LIBRARIES AND EDUCATION

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Sweden," read before the St. Louis conference of the American Library Association, 1904, writes that books are lent in the most liberal way between Swedish libraries. The arrangement is entirely voluntary, and works well. By means of the Union Swedish "Accessions-Katalog," everybody can find out in what library a desired book is to be had, and within a couple of days he can have it. Demands from private scholars all over the country, where there is no great library to act as an intermediary, are met with the same liberality. MSS. and books of a special character are sometimes lent to foreign libraries and scholars. Dr. Andersson also mentions that the University libraries lend out to professors and students almost any number of books, and even to members of the public, who come for the purpose of research.

Schools and Libraries.

At the present time the Education Department is co-ordinating the primary and secondary (including technical) branches of education under a central administration, combined with some form of local autonomy adapted to the specific needs of each district and type of school. This forward movement makes a distinct advance in educational policy. But public instruction is not a matter for officials merely; it is a national obligation, and demands the interest and support of representative citizens in all localities of the State. The provision for greater facilities in regard to advanced education in country districts, under the guidance of talented teachers, may help to prevent a too-early migration of young people to the metropolis, and enable them to acquire an intimate connection with the progress of their districts, and thus encourage increasing favour towards decentralization. The extension of technical and agricultural colleges, suitable to their localities, has appealed to a large number of students, and, together with the continuation and high schools, they will undoubtedly create several
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comparatively large groups of students in training in inland centres.

Assuming that the Department is capable of meeting most of the demands which this extension of policy necessitates, still, complete as the system appears to be, it is lacking in one essential particular. The various free libraries in the State are not associated with this advance in public instruction, and their relation to our school system is a problem of pressing importance to-day. The time appears opportune to co-ordinate library development in Victoria with educational progress.* In elaborating schemes for State instruction in the arts and sciences, the libraries should not be neglected. Up till now they have had little or no direct bearing upon the educational movements around them. They do, in fact, perform some social functions which appear to be very popular, but as spheres of inculcating real desire for learning and book-culture, as well as supplementing the work of the schools, they are decidedly lacking. The local library should be a

*S. Sadler, Continuation Schools in England and Elsewhere, 2nd ed., 1906, p. 81 (referring to slow progress of public libraries in Great Britain prior to the Education Act 1870): "But the trend of opinion in favour of library extension was strengthened by the social and intellectual change gradually brought about by the operation of the Elementary Education Acts." Dr. Millau, in his illuminative article on Libraries (Die Kultur der Gegenwart, Teil 1, Abt. i., p. 581), makes a similar reference to Prussia: "Everybody knows how much of the powerful impetus, which German library economy has received during the past ten years, is to be traced to the initiative of the Prussian educational authorities."

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factor in the progress of the scholar from form to form in school, and he should be exhorted to draw upon its resources in an intelligent manner. The little more he would see in a municipal library, as compared with the smaller collection of books at school, would rouse further interest, and stimulate eagerness for increased facilities of reference.

The growing numbers of young readers, who at present obtain little or no guidance as to the proper handling of books and their selection for study, calls for an immediate recognition of their existence by the libraries of the State. In addition to satisfying their needs as readers, there is the advantage of developing the sense of civic responsibility to be gained from the use and loan of books from the local library. The young student would learn to protect them from abuse, and attach some importance to his position as a borrower; and thus from this early association with public libraries he would gather about himself not only the restraints of culture, but also receive an impetus to value his approaching citizenship, and come to discharge its duties with consideration and discernment. In many places libraries have proved their worth as institutions cultivating in the children the knowledge of civic duties and privileges.

This association of libraries, whether school or public, with the young, emphasizes the fact that it is not sufficient that librarians alone should have a knowledge of library methods; it is also
of the greatest importance that teachers should possess a general acquaintance with the management of libraries, the use of reference books, and guidance in the selection of works for study and general reading. The enormous output of publications from year to year, in all branches of human knowledge, makes it incumbent upon educational authorities to provide some form of training for pupils and teachers in this respect. It is not to be expected that every young scholar can, with advantage, pick up this information for himself, any more than he can do so in other spheres of learning: the matter requires some special training and guidance.

In 1876, Mr. Charles Francis Adams drew attention to the want of co-operation between libraries and schools in the United States. In an address to the teachers at Quincy, he stated that though they stood side by side there was no bridge between them. A first effort to construct a connecting link was put forth by the library and school authorities of Worcester, Massachusetts, in 1879.* It was arranged that the teachers and pupils should visit the library, and that books should be delivered to teachers for reading in the schools.

From this small beginning, after many halting advances, public libraries have increasingly in-


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terested themselves in schools, either by establishing branch libraries in school buildings, or by lending books through the agency of the travelling libraries system, and at the same time by providing experienced children's librarians to visit the schools and enlighten the children in the proper use and purpose of the libraries.

Through the influence of the librarians, the teachers in many normal colleges in other lands are receiving instruction in library practice, so that they may better assist young pupils in improved methods of reading, particularly in connection with the library service. (This has been previously referred to in some detail, and need not be further dealt with here.) But it may be mentioned that the steady growth of an intimate connection between schools and libraries, as well as of a desire for the general extension of library facilities throughout the rural and less-populated centres of the several States of America, brought about the foundation of State library commissions, partly State-aided and partly voluntary in character, which undertook the direction and supervision and promotion of libraries. The first commission* of this kind was formed in Massachusetts in 1891, and the system has developed to such proportions that almost all the States have library associations or commissions, acting in several instances, either with, or under, the

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direction of the education departments. They control or advise the management and distribution of travelling libraries to rural schools and villages, factories, stores, &c., and in some places they appoint library organizers to visit the libraries under their supervision, and give guidance and help in the selection, purchase and lending out of books.

This matter of inspection of libraries has not been lost sight of by the educational authorities themselves, who, in many cases, appoint officials to organize and inspect the school libraries under their control, and to render them efficient, in every possible way, as stepping-stones towards an early familiarity with the larger collections in public libraries.

Many library authorities prefer the system of official inspection by the State rather than leave the matter in the hands of voluntary commissions. Attached to the Education Department of the Province of Ontario, Canada, there is an office of Chief Inspector of Public Libraries.* Inspector Nursey, in his Report† for 1910, shows that the provincial Government generously subsidizes the libraries, upon a non-fiction basis, up to £40, defrays 50 per cent. of the cost of cataloguing.


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materials, and provides an itinerant expert cataloguer, who gives free instruction to the local librarians. The rural libraries also obtain the free services of a departmental bookbinder. Where no night classes are held in any district, the local library is endowed with technical text-books. The Library Association of Ontario* also receives a State grant, and its Bulletin and Proceedings are printed by the Education Department. "Institutes" or conferences of librarians are held at various centres of the province, and the inspector attends these gatherings. The Government partly defrays the expenses of the "institutes."

It may be worth while to consider briefly what may be done in Victoria in the direction of coordinating the work of schools and libraries. Roughly speaking, we may say that we have three grades of schools under the control of the State—(a) primary schools, (b) high schools and technical and agricultural colleges, and (c) training colleges for teachers. The public libraries in Victoria may be classified as follows:—(a) Public (State) Library, Melbourne; (b) public (municipal and free) libraries; (c) mechanics institutes (subscription) libraries. While the first is entirely under State control, the latter two are only partly so, and that, too, only in a small degree, to the extent of the subsidies annually granted by the State for the purchase of books.


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These two main divisions of education—schools and libraries—are under separate ministerial control. Whether this be necessary, or not, for political reasons, it is undoubtedly apparent that some definite form of co-ordination in policy and administration is required for the more efficient service of both to the community. Libraries should be developed throughout the States pari passu with schools and colleges. The promotion of increased facilities for education demands an increased use of books, suitable to the various grades of students; and books must be congregated in libraries for this purpose. The nature and scope of this extension of the libraries should be determined upon a co-operative basis.

First of all, let us look at the schools' requirements as regards libraries.*

1. Amongst primary schools there are necessary school (class) libraries for immediate use by children in the schools, comprising—

(a) Works of general reference,† such as encyclopedias, dictionaries, atlases, pictures, &c.

(b) Books of standard value, both for reference and loan purposes, as well as specially graded collections of children's books.*

Such libraries are most necessary where schools are not situated in the vicinity of free libraries or mechanics' institutes; but none the less, the larger schools in populous districts undoubtedly require their immediate formation, if not already established. In fact, school buildings might well be fitted up with a library-room, and appliances for the care and use of books.†

2. In high schools and technical colleges (a) and (b) are necessary requirements, but on a more elaborate scale, particular attention being given to books extending the list of general textbooks, with a view to encouraging wider studies and research.† The pupils might also be induced

* Cf. M. J. Moses, Children's Books and Reading, N.Y., 1897, pp. 183, 184, where he quotes from a private letter of Mr. C. G. Leland, Superintendent of the Bureau of Libraries of the New York Board of Education:—"As a continual protest against this materialistic tendency, the school library takes its position and marshals its books. Its first purpose is to create a love for good literature and beautiful pictures as soon as the child has mastered the mechanics of reading; its ultimate aim is culture."

† I have not referred to Sunday-school libraries in this volume, but the remarks on school libraries will apply to them; and there is unquestionable need for their reform. Cf. Barwick Sayers, Children's Library, pp. 21-24, and bibliography, pp. 206-7.

† Cf. C. Norwood and A. H. Hope, Higher Education of Boys in England, Lond., 1909, for an excellent chapter on school libraries, pp. 431-436:—‘‘If we are right in assuming that one of the chief objects of education is to fit a boy to use his leisure wisely . . . it is certain that one of the best instruments the school possesses to accomplish this end is its library” (p. 461). Also Easton

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† Cf. Chancellor, American Schools, 1905, p. 376, for classified contents of a good school (American) reference library.
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to undertake some of the duties of the librarian, and thus gradually learn the importance of carefully handling, preserving, and arranging the books.

3. In the training colleges there might be established a model teachers' library in addition to the general collection for reference and lending,* and arrangements should be made for lectures upon library science and bibliographical methods, in their more particular bearing upon educational training and establishments. As the work may be easily carried on in connection with literary and historical studies, it would not require extensive changes in the curricula. Where colleges are situated in the neighbourhood of the public library, close co-operation should be instituted between the training students, teachers, and the librarians, and regular visits of educationists made to the libraries. In addition, special facilities might be granted to teachers in the borrowing of books, and in the use of the library generally. And further, where arrangements can be made, groups of scholars might visit the more important collections at suitable times.

Cahen for school libraries in France, in Sadler's Continuation Schools in England, 2nd ed., Manchester, 1908, pp. 584-56. The libraries of our large public schools might be made more effective in the same direction.

* Cf. Farrington, French Secondary Schools, Lond., 1910, p. 361, refers to the "highest-prized privileges of a normal student," being "a collection of some 200,000 books among which he can browse to his heart's desire."

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in order to become acquainted with, and at home in, a large public library.

On the side of the libraries, as regards their connection with schools, there are some features which might be mentioned. The more efficient establishment and control of mechanics institutes libraries in country districts are urgently needed, particularly with reference to the purchase and lending of books, useful for children and other local services. Librarians and teachers should be encouraged to cooperate in extending these library facilities for children, and, where possible, a special room might be set apart for young readers, and, if this be inconvenient, a special section of the library may be fitted up for the purpose. The municipal free libraries should elaborate on these features, and develop in the children a general idea of responsibility for the maintenance of public institutions, by means of illustrated lectures, reading circles, &c. While it seems better to foster the establishment of children's rooms in connection with the local municipal libraries, still, where there exists a State library, it might, with advantage, be regarded as an actual part of the educational service of the State, and embrace a school department in connection with its lending and travelling branches. By this means there is avoided any duplication of machinery* in meeting the library

* As an instance, the Brooklyn Public Library, finding
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requirements of schools and colleges belonging to the State educational system. Arrangements might be made through this department to grant special facilities to teachers for borrowing books, and to provide beforehand for the special courses they are compelled to undertake from year to year. The travelling libraries section would be utilized to aid in the equipment of children's libraries in schools, arranging for their periodical exchange and distribution. While referring to travelling libraries, it might be mentioned here that similar travelling library facilities might be extended to various shelters, factories, camps, fire-stations, benevolent institutions, newsboys' societies, &c.*

As regards the Public Library of Victoria, it is readily recognized that, up till now, it has had a double function to perform. It has striven to pro-

that the work of the Education Board was overlapping the library’s services, recently sought for a conference to effect co-operation.—From Annual Report, 1911, p. 37. See also important report, entitled Co-operation between the Public Schools and the Public Libraries of Greater New York, signed by the librarians of the New York, Brooklyn, and Queen's Borough Libraries, recommending that the Board of Education use the public library systems of Greater New York to supplement its own work.—Library Journal, July, 1912, pp. 383-4.

* Cf. University of the State of New York, Home Education Department, Bull. 40, 1901, Travelling Libraries. It is interesting to note itinerant libraries were in operation in the East Lothians in 1915, under the direction of Samuel Brown, of Haddington (p. 45). Victoria was one of the earliest countries to institute the modern system, but is now far behind other countries in development. For an account of Samuel Brown, see also Library World, April, 1912, pp. 301-03.

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vide both for the general reader and the scholar, and probably to their combined dissatisfaction. But the time must come, when the Public Library will eventually need some relief from this double strain, and the problem of adequately equipped decentralized libraries, in the larger centres of the State, will then become a matter of pressing importance. It would be a wise move to anticipate such a development and provide for some co-ordinate form of control in their establishment. Instead of permitting public libraries to grow up in the State in a haphazard manner, having no connection with one another, and learning little or nothing of one another’s needs and advantages, as well as losing all the benefits of co-operation and expert direction, it would undoubtedly be advisable to seek Government action and legislation for the appointment of a State Library Board or Commission* to control, direct, and supervise generally the establishment, development, and advancement of libraries, and to institute a library policy for the whole State. Such a board or commission should be representative of the various

* A similar commission was proposed by Mr. H. C. L. Anderson, of the New South Wales Public Library, in 1902. See his paper, Public Libraries and the Government Subsidy.—Library Association of Australasia, Trans. and Proc., 1902, p. 13.

The New Zealand Library Association passed a resolution to the same effect at its third annual meeting, 1912.—Public Libraries, July, 1912, p. 269.

sectional bodies controlling the libraries, as well as of educational institutions, and include amongst its functions (in addition to the general objects already mentioned)—

(a) Preparing reading lists suitable for small libraries, and lists particularly bearing upon the yearly output of good and elevating books for children, as is done elsewhere.

(b) Aiding and directing library instruction generally, and particularly assisting the Education Department in this respect.

(c) Enabling students in country districts to obtain necessary works for temporary use in the pursuit of their studies.

(d) Assisting other societies, such as the Victoria League, which undertake the distribution of literature to country districts.

(e) Allocating Government subsidies for library purposes, and the appointing a supervisor to direct the local librarians in the judicious expenditure of such funds.

(f) Encouraging the training of all librarians in library economy, and instituting local centres for occasional lectures, exhibitions, &c., bearing on their work.

These are just a few general statements of policy, which may be considerably elaborated in detail, if necessary. Questions of finance and administrative control are not dealt with here, as they would require much fuller treatment, and would absorb much time and labour in gathering information concerning the nature and distribution of libraries and schools throughout the State, and also concerning the centres they would be called on to serve. Work of this sort might be undertaken by a small committee, empowered with the necessary authority to make investigations.