–the needs of these three libraries are so very different. Yet in fact they have in common their basic, and identifiable, features; if treated systematically, the same planning methods are applicable to each.

One of the most important of the librarian's tasks, and the earliest, is to make sure that the architect knows exactly what it is that the library is being created to do. This may seem so obvious that it is not always taken seriously; the complexity of the task which lies before the architect and the enormous range of problems which he has to solve

Chapter 6

FURNITURE AND EQUIPMENT

Godfrey Thompson

When furnishing and equipping a library, it is essential that the responsible officer is fully informed as to the nature of the operations to be performed in the building, the dimensions of the areas allowed for these operations, the equipment (or furniture) available, and, above all, the requirements implicit in daily use, whether by the reading public or by the staff. The operation itself is usually jointly performed by the librarian and architect working in co-operation during the planning stages, whether of a completely new building or the re-furbishing of an older structure. The architect will have not only his technical knowledge of, for example, the strength of the building or what may be achieved by internal re-arrangement of walls, but also a considerable experience derived from his acquaintance with other buildings and with the many trades which will be suppliers of the items needed.

It is convenient to consider the equipment of a library as falling into several broad categories determined by the function it will perform, but this, though fruitful in stimulating ideas as to improved services, does not lead to a systematic easily consulted list. Basically, these categories are concerned with the following considerations:

1 Equipment which is special to libraries and is used largely in direct face-to-face service to the reader. This includes book shelving, display equipment, control counters, enquiry desks and public catalogues, as well as the machinery used for the recording of library transactions such as photochargers and computer-issue devices. Some furniture such as atlas cases, A-V storage cabinets are specially designed for the library. In choosing the most efficient and economical item for each purpose, the librarian must also bear in mind the effect it will have on the appearance of the library.

2 Storage shelving, together with the equipment necessary for the swift retrieval of books stored away from public areas. In this category are book conveyors, book hoists, communication equipment (telephone, internal and external), air-conditioning.

Chapter 7

SOURCES FOR THE SELECTION OF BOOKS AND OTHER MATERIALS

Brian Baumfield

This is a plain man's guide to book-selection, and the emphasis throughout is on practical methods to achieve the aims. Some general theory is included as a necessary precursor, and only public library book-selection is treated in any detail, with brief guidance to more specialised functions.

BOOK SELECTION OBJECTIVES

These are so much an integral part of the aims of any library service, that it is difficult to extract them out of context. Book-selection aims of different types of libraries vary according to needs of the users, whether in public, academic, institutional or special libraries. All, however, are geared to *demand*, and *supply*. Lionel McColvin, (1) as long ago as 1925, spelt this out in terms as relevant today as then:

'The library must be constituted in response to, or in anticipation of, demand. Books in themselves are nothing, they have no more meaning than the white paper on which they are printed, until they are made serviceable by demand. Book selection resolves itself into a consideration of two fields–demand and supply. We cannot alter, create or abolish demand.'

Speed of supply is an essential part of the book-selection process, for in so many cases factual information is needed quickly. Hackneyed though it may be, the phrase 'the right book to the right reader at the right time' still encompasses the essence of the book-selection process.

Book-selection for public libraries is probably the most sophisticated, and certainly the most pervasive of the exercises necessary to achieve the goals. Each library authority–in the UK, since local government reorganisation, all of these are large–has to meet the needs of the community in broad fields, and within these fields must cover books at many different levels–from the primer to the monograph. Because some of the new county library authorities are so big, it is often more a

Chapter 8

ACQUISITION PROCESSES AND PREPARATION FOR USE

Brian Baumfield

The implementation of the book-selection process requires careful and efficient organisation, capable of handling a throughput which may comprise a very large number of volumes in each year (in the case of all centralised systems). It may be manual or computerised, and one of each type is described in detail--the first is in operation in the London Borough of Brent, the second in the County of Kent. Neither is suggested as the only method, but both work efficiently, and are capable of modification to meet local needs. The former is operated in conjunction with a book-selection system based on a weekly meeting (see chapter 7).

Whilst the prime objective of any acquisition process is the speedy availability of all items ordered, the system must be capable of offering information of varying kinds at several stages of the operation. It must, for instance, provide an accessible record of material on order and material received, together with adequate financial records of expenditure. Audit requirements, quite properly, are strict, as large sums of money are involved and, equally important, financial control must be exercised by the librarian if planned expenditure is to be implemented throughout the year. Considerable care needs to be taken not only to keep the system as simple as possible (consistent with the requirements), but to avoid duplication, and to provide as much information as possible from a single record. Policy decisions on the allocation of orders to different suppliers will already have been taken (see chapter 7).

To reiterate, the requirements of a centralised book order-system are to provide a control which will render information on:

A: Whether any book is on order. If so:

1 With which bookseller.
2 Date of order.
3 Number of copies ordered.
4 Location of branches for which ordered.

PART THREE

Books and people

INTRODUCTION

R Northwood Lock

Books, we have on good authority, are of no value unless they are used, and the same authority says that it is not for the librarian to create demand.

What, then, is his role in the complex activity which goes into the formation of a library system, and how may his achievements be assessed?

There are no really helpful practical definitions of the functions of libraries as a whole within a community, nor is there much expression of preferences from readers, actual or potential. What do they expect from a library?

Such surveys as have been conducted imply that readers have a low level of formulation of responses made to questions, and this seems to suggest that in reality those interrogated either did not know whether they had obtained from the library visit what they required or, alternatively (and this seems more probable), that the majority had approached the library in a singularly naive and unprepared fashion, knowing neither precisely what to look for nor how to use such materials as might be relevant. The librarian is, in short, expected to provide the answer to questions unformulated and often deliberately obscured. He could, of course, passively observe the comings and goings of people in the library and remain indifferent to their reactions, but no responsible librarian could envisage such an attitude.

This situation refers to the supposedly systematic reader whose reactions have been investigated in university and college libraries, and not to those who seek recreation by borrowing an attractive-sounding title from a lending library; and though it is quite possible that the phenomenon is common to several types of library, it has not yet been seriously studied.

It must be confessed that, as librarians, we know singularly little about the readers who we so ardently wish shall profit from using our

books. In some extreme cases, such as the national archival libraries, reader motivation does not greatly affect the policy or administration of the library, because the wanted book is there, usually accompanied by useful support material. Again, in a library explicitly devoted to a definite subject, one can fairly assume that the readers who come to use the materials are to a certain extent united by their subject interest, and that that interest will largely have been anticipated by normal book acquisition. In neither case can we deduce anything of value about the intellectual level of the books required, nor of the explicit purposes for which they are consulted. The librarian, in these extreme cases, has the problem of organising an efficient retrieval service and reasonable facilities for study.

This is basic, but few genuine scholars are content to be denied access to the shelves and, as access is impracticable in very large libraries, some organisation must be created to surmount the problem. But, it should be observed, some characteristics of the serious reader can be identified. First, his desire for subject literature (and supporting materials) is limited only by the extent to which it has been preserved, and constantly generates new relations with other subjects to which access is therefore needed. Secondly, he may wish to be able to scan the book product of whole subject areas directly and not only through a catalogue, for, by actual sight of the authors and titles, quite frequently new inspiration is generated.

The more general the library is in subject coverage, and the more selective it is obliged to be in acquisitions due to limitations of funds, the more difficult it is to offer satisfactory service to any but the superficial reader. A general library stocked primarily with a selection of books published within perhaps the last decade cannot offer much satisfaction to the systematic reader above undergraduate level, unless the library has quite exceptional resources. In this context it is worth noting that when, as in local history collections, public libraries have concentrated resources on a definite objective, considerable success has been achieved in reader satisfaction; but, in general, the systematic reader may be fortunate in finding a few of the better known titles of his subject in such a library. In truth, he is in the wrong place and should go, or be directed, to a library wherein his specialism is a main interest. This function of providing guidance to sources for further information is generally accepted among librarians as being practical and as positive as their situation allows. To the reader, however, it may be of little comfort to know (what probably he suspects already) that the source will be several hours away by train.

Careful distinction should be made between the type of book stock needed for a rigorous course of study or reseach and that needed for direct factual information purposes. In this latter area public reference libraries frequently achieve very considerable success, and their networks of cooperation and inter-communication also deserve great credit. The point illustrates yet again the strength of pursuing defined aims of service.

Librarians have indeed done much, particularly in the public library sector, by introducing cooperative interlending schemes, by improving knowledge of the actual location of available copies through a system of union catalogues of quite remarkable sophistication, but the heart of the matter lies in that yet unexplored area of psychology, the motivation of the reader. This is a field of study in which the controlled experiment is virtually impossible, and no single objective judgment seems within existing powers of investigation. Yet it is clearly of major importance to know more about the value libraries represent to their users. Vague enthusiasm from satisfied users is of little practical value: it is from the number of less-than-satisfied readers that we wish to learn.

Within the library, readers do not often behave in a natural and relaxed manner. They are frequently diffident in their approach; they have been confronted with more or less formidable entrance barriers, they must discover and observe unknown and unfamiliar routines. There is a lack of familiarity with the disposal of books - how do I find what there is, how do I know what I do want? If it is not seen at once, what do I do? Similar situations occur in supermarkets, but, whereas the serried ranks of food tins, packets and jars carry recognisable names, this will not avail the inexperienced reader in the library where little is really obvious at a glance.

The extremes of open plan libraries, whilst superficially welcoming and cheerfully informal, may yet prove counter-productive as generating even more self-consciousness among readers. It has been appreciated for a long time that the introduction of safeguarded open-access libraries tends to thrust more independence on the uncertain reader than he is prepared to shoulder, and, with increased numbers actually coming to the library, staff may be kept very much occupied with purely routine work. Ideally, the newly-opened subject-classified libraries, with their neat card catalogues, should have been the right solution for those who were well-motivated and of the right type of mind to avail themselves of the organisation. Others—and they must have been many - either

consulted the staff or drifted away from the library, vaguely unsatisfied and willing prey to the more blatant attractions of the mass media.

Librarians were not wholly unaware of their failure to win mass support from the general public. They campaigned, not without success, for money, for new buildings, for more books, and did survive their last serious competitors in the book world, the circulating libraries. By the 1930s, professional training (sponsored by the librarians themselves) had begun to show results, in that young men and women began actively to seek ways of increasing the impact of the library on the community, by direct participation in local societies and cultural concerns, specialising in local history and administering libraries in schools. The way was being prepared for increasing integration with people in general, and with awareness of the needs of special groups, such as hospital patients, when the smooth progression was interrupted for five years by world war II.

In many ways the postwar attitudes of librarians to readers has remained much the same as before, but there has been, perhaps due to the increased emphasis on studies in sociology and to the massive experiments in education, a considerably greater search for positive evidence to prove many of what were formerly assumed to be the principles of librarianship. Much research has been undertaken, especially in the USA, to validate some of the generalisations and to apply the techniques of the social scientist. It now emerges that practical benefit can derive from some of the studies undertaken at Aslib, from those under the auspices of the British Library and from the Library Association. The immediate benefits sought are in efficiency of bibliographic control—the recording, locating and retrieval of literature on a worldwide basis is now practicable, and Gesner's dream of a universal bibliography is at last near realisation. More efficient use of staff abilities will be tried; library administration will be modified by the elaborate technology being introduced, but what has so far been omitted when attempting to attack other seemingly intractable problems may be summarised as the quantification of reader-satisfaction and its relation to the quality of material supplied by libraries. The problem pervades all libraries, from the most elementary school library, through the efficient public library system, the universities and college libraries, the special libraries and, ultimately, the national libraries. Until it is resolved, no librarian can really be certain that the people who visit his library go away with their requests (for loan, for information, for study) satisfied to an acceptable degree, and that the elaborate national system

of book supply, serviced by trained competent staff, has demonstrably justified itself.

Chapter 9

THE ARRANGEMENT OF BOOKS FOR USE

R Northwood Lock

The individual owner of a private collection of books may not and usually does not need to keep them in a definite order; he can remember where to find any wanted title, or a search will not be difficult. Indeed, random browsing along the shelves on which a collection of books is displayed has attractions of its own and has, as a contribution to intellectual stimulus, been in recent years itself the object of serious study. The librarian committed to the speedy location and production of books on request, must keep his materials in some order which will facilitate both his own administration and, where the shelves are open to public access, the convenience of the readers.

There are several basic principles for arranging books, not one of which is entirely acceptable to librarians or users, and it is customary for libraries to be arranged in those orders which most suit the type of materials involved, the use which will be made of these materials, the accommodation at the disposal of the library and, in particular instances, the possibility of future growth of the collection. Thus libraries directed to popular reading allow much more space in which people can circulate than do libraries concerned with storage and preservation, and which are, consequently, not open to public access. Hardly any library can display to the readers all its resources, and must in consequence provide some form of compact storage (see chapter 5); other libraries may have to devise elaborate security precautions such as strong rooms to safeguard rare, fragile or precious items, and to create specially-controlled reading conditions. Industrial libraries, in particular, frequently need to house confidential materials to which access is strictly limited to certain personnel. These factors all cause modifications to the general arrangement prevailing in the library and, with other local considerations, it soon becomes clear that the librarian is here faced with a decision which has fundamental bearing on almost all his administration. The basic principles from which all other variations arise are:

Chapter 10

THE LENDING LIBRARY

Leonard White

DAILY ROUTINES

Loans: The issuing and discharging processes in the lending library are so fundamental to its organisation that the daily routines will be radically affected by the type of issue system employed.

The development of transaction-recording methods has undergone a major revolution in the past two decades, and the impact of these changes has been reflected in the planning, management and staffing of the lending library. In order to appreciate fully the significance of the innovations, it is necessary to examine the major landmarks in the development of modern issue-systems and to focus on the reasons for their implementation. The method of recording loans will vary according to the clientele, the purpose of the library and the volume of transactions throughput.

In British public libraries, the standard issue method has for many years been the Browne system which, because of its simplicity of operation and its flexibility, still continues to be used in the majority of the smaller public library service-points in this country.

THE BROWNE SYSTEM

Reader-identification: the reader is issued with a ticket made in the form of a pocket, one ticket for each book up to the limit he will be permitted to borrow. Details of the reader's name and address are recorded on each ticket.

Book-preparation: a book-card with book identification details is located in a blank pocket inside the book cover and these details are duplicated on a date-label inside the book.

Issue: the book-card is extracted and inserted into the reader's ticket to form the charge, the date-label is stamped and the charge filed in an issue tray behind the date due for return.

Chapter 11

THE REFERENCE LIBRARY

Donald E Davinson

The reference department within a public library has two principal functions. It is firstly a collection of literature maintained wholly, or chiefly, for use on the library premises by people wishing to pursue specific study or research, secure in the knowledge that, as distinct from the home-reading (ie lending) library, the material that they require will always be available to them when required. This holds true even when, as in some recently designed libraries, reference and lending library stocks are shelved within the same room. The distinction between the purely reference stock and that which may be borrowed appears to present few problems. Secondly the reference department is designed as a collection to satisfy the needs of enquirers seeking specific factual items of information.

Sometimes called the 'quick reference service', this function can be effectively exercised in any library. In the largest systems the service may become a separate Current Affairs Information Department embracing all aspects of comtemporary life, but in the smaller units, resources will probably confine the potential service to the provision of local directory information, factual data from general encyclopedias and transport time-tables. The telephone may be used to bring in the resources of the central reference library, or perhaps give access to sources of information outside the library system.

Many public library services in the UK began as purely reference services, adding home-reading facilities later to their services. The reference library houses such materials as bibliographies, encyclopedias, dictionaries, directories (all both general and specific in coverage), as well as monographs, treatises and textbooks on a variety of subjects. In the larger reference libraries, a considerable proportion of the stock will, indeed, duplicate material provided for home-reading in the lending libraries. The largest public reference libraries are often sub-divided into subject-collections--business, science/technology, local history, art

Chapter 12

CHILDREN'S LIBRARIES

Margaret R Marshall

Even if the purposes and functions of public libraries are generally accepted, those for the children's sections are rarely specified. The Bullock Report sees two of the overall objectives of library service to children through school or public library as the improvement of verbal, visual and aural language, and the creation of a society literate and able to communicate. These suggest the objectives of service to children as the satisfaction of children's reading needs for pleasure and information; participation in the educational process directly by providing books which inform and by activities which further this process; the satisfaction of the requirements adults make for provision to children, by means of service to schools and other organisations and by outreach to children.

This brings the librarian round full circle to participation in the creation of the literate population, 'able to derive pleasure from and contribute towards communication'. (1) Add to this the achievement of pleasure through reading and the setting of a pattern for adult reading, and there develops the need to provide for the child who wants something to read; who needs a specific book or piece of information; for the parent needing material for the child and for his own related purposes; for the teacher requiring material for teaching purposes with children and to supplement school-owned stock; for the playgroup leader, the children's clinics, special schools, hospitals, youth clubs, penal institutions, housing estate centres and the general community.

The role of the children's librarian is thus multi-faceted.

1 An active planner with other agencies concerned with children's welfare, such as education-authority officers, advisers and teachers, social workers, child-guidance staff and hospital staff.

2 An organiser of a service, involving purchase, acquisition, supply and organisation of stock, book and non-book, to service points such as central, branch, mobile, school, hospital libraries; organising, too, the

Chapter 13

HANDICAPPED READERS

William J Martin

Handicap comes in a variety of forms and with varying incidence of severity. The senses of touch, sight or hearing can all be affected, as can the ability either to move around or to use individual limbs. In a considerable number of cases the same person can suffer from more than one handicap. Society tends to categorise these people either as 'the handicapped', or into such groupings as the blind, the deaf or the mentally retarded. All such categories are to an extent dangerous generalisations, reflecting an erroneous tendency to see handicapped people as an amorphous group, whereas in reality their handicap can be the single factor that connects them. Moreover, even when someone is indeed severely disabled and confined to a wheelchair, this need not necessarily prevent him or her from doing a job of work, especially one where there is little demand for mobility. It is, however, a failure to realise such seemingly obvious facts that leads frequently to the exclusion of handicapped people from everyday social activity, and from the use of services to which as citizens they are entitled, including the library service.

THE PARTIALLY-SIGHTED

In its efforts to place handicapped people into convenient categories, society quite often overlooks the 'in-between' groups, people such as the partially-sighted, who are neither blind nor blessed with normal vision. There are many ways of assessing partial sight, and each country seems to prefer its own approach. In the United States, for instance, visual acuity for normal sight, that is clarity, would be set at 20/20. This means that letters of a certain size can be seen by the average person at a distance of 20 feet. Using this approach, partially sighted vision is commonly referred to as 20/70 to 20/100 vision, which means that at a 20-foot distance, the individual can see what the average person sees within 70-100-foot distance. (1)

Chapter 14

THE SPECIAL LIBRARY

K G B Bakewell

A special library is one which serves a particular group of people, such as the employees of a firm or government department, or the staff and members of a professional or research organisation. Such a library deals essentially in *information*. It is not true, as some writers suggest, that books do not matter in a special library; it *is* true that they may be less important than material like research reports, pamphlets, periodical articles, news-cuttings, trade-literature and even letters, which may be regarded as 'ephemeral' in the public or academic library.

The essential purpose of the special library is to provide information which will assist its parent organisation–ie to help an industrial firm to make a profit for the well-being of its employees, its shareholders and (one hopes) the public at large, or to assist a professional body to cater for the needs of its members. To do this adequately the library should hold a reasonably high position in the organisation structure, so that it knows the organisation's policies and interests. It should also serve the *whole* organisation: many industrial libraries are attached to research departments, with the result that they become identified with the research and development staff, and their potential for helping commercial, managerial and administrative personnel may be overlooked. In fact, the pressure on many companies these days to innovate and diversify may mean that there needs to be greater rather than less emphasis on marketing research information.

All librarians should be aware of modern management techniques, but this is doubly important for the special librarian–or manager of the special library and information service–if only to enable him to hold his own with managers in other departments. Techniques like 'management by objectives' (fixing mutually agreed objectives and systematically removing obstacles to the achievement of these objectives), 'management by exception' (the issuing of precise instructions for the general running of the department with only exceptional cases being

PART FOUR

Libraries and librarians

INTRODUCTION

R Northwood Lock

The thoughtful librarian, having a responsibility to care for the physical media by which much knowledge and culture are made available, and through which exchange of information is effected in the world today, has need to make a correct estimate of his true position in society—whether he be merely an agent for other specialised interests, with little or no independent function beyond supplying certain routine mechanical processes, or a positive contributor to a community, who is able and willing not only to comprehend the needs of his fellows in a great variety of intellectual activities, but to be able to give positive leadership through his own abilities and carefully-exploited professional skills.

That, at least, is the choice of image which the general public and users of most institutional libraries will have in their minds. They will seldom, if ever, know of the very considerable administrative and managerial skill that supports a large library system and, as there is frequently among individuals a generalised resentment of what is to them unknown or unexplained, much friction can quite unwittingly be generated by mutual misunderstanding.

Essentially, the librarian should, from the most junior to the most senior, fill the role of a person who knows about the sources of information—though the term has much wider connotations that formerly—but he may also enter into other activities which are perhaps to be regarded as peripheral, that is, the custody of art collections, or museums, or, in a more personal capacity, as the leader or support of local societies, usually artistic or dramatic, but always with cultural or educational intent. This extension of function is generally accepted, and it may safely be assumed that the librarian (and particularly the public librarian) should no longer confine his interests to the selection and distribution of books and journals, though this may remain the principal part of his responsibility. Nevertheless, he will certainly find that one of the less obvious consequences of the size of modern public library

authorities is a steady pressure to transform him into a new social figure, who is at some considerable remove from the books and readers which are the purpose of his organisation.

In short, the librarian is today confronted with that most ancient of intellectual dilemmas—how to reconcile the need to explore ever more specialist areas of subjects more minutely, with the need to cultivate a total vision of the purpose and relevance of all those activities which should combine to ensure that libraries work for the good of society.

It is a conflict which arose in ancient Greece as soon as experimental science began to compete with purely intellectual speculation, and it has been noticeable within the library profession in modern times from the moment when it became apparent that mechanised procedures could not only replace but vastly improve upon manual operations in libraries. As a result, it becomes increasingly hard to justify human labour and human judgement at many stages, instead of impersonal machine-processing. It is then that the librarian must draw what strength he can from his intellectual concept of the library service and do everything possible to exploit or even by-pass the machine to the advantage of the service and the user.

A new edge has been given to the old distinction between 'generalist' and 'specialist' librarian (sometimes rephrased as between 'bookman' and 'administrator'). The assumption could be that it is impossible for one man to possess the ability to balance a whole range of technical operations in his mind, yet still retain vigour to ensure that the range is no more than is necessary to support, rather than dominate, the book service.

That delegation of duties and responsibilities to specialist teams of staff is essential has been adequately argued already in this book, but in chapters concerned with practice, little could be said of purpose, save in general terms. Yet, in the contemporary flux of advanced electronic technology and vastly enhanced general library provision, it is strange to find so little authoritative speculation about what it is all designed to achieve. The generalisations of librarians of the pre-electronic age are frequently inspirational and informative, but it is now appropriate for a new rationale of librarianship to come to be formulated. A fruitful start might be made by ceasing to regard problems of library administration (from book-selection to staff-management) solely as exercises in pursuit of some imaginary standard of absolute efficiency, and by placing emphasis instead on yardsticks of reader-satisfaction.

What are the interactions between the professional librarian and the user? Clearly, these depend upon the type of library and the general nature of its use. Some libraries will find their readers need little assistance to use the literature available, but are more concerned to have staff available with bibliographical expertise to suggest further resources. Other libraries may find readers apparently quite unable to choose books, even from inviting displays on the shelves. The librarian would surely want to know the extent of either extreme, but little is in fact known about success and failure rates among readers.

Much is made of the problem of approaching the reader who is clearly in difficulties, and emphasis is given to the genuinely complex situation caused by the inability (and sometimes unwillingness) of the reader to formulate precisely what he does want. It does seem that open-access subject-classified libraries have not entirely fulfilled their expectation of representing systems in which no reader had any difficulty in following subject-arrangement on clearly-marked shelves, or in working through the elaborate card-catalogue entries. The failure to accomplish this great step forward may have been due to the increased involvement of staff with their routines–classification, cataloguing, and the numerous other clerical operations. An older institution, the 'indicator' closed-access library with its minimal staff-reader contact, was replaced by another institution which is perhaps more awesome to the new reader in its display of competence and general efficiency. But in the process, the opportunity for free and easy talks about books between would-be reader and staff was missed; it now seems to be arising again in the new informally-designed public libraries, where much routine work is taken over by machines and staff are free to circulate more among their readers. It is no use advocating policies which seek to integrate the library service fully with the community if the two sides, staff and public, do not have opportunity for reasonably prolonged interchanges of ideas.

The librarian has a fine part to play in the life of the community–he is no longer tainted with the Victorian image of an introverted, myopic personality who failed to make good elsewhere. He can demonstrate interests and knowledge not confined to any one of the arts, the humanities or the technologies. What must, however, raise him above the competent clerk, the office manager or the social worker, is the vision he should have of the world of the mind in all its variety, and of his own place in opening the ways for others to share its resources to the fullest advantage, each according to his abilities and needs.

Chapter 15

LIBRARY COOPERATION

Ross Bourne and Peter Smith

Cooperation between libraries and librarians is a deeply rooted concept in librarianship. Recognition of the limitations of individual library resources, the desire to improve the availability of and access to materials, attempts to rationalise and utilise available resources to optimum effect, and the formulation of common and desired standards for library practice has led to the development, at local, national and international levels of intra-institutional and inter-personal formal and informal modes of cooperation which touch upon virtually every aspect of librarianship. This chapter does not attempt to trace the history of library cooperation, nor does it claim to be exhaustive; it outlines the different forms of library cooperation and illustrates each form with examples from different parts of the world.

INTER-LIBRARY LENDING

For many people, inter-library lending is synonymous with library cooperation. The ability to satisfy readers with requirements outside the stocks of an individual library or library system has led to the development of formalised schemes which fall into the following broad categories:

1 Local, regional or national centres with union catalogues of libraries' holdings.

2 A central store of books 'dedicated', ie the sole function, to supplying books on demand to other libraries.

3 Direct inter-library lending, ie lending between libraries without reference to a regional or national centre. This can be achieved by the production and circulation of finding lists of other libraries' holdings.

In Britain we see examples of all three of these categories. For the purpose of inter-library lending England is divided into seven regions, each with its own regional bureau, while Scotland and Wales each form

Chapter 16

PUBLICITY AND PROMOTION

Frederick Hallworth

A gentle charge is sometimes directed towards librarians by others (and sometimes by librarians towards themselves), accusing them of aiming ideally to gather everything on the subject, place it neatly and in perfect order within a building providing optimum storage conditions, then lock the door and throw away the key.

This was probably more frequent in the past than in present days, but within the words particular attitudes are displayed, mostly of an academic nature. After all, considerable bibliographic, acquisition, classifying and cataloguing skills are required, care and preservation are always legitimate and necessary aims (and in some areas of librarianship their importance can be over-rising). But people come first, even if encouragement to 'use' material does conflict with the need to preserve for use.

Hence the extent to which librarians have sought to encourage use has varied. Often in the past, and still even today, some order their buildings, stock and staff and then wait for potential users to arrive, relying for publicity and promotion of the service upon the personal recommendations of satisfied users who have been impressed by intelligent staff, well-ordered and guided stock, aided possibly by lists and bibliographies and an occasional display of books illustrating some topic or subject.

THE LIBRARY AS A CULTURAL CENTRE

W R Maidment (5) plarises the attitudes of modern librarians thus: 'A library should be a cultural centre whose primary function is to render a book service, but whose activities extend to all the other media. For others, the library is the part of a cultural centre which is concerned with books.' He points out that the United Kingdom government has set up a Libraries & Arts branch within the Department of Education and Science.

Chapter 17

PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Ronald J Edwards

For all practical purposes, formal education and training for librarianship may be considered to have begun in the late nineteenth century, a period marked by a rapid growth in the number of libraries.

While these libraries were still small and their methods and techniques fairly simple, it was possible for chief librarians—who were themselves self-taught—to instruct their assistants in the basic skills. In Britain, the normal preparation for professional competency was some form of informal apprenticeship, although a number of libraries actually bound such staff to them for periods of up to five years. Even in the United States of America, where the first library school was opened as early as 1887, a number of libraries used the apprentice system to teach the 'craft' to new staff.

However, the rapid increase in the size of library staffs and the use of more complex methods soon made it impossible for a chief librarian to take all professional decisions himself, or personally to ensure that all his staff were schooled in his methods. Ambitious young librarians started moving from one library to another in search of rapid promotion, and it became obvious that competence in the methods of one library was no substitute for some nationally-recognised standard of proficiency. Eventually, in 1885, the Library Association held its first examination, and while there were very few candidates in the early years, the basic pattern for professional education had been set.

This pattern has only gradually changed over the years. Initially, education was seen as a mere extension of practical training, and examination questions tested either a knowledge of basic routines or a capacity to memorise lists of authors and titles. The only change of major significance before the second world war was the imposition of the matriculation requirement of 1924, after which time all entrants to the examinations had to prove that they had reached a basic level of formal education. The other potentially major development, the opening of

Chapter 18

STAFF ORGANISATION

Ronald J Edwards

Patterns of staff organisation in libraries have changed radically over the last few years, and a wide range of methods and styles of staffing now exists. This development to some extent reflects a general revolution in personnel management, but it also stems from a new approach to the problem of using the full talents of the library staff in the service of its readers.

The chief librarian has always been concerned to deploy and use his staff to the maximum effect, for libraries are labour-intensive organisations, which commonly spend around 50% of their total budgets on staff salaries and related expenses. This concern for the effective use of staff has remained constant, but the methods have changed and are still changing. Before we can understand the directions in which change is leading it is necessary to consider the role of the chief librarian, his relationship to the rest of the staff and the way these have developed and affected staff organisation generally.

THE ROLE OF THE CHIEF LIBRARIAN

Libraries normally exist as 'service' institutions; that is, they provide a service to a parent organisation or community, and do not exist in their own right. Consequently they tend to be part of a larger organisation, be it local authority, academic institution, government department or industrial firm, and the librarian is subject to a number of pressures and constraints. He may wish to develop the service in one way, while senior members of his staff have different priorities, and his committee still others. The parent body may desire yet another different approach, perhaps on political grounds, or because they are conscious of factors outside the librarian's knowledge. Finally, the financial controllers of the organisation, or the central government department directly concerned, may decide that there are no funds for expansion, however worthy, and indeed may demand a reduction in overall expenditure and a consequent contraction of library services.

Chapter 19

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS AND OTHER INTERESTED BODIES

K C Harrison

Library associations are of many different kinds. They can be international, national, regional, state, or they can be even more limited by being directed to one particular area of activity, such as music or medical libraries.

Since the American Library Association was founded in 1876, closely followed in 1877 by The Library Association (UK), there has been a steady growth in the formation of such bodies throughout the world. At first this expansion was slow, but in recent years it has accelerated remarkably. The current issue of the *Library Association year book* records over 140 library and bibliographical associations throughout the world, and it is acknowledged that this is an incomplete list since it is based on the return of questionnaires, and it is also known that new organisations are being formed all the time.

Why, people may wonder, it is necessary to have such a proliferation of library associations? They may be assured, however, that such organisations would not be started, and they would certainly not continue in existence, if there was not a definite need for them. It is difficult to lay down the purposes and functions of a library association, because of the variations in scope and coverage already mentioned, but as far as national library associations are concerned, their main objectives can be summarised. These are that a library association should exist to unite librarians through the holding of meetings and conferences; to promote the better administration and development of libraries; to enhance the status and qualifications of librarians; to promote legislation necessary for the furtherance of libraries; to encourage bibliographical study and research; to publish material designed to be of service to the profession; to make representations to government and other outside bodies, and to give advice on library affairs; possibly to hold examinations, award qualifications, and maintain a professional register of qualified librarians; and, finally, to engage in such other

Chapter 20

PROFESSIONAL LITERATURE: AN APPRECIATION

R Northwood Lock

There is no reason to suppose that the reading habits of librarians differ substantially from those of their people except insofar as there is perhaps a stronger tendency to more purposive choice, a fuller sense of cultural values and an overall tendency towards the arts rather than the sciences or technologies. What librarians do have to a rather more obvious degree than many professional people is a very definite interest in the literature about the art and practice of their chosen career.

Being implicitly readers with wide interests, able and willing to follow those interests through the available literature and, additionally, being predisposed to relate almost any human activity to libraries, librarians have some difficulty in deciding which literature is basic to their needs. Definition becomes more the exclusion of categories than a positive description of what should be included.

Professional literature is that which is read to enhance knowledge and skill in the practice of an employment, as contrasted with instruction manuals which explain the manipulation of tools or apparatus. There will most probably be an element of theoretical generalisation from which fundamental principles governing various activities may be derived; the historical growth of the profession will be recounted to throw light on the conditions which govern the present situation; but within all this there will be a core of topics common to all practitioners at some stage in their careers (and, perhaps, needed occasionally at any stage), as well as specialities which arise from individual departmental responsibilities or from the encouragement of personal talents.

Thus, in the art and science of library practice, the core subjects centre round the administration of libraries of all types (with emphasis on techniques and routine practices which are enlarged upon as part of in-service training); on book-selection; cataloguing and classification; the study of reading patterns; and the social background of libraries. To this core should be added theoretical considerations of the nature

Index