PUBLIC LIBRARY EXTENSION

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Unesco has a special responsibility for the development of those educational, scientific and cultural services which help to bridge the gap between the specialists and the ordinary citizens of the world. There is always a danger that in any period when great advancements are being made in science and learning the intellectuals may be out of touch with the people and the people ignorant of what their cultural leaders are doing. Of the many types of service which civilized man has designed to bridge this gap there are few which have such wide possibilities and such need for development as the various services contributed by public libraries. No one who has learned to read beyond the level of bare literacy and who wishes to play his full part in the life of his community can possibly keep in touch with what is happening elsewhere in the world, with what, even, is happening at his doorstep, without recourse to books and periodicals, but few people in the world can buy all the books they need for their own personal use. Therefore Unesco cannot hesitate to do all in its power to see that there are more public libraries and that wherever they exist they are as good as possible.

Public libraries in their simplest function exist as storehouses of knowledge and of experience which are freely open to people of every class, race, religion and age; but in recent years public libraries, wherever they have been well developed, have accepted far wider responsibilities than those of passive storehouses. They have an active part to play in adult education, making use of new techniques of communication, such as radio, films, discussion groups and exhibitions, so that the people who use libraries may be helped to read wisely and well and may be led to pay critical attention to the significant problems of their place and time.

At present it is unfortunately true that there are few countries in the world where the full possibilities of public library work are understood and there are many parts of the world where public library services can as yet be hardly said to exist. These facts are well understood by Unesco and, therefore, following a successful summer school for public librarians which was held in England in 1948, we have undertaken the publication of a series of manuals to make the best possible experience in public library work widely known throughout the world. These manuals, of which four are being published in 1949, will deal
with some of the fundamental questions of library work: — training for librarianship, the role of the library in adult education and the extension of public library activity to meet the needs of scattered and rural populations and special groups in the community.

They have been written by librarians principally for librarians, because the professional workers in librarianship must carry the chief responsibility for the development of their services, but they have not been written so as to be exclusively of interest to librarians. Indeed, it is my hope that they will be read by government officials, educators and others with a responsibility for the provision of public library services and for the professional training of librarians. Public library progress depends largely upon the competence and vision of librarians, but substantial results can be obtained only if the librarians receive the support of the educational authorities and the legislative and financial authorities of their countries.

The authors of these manuals write freely as individuals expressing their own opinions. They have consulted the papers produced at the International Summer School and have received advice from Unesco, but not with the object of laying down Unesco rules for public librarianship. Certain principles of library service undoubtedly appear which may be universally acceptable, but, as several of the authors have pointed out, a living library service will be so closely keyed to the social, cultural and economic conditions of its region that there must be widely differing interpretations in practice. All this has been taken into account.

These manuals are practical demonstrations of international cooperation. They convey the authoritative opinions and good experience of a number of leading librarians to their colleagues and those who are concerned with the development of popular education and the growth of international understanding widely throughout the world.

JAIME TORRES BODET,
Director-General.
## CONTENTS

**INTRODUCTION** ................................................................. 1

**Part One.**  
*The Organization of National Public Library Services.*

- **CHAPTER I**  
  General Principles ................................................. 6
- **CHAPTER II**  
  Agencies for library service ..................................... 9
- **CHAPTER III**  
  Governmental and financial factors ............................. 20

**Part Two.**  
*Administrative Aspects of Library Extension.*

- **CHAPTER IV**  
  Service points .................................................... 32
- **CHAPTER V**  
  Bookstock .......................................................... 38
- **CHAPTER VI**  
  Centres and travelling libraries ................................ 45
- **CHAPTER VII**  
  Service to individuals ............................................ 59
- **CHAPTER VIII**  
  County library organization and methods .................... 63
- **CHAPTER IX**  
  State agencies and Co-operation ............................... 69
- **CHAPTER X**  
  Work with special types of reader ................................ 77

**Part Three.**  
*Incentives to Extension.*

- **CHAPTER XI**  
  Promotion of library extension .................................. 82

**Part Four.**  
*Library Extension Programmes.*

- **CHAPTER XII**  
  Principles of Library Extension .................................. 90
- **CHAPTER XIII**  
  An outline programme ............................................. 99
- **CHAPTER XIV**  
  Conclusion ......................................................... 103
- **APPENDIX**  
  Specifications of typical library vans .......................... 105
- **SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY** ........................................ 110
- **INDEX** ............................................................... 111
The words 'Public Library Extension' are understood differently in various countries. In one at least, they mean the extension of the normal work of the library (the provision of books, reference services, etc.) into other related and associated fields, such as the provision of lectures, exhibitions, film displays, musical and dramatic activities, etc., for children and adults.

In this book, however, a different field is covered, i.e. the extension of public library services so that they reach more and more people. This important task is considered from two main aspects: a) how best can schemes for nation-wide library services be planned and implemented and b) what are the practical problems to be overcome, especially in relation to library service to small communities and sparsely populated areas.

The first is largely a question of organization, of the relationship between the various governmental agencies, local, state and national, of legislation and control—it is primarily the business of government, of those responsible for the development of libraries as a public service. The second is more a matter of applied librarianship—of ways of doing the things made possible within the chosen framework of organization.

The ultimate objective is that in all the countries of the world all who want to do so may enjoy the benefits of adequate library services. The realization of this ideal will take longer in some countries than others—partly because some have a long start, partly because the full use of libraries, and of the books and other sources of information they exist to provide, can only result when certain standards of education and social circumstances have been generally attained by the population. Once basic standards have been achieved, however, libraries become potent factors in educational and social progress, and the higher the educational and social status of a community and its individual members, the more developed, more complex the economic and cultural environment, the more extensive and varied become the functions of library services.

praising 'local authorities' e.g. the states of the United States of America, the states of Australia, the provinces of Canada, South Africa, etc.

By a local authority is meant the governing body (and citizens) of any local unit of population which has authority in relation to local affairs—a city, town, county, parish, commune (in the French sense, not the Swiss).

For urban areas the word town is used, though in many countries the word 'city' may be the proper description. Here the word 'city' is only applied to the large urban area, the national or provincial metropolis, etc.
Consequently there is no one policy of public library extension capable of adoption everywhere now or in the near future. Each country must adopt the plan for development best related both to the present conditions of its book supply services and to the condition of its people. Nevertheless the essential purposes of public libraries are the same everywhere and the experience of the past shows clearly that there are systems of organization and administration, methods, techniques and programmes of development which are most likely to prove effective, economical and constructive. It is with these that we are here concerned. The scope and sequence of the discussion will be seen from the preceding table of contents. The author has tried not to be dogmatic; when, in his view, there is only one right course of action, he has said so and sought to justify his view, but as a rule basic patterns with alternatives and modifications are presented, the final choice being left to the dictate of circumstance. Moreover, though the author has been privileged to study the discussions at the Unesco School held in Manchester and London in 1948 and other material provided by colleagues in other countries he has deliberately refrained from direct reference to the library services of particular countries believing that mention of what is done in A or not done in B would inevitably result in implied praise or blame or individuous comparison which would serve no useful purpose.

Other pamphlets in this series deal with public library objectives and methods, with education for librarianship, and the adult education activities of public libraries, consequently apart from a brief summary of general principles sufficient only to sketch in the background, these matters will not be discussed here except in so far as they directly concern the problems of Public Library Extension.

DEFINITIONS

As the system of government (national, state and local) and the terminology of librarianship vary from nation to nation it is desirable that the meaning attached by the author to certain words and phrases should be clearly understood.

_Nation, national_—refer, obviously, to the whole of the sovereign state. _State_ is used to denote a large constituent part of the nation, an element in a commonwealth or federation, a 'province', etc. with a government controlling certain functions in relation to that
part of the country as a whole—a part of the 'nation' but itself comprising 'local authorities' e. g. the states of the United States of America, the states of Australia, the provinces of Canada, South Africa, etc.

By a local authority is meant the governing body (and citizens) of any local unit of population which has authority in relation to local affairs—a city, town, county, parish, commune (in the French sense—not the Swiss).

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PART ONE

THE ORGANIZATION OF NATIONAL PUBLIC
LIBRARY SERVICES
CHAPTER I

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

If a public library is to be effective, whether it serves a few people or many, four basic essential conditions must be observed. They are simple, almost obvious conditions but they have often been overlooked or neglected by those responsible for library development; the result has invariably been failure, more or less complete, to achieve the proper objectives of a library service. These conditions, however, cannot exist unless library services are properly organized. Consequently, as the process of library extension is largely one of developing that form of organization in which effective libraries can best operate in any particular country or region, these four conditions must be appreciated at the outset and always kept in mind.

We must recognize firstly, that the stock of books at every point from which library service is given must always be good enough to meet the needs of those for whom it is provided. These people are individuals; they may have many interests in common but most have their own particular requirements, arising from their work, social and cultural activities and interests, and suited to their abilities and experience. This variety of demand exists in a small as well as in a large community; it is something to encourage. Consequently it is not sufficient to provide those books which most people will be willing to read; if there are books that only one man needs they must be available.

Moreover, reading is a continuing process. People who use books for any purpose—recreation, vocation, study, personal development or any other—want to use them, with greater or less regularity and frequency, all their lives. This means that the library must in the course of time provide them with material for a lifetime. This has two aspects: a) that the stock must be kept up to date so as both to compass the changing needs of users and embrace everything new that is written, about new things or old, and b) that, though a reader may find most that he needs in a large library that
Centre in a housing project.
Centre in a country grocery store.
is adequately refreshed with new material, the reader who can use only a small service point—as must the great majority of people—can only be satisfied if its small stock is constantly and regularly changed. The small library—and it need not be very small for this to apply—that has to rely upon its own permanent stock must, even if it receives a reasonable supply of new books, sooner or later become useless and unused. Those books which appeal to any one reader must be few; that reader will soon read them all. He may for a while read books that he does not really want to read or which for him serve little purpose, but that is a poor end to high ambition.

There are tens of thousands of such pathetic examples of failure which could very easily have been avoided. These libraries no longer serve much useful purpose; they are not an incentive to library extension but an obstacle in the path of progress.

We must realize, also, that libraries should do more than meet existing needs. They should help to improve and extend them. They should, within their inevitable limits, be a demonstration of the wealth, range and variety of the world of books, and encourage people to use them. This they can never be if the book stock is either inadequate, static, and moribund or if it consists largely of those things which are of the widest appeal because most people have become accustomed to them. It must be remembered that the great majority of people—all, indeed, except those with access to the larger city libraries or the means to buy books from well-stocked bookshops—can learn about books only by seeing them in their local libraries. Consequently at even the smallest service points there must be some exhibition of the less obvious, less commonplace books. How this can be achieved we shall see.

Again, though good book stocks are essential they are not the whole library provision. On the one hand books must be properly serviced and exploited. This business of making books useful to people—the purpose of library extension—is one which calls for efficient organization and management and an understanding of books and of people. Those who look after libraries must therefore both understand the everyday routines and techniques of effective librarianship and appreciate the objectives and ideals of their calling. In other words trained and experienced staffing is necessary. In some departments and for some activities it is essential; some service points may have to rely upon untrained, perhaps voluntary, workers but these must always enjoy the help and guidance of professional librarians. There is as much to learn about librarianship as there
is about teaching, or engineering or any other specialized vocation. On the other hand—a quite distinct matter—a well developed library service provides not only actual books but information, some of it to be found in books by expert reference workers but much of it to be garnered from a great variety of other sources. Reference and information services no less than book supply services, possibly even more, require staffing and resources far beyond those possible in the small independent service point.

From the foregoing the four essential conditions to which we referred at the outset will be clear: However a public library service is provided and organized it must:

(I) enable all service points, excepting only the largest, to refresh and exchange most, or even all, of their book stocks when necessary and in such a way that they both meet existing needs and stimulate further library use;

(II) enable those particular books—any books, however specialized—required by any reader anywhere for his own special needs to be supplied;

(III) enable all libraries to be properly supervised and staffed by suitably experienced and qualified library worker; and

(IV) enable people everywhere, through their library services, to obtain all the information and guidance needed either to supplement the book service or to make it more effective.

There is a fifth condition to any successful programme of library extension—a matter to which we shall refer time and again—that all library services should be as good as it is possible to make them. There is no dictum more true than the words ‘nothing succeeds like success’. Inadequate libraries achieve little; good libraries can achieve almost anything. People will always use good libraries to the full because they find them useful. They will not use bad libraries because they are practically useless. People—and governments—will support those that are both useful and wanted; they have no cause to support those that have failure and uselessness written large on their record.
CHAPTER II
AGENCIES FOR LIBRARY SERVICE

DISTRIBUTION OF LIBRARY SERVICES

The organization of a library service is determined by the way people live—some in the great metropolises, some in the lonely places, some in the provincial cities, market towns and villages. In no two countries in the world, often in no two regions in the same country, are conditions the same. The balance of population between town and country, the size of the cities, their relationship with their environs, the densities of population and above all the distances between towns and even between the smallest communities vary so enormously that it would seem impossible to find any common factors. Yet they exist. Every country has its metropolis, every province or region its major city or cities, all of them not only large concentrations of population, but also centres of trade, industry and cultural activity for a large surrounding area, and centres of communication and distribution. To a diminishing extent this is true of the smaller cities and towns. Consequently whether in the most densely or the most sparsely populated areas there are urban centres, immense or tiny, to which people go from time to time for various reasons—to buy or to sell, to seek entertainment, to meet their fellows—and from which other goods and services are taken to them.

The distribution of library services must be planned on exactly the same basis as the distribution of any other kind of service. In the large cities one can buy practically everything and anything; some things must however be sold from shops as convenient as possible to the homes of the buyers; but the range of commodities available anywhere is dictated both by the needs and convenience of people and by means of communication. Thus, assuming standards of living to be the same, the inhabitants of a community on the outskirts of a city who may reasonably be expected to visit it frequently may accept locally a smaller range of commodities than a community of the same size which is far distant from a larger centre and which may itself be the only centre for those in smaller commu-
nities a long way off. The writer has himself found in the lonely parts of New Mexico or Western Australia stores with a wider range of goods than would be displayed in an English town that by the standards of those regions would be a large city. Everywhere some of the commodities available would be produced locally, others carried there, greater or less distances, by the normal routes and methods of distribution.

This pattern of commodity distribution applies equally to library services. Some materials must always be available wherever people live; but for full satisfaction some people at least will need other things and these they must either be able to get at the centre to which they have other reasons to resort or the things they need may be sent to them, often in large part from those same centres.

This matter has two important implications. On the one hand those concerned with library extension must not be obsessed by the apparent difficulty of the task. The present writer has often encountered this argument that it is not practicable to provide for those who are few and far apart, that library facilities must therefore be limited to the larger communities. To this there is only one rejoinder. If it is practicable to give these people their beer and their clothes, their tools and their sewing machines, the same machinery of distribution can be used with necessary modifications to give them their books. A properly balanced, effectively organized plan for library extension must take heed of the habits of people in relation to the different types of ‘population-centre’ and the methods of communication. In other words there must be a proper co-ordination of the country districts and the urban centres.

This essential condition has, however, been too often ignored where library services are concerned, with the result that they are too often provided by a large number of small, unrelated, independent units, and that the facilities of the town have been denied to the countryman who could easily use them.

In planning library extension we must, therefore:

a) make it possible for people to use any library services that they can and wish to use, e. g. the countryman those of his market town when he goes there, the resident in the suburb those of the city where he may shop, work, attend cinemas, etc.;

b) avoid duplication of provision by trying by separate machinery to give people, e. g. country or suburban dwellers, services they could get elsewhere;

c) make the best use of communications, e. g. by decentralizing distribution where this is practicable.
In addition all schemes for library extension must embrace the whole of the region concerned. There must be no omitted or excepted areas, no unserved pockets, no places which fall between two schemes of organization. This is not always easy to ensure, e. g. when there are two or more possible centres for any district.

A BASIC PATTERN

It may be useful now to consider in outline a useful basic pattern of library service for an area with the typical set up of a) large city with suburbs, b) smaller towns and townships, c) villages and smaller communities and isolated homesteads.

By methods to be discussed later, books would be taken to people in the third group c). They would also be able to use the library of their nearest town. This would serve also its own inhabitants with most of their needs but unless this town were fairly large its library should be able to replenish and refresh its stock with bulk loans from other libraries or from some central pool (as will be considered in due course) and material required to meet the special needs of individual readers should be obtainable from other sources. In the larger urban places there would be a central library offering the best possible stock to its own residents, those in surrounding suburbs and country districts and provided with branch libraries giving adequate service to the various districts and properly linked with the central organization.

This simple pattern will usually need considerable modification, especially when the largest area which can be treated as a co-ordinated whole and brought within the scope of any workable plan of distribution or administration is still so sparsely populated and financially insufficient that help from another source, e. g. state or nation, is needed. Conversely, the population and needs of an area may be so large and concentrated that some form of break-down into manageable divisions is necessary.

LOCAL VERSUS CENTRAL RESPONSIBILITY

Nevertheless it will be obvious that this basic plan, however modified, must embrace several elements of local government and involve either some degree of combination and co-operation between them or some system which puts the responsibility for providing library
services upon a larger (regional, state or national) governmental agency.

The question therefore at once arises—should public libraries be provided by local authorities or by state or national governments? There can be little doubt that if local authorities are, or can, with appropriate assistance, be rendered capable of providing adequate library services it is best that they should do so; and in any event it is desirable that the local authority should at least have sufficient concern with them to have an interest in them. This opinion is based upon several considerations. Firstly, as a public library exists to serve not merely a community but its individual members, the more closely its work is related to those who use it the better. Library service is never something to be imposed from above; it must arise from the needs of its users.

Secondly, the success of a library depends upon the regard in which it is held by its own immediate public. There must be both understanding of its values and pride in its possession. People are always most interested in and most proud of those things over which they have some control, which they can regard as the expression of their own desires and the fruit of their own endeavours.

Thirdly, though it is easy to exaggerate this point, different communities do need different kinds of library service; and those who provide them are more likely to secure the right type the closer they are to the community served.

Fourthly—a matter which it may be dangerous to mention though it must be mentioned as it is very important—as the library must be a full free opportunity for each user, local control may be a useful safeguard against the use of the library as an instrument for making people think and do as someone somewhere might like them to. The more remote the control the greater this danger.

The success of library extension programmes indeed demands a proper balance between these two factors, often sadly unaccommodating to one another; the responsibility for service must be as 'local', as close to its users, as possible but the service must be adequate and adequacy can usually only result when resources are fairly extensive. It is quite useless to expect a community to do by itself and for itself something which it is quite incapable of performing. Far too many of the communities of the world have been expected to do so.
The system of local government differs considerably from country to country as regards the size, type, and powers of local government units, their relations with large governmental bodies, etc. It is, therefore, impossible to generalize. In one country there may be a great many very small units with no intermediary between them and the government of the nation or of a very large state or province; elsewhere there may be a well developed 'two tier' system in which, within the state, the smaller authorities are united for some purposes into larger groupings.

Whatever the governmental system, however, local authorities must be brought together for library purposes—perhaps by legislation creating suitable local government areas, probably more often by schemes for co-operation.

To the former course there may be objections such as the frequent and understandable reluctance of local authorities to relinquish powers or sink their identity in joint schemes; or there may be financial or administrative difficulties in creating authorities for library purposes which are not those functioning for other local government purposes; or, possibly, the age old rivalry between town and country.

Some large cities are governed by one single authority, at least for some purposes, but in many cases the natural city is covered not by one but by several local authorities. Where this is so there is a very strong case for legal unification. Voluntary schemes of co-operation may be possible but in all but the very largest cities complete amalgamation into one system, with one unified administration, joint resources, one government, and one body of officers, will surely be most efficient and economical, for libraries as well as for other local government purposes.

Similarly in some places the country districts and the urban elements in a convenient area form one unit for certain purposes as (with the exception of the larger towns and cities) is the case with the English counties (the union is not complete for library purposes though it is, for example, for education). Elsewhere the 'county' (or whatever it may be termed) comprises only the area outside the large urban elements, and this too is so undesirable that where possible union should be sought.

The face of the world is not however covered wholly or even
predominantly by either a) large urban areas or b) county districts with their natural urban centres—their market towns, etc.—reasonably accessible at least at not too infrequent intervals and large enough to support an adequate joint library service. There are in most countries great tracts, sparsely populated, with no convenient towns or cities at all; or possibly with one or several small urban centres all too small for library purposes. In such regions some different type of co-ordination is necessary, e.g. the establishment of a scheme for the region operating, with a machinery specially devised to overcome the difficulties, from a regional centre which may be established only for library purposes, or perhaps by services provided from outside the region itself by a larger agency of library administration.

Even these three main bases—local authorities, combination of local authorities, and regional schemes, might fail to provide the necessary resources of money, organization and impetus—hence the need for state and national agencies for the promotion and assistance of library services.

**TYPES OF LIBRARY SERVICE AGENCY**

The various agencies by which library services may be given can now be tabulated.

1. *A Single Library Authority and Library System for an area*
   a) *The whole of a city*—providing: (1) central library with lending and reference departments and appropriate special departments; (2) sufficient branch libraries; (3) necessary services to children and special categories of population (hospital patients, the blind, etc.—see later).*

   Apart from the need to secure from other agencies certain even more specialized provisions to be noted later, the 'whole city' system can in a large enough city operate efficiently as an independent, self-contained unit, but it should be willing to extend the use of its services, by arrangement maybe with the appropriate local authorities, to people in the surrounding district who need them.

   b) *The part of a city*—i.e. where the 'geographical' city—the conurbation—comprises several local authorities (as in Sydney or

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*These activities are not repeated under other categories of agency; it is assumed that, according to circumstances, they will be given by all library systems.*
Melbourne or to some extent Los Angeles). In the very largest cities, e.g. London or New York, these elements may themselves be large enough to justify independent existence provided it is amplified by co-operation for special purposes. Where the elements are small amalgamation into one system, or, in large cities, into groupings of adjacent authorities, is highly desirable.

c) **The authority comprising city or towns (or towns) and country covering the whole of the geographical area.** For all excepting large cities this is the ideal arrangement. It includes a central library in the main city, appropriate libraries and branches elsewhere. The smaller service points are provided with frequently changed supplies from a unified book stock maintained at a central headquarters (and possibly also at Sub centres). From this stock the specialized needs of individual readers are satisfied. With staffing that ensures good librarianship throughout the system, this arrangement ensures efficiency and economy and avoids duplication of work. It means that every reader and every community can share the whole resources of the area.

d) **The authority covering an area similar to that of c) with the exception of one or more independent urban elements.** This preserves many of the advantages of c) unless the system is seriously weakened through lack of the independent urban units. If it is, amalgamation should be sought; in any case there should be co-operation to prevent duplication of effort and to give readers in the area access to the resources of the city or cities.

e) **The authority covering only the country districts or the country districts plus only very small towns.** This is an unsatisfactory arrangement. The inhabitants are deprived of access to any considerable accumulation of stock; duplication of work will result if the authority tries to establish its own central pool for use by its own readers. Usually too the country area alone will be too poor to maintain adequate services—a position usually aggravated by the fact that the average wealth per inhabitant in the country districts will be less than that of the urban dweller though the urban area may draw much of its wealth from the surrounding country. Amalgamations into c) or d) systems are eminently desirable.

f) **The authority for an urban unit too small to maintain an adequate library.** The obvious minimum step is amalgamation with its immediate country authorities, but as this is still unlikely to secure adequate resources incorporation into a c) or d) system is most desirable.
2. **Groupings comprising two or more independent local authorities**

Should the amalgamation of independent local authorities into unified systems be impracticable much can be achieved by voluntary co-operation and co-ordination.

There are two main ways in which this can be done.

a) **By an authority contracting with another (and probably larger) authority for all or part of the library service.** This can take many forms. For example:

(i) Arrangements for the use of the libraries of the large city, e.g. country or suburban residents allowed to borrow from the larger authority's libraries, the contracting authority paying either a lump sum or one based upon the number of borrowers. It is general for city reference libraries to be open freely to all regardless of where they live.

(ii) Arrangements for the bulk loan of stock on payment.

(iii) Arrangements for the provision of staff, or for expert supervision or advice.

(iv) Arrangements by which the larger authority undertakes certain services such as the central purchase, cataloguing, and preparation of stock, the supply of equipment and materials etc.

(v) Arrangements by which, for payment by the local authority, the larger authority provides the whole of the library service in the area as part of its own system—an unusual but not impracticable arrangement, for example, when the authority is unwilling to merge itself into a wider scheme or perhaps as an experimental first step towards amalgamation.

In all the arrangements mentioned above the cost may be borne wholly or in part not by the recipient authority but by some superior agency (state or national).

b) **Joint governing bodies,** e.g. the formation voluntarily of joint committees representing the local authorities and administering a joint library service—useful when either the local authorities are unwilling or unable to amalgamate or as a first step towards amalgamation. The cost of the joint scheme would be borne from local funds in accordance with an agreed apportionment. Joint schemes are the next best thing to amalgamation but must be given some reasonable degree of permanency as no efficient organization can be built up under the constant fear that any of its elements might withdraw at short notice. The chief disadvantages are applicable to all voluntary schemes:

(i) That the inhabitants of places unwilling to co-operate would
either remain without libraries or find it increasingly difficult to provide them independently, and,
(ii) That the abstention of important elements might render it difficult or uneconomical for the remainder to establish a joint scheme.

It may well be, therefore, that the joint scheme should be imposed upon an area by some superior authority (state or national).

3. State and National Agencies

State and national agencies for public library extension are necessary in every country, to stimulate, co-ordinate and assist the work of local authorities—sometimes themselves to provide library services.

In this section as everywhere in this discussion it is not possible to deal with one universal pattern of government. In some large countries (e. g. England) there are no intermediaries between the national government and the local authority. In others (e. g. the United States, Canada, Australia) there is an important system of state or provincial government. Yet again there are smaller countries where though there may be provincial authorities the total area is such that functions elsewhere appropriate to the states must be undertaken by the national government (e. g. Denmark).

The type of agency discussed here will, however, be obvious. It is that with responsibility for and some measure of control over a country or part of a country comprising a great many local authorities, and possibly, much 'unincorporated' territory. It may be the ultimate authority or it may itself be subject to the national or federal government, in which case the latter has its own opportunities to help library extension.

The state or national agency as here intended can operate:

a) By itself providing library services. As already suggested this is not normally desirable, but in some regions there are no local authorities, the territories being governed directly by the state. Elsewhere the combined resources of the local authorities, or the means of communication, are so inadequate that direct state responsibility is the only sensible course. Moreover, until service by local agencies gives full coverage, the state agency should give certain necessary, partial services, to those who are without local libraries (e. g. the supply of books to individual purposive readers).

b) By providing some of the service agencies. In regions where the types of amalgamation and co-ordination mentioned in Section 2 are impracticable, the state agency may itself establish central or
regional centres from which books are supplied to local service points; and provide centralized services for library authorities which remain responsible for the normal administration of their own libraries.

c) By providing grants-in-aid to local-authority (and regional) library services, made
   (i) when it is not reasonably possible to support libraries entirely with local funds;
   (ii) to equalize the burden of providing a service which is in the long run for the benefit of the whole nation;
   (iii) when the national system of finance is such that some part of the cost of local services must be met from the state or national revenues, and
   (iv) above all, in order that the state may be entitled to a voice in the public library service, the opportunity to encourage or advise or the right to insist on adequate standards.

d) By providing grants 'in kind', e. g. loan or hire of books, of staff, of centralized cataloguing and book purchasing services, etc.

e) By providing expert advice and assistance, also by employing inspectors to see how grants-in-aid are used or that legal obligations are met.

f) By the stimulation of library extension, e. g. helping and encouraging local authorities, conducting propaganda for library extension.

g) By studying library problems, conducting research, collecting information and making it available.

h) By publishing material related to library development, e. g. book lists, bibliographies, textbooks for staff, publicity material, etc.

i) By supporting or assisting demonstration schemes.

j) By providing facilities for professional training.

4. Regional Schemes

We have put these last because regional library schemes, (i. e. schemes covering areas larger than those of amalgamation and combination of authorities or areas not served by local authorities but by the state) may either be the result of further co-ordination by local authorities or be organized by state (or national) agencies.

5. Federal agencies

In any country in which there are intermediaries (state, provincial) between the national government and the local authorities (e. g. in the United States, Canada, Australia) these intermediary authorities will perform much the same functions as the national agency
of a country where none exist. Nevertheless in the former countries there will still be services to be rendered by the national (federal) government to the state (provincial) agencies.

The precise nature of these functions will necessarily depend upon the governmental and financial structure.

Nevertheless, at the least a federal bureau is desirable to co-ordinate the work of state agencies and, elsewhere, federal grants may be necessary to adjust inequalities in state resources, or again, if the states or some of them are not sufficiently capable of meeting all their own needs federal central services may be desirable. For example, to facilitate the supply of specialized books federal (national) union catalogues should be maintained; also some of the resources of federal libraries should, where practicable, be available for loan to other agencies and facilities for photo copying microfilm, photostat, etc. provided.

The establishment of National Book Centres able to deal with exchanges, the distribution of duplicates, etc. both to libraries within the country and to book centres and library agencies in other countries has rightly been urged by Unesco. The National Book Centre can with advantage be associated with the federal or national library agency or with the national library. Here also (preferably closely associated with the union catalogue department) there should be an adequate bibliographical centre capable of supplying up-to-date information regarding the publications of its own and other countries, and regarding the specialized holdings of libraries, sources of information, etc.

In this connexion it should be noted that every country should publish an official complete bibliography of everything published within its territories. If this is issued in approved 'catalogue entry' form a basic central cataloguing service will result, to the great advantage of all library authorities. To promote international understanding and the wider dissemination of ideas and information this same agency should prepare, and make world-wide distribution of select lists of representative and important publications, and also encourage and facilitate the translation of suitable materials both from and into the language of the country. This is especially important in the case of countries with a limited literary output (a point amplified later). And it need not be emphasized that where the language of a country is shared by other nations every effort must be made to exploit fully the common heritage, e. g. by co-operative schemes for the publication of bibliographies of all books in a language (e. g. Spanish, Arabic, English) regardless of the place of publication.
CHAPTER III

GOVERNMENTAL AND FINANCIAL FACTORS

LIBRARY LEGISLATION

It has been taken for granted so far that public library services should be supplied by the government agencies which provide other services—education, roads, public health—essential to the well-being of a modern civilization; and which can best be provided by the people and controlled by the people working through the normal processes of democratic and representative government. This attitude is not here argued, as to do so would be outside the scope of this pamphlet.

It follows, however, that since the provision of public libraries is a function of government and paid for out of public funds it must be subject to legislation empowering the appropriate authorities, defining their functions, and ensuring adequate financial control and proper administration.

Considered from the point of view of library extension, legislation has three other functions: to make library services possible, to encourage their development, and to ensure that libraries shall be provided. It is not, therefore, merely a question of 'permitting' and 'auditing' but of creating the conditions in which libraries can flourish. For this reason the framers of library laws must be very careful that they are not restrictive, either by deliberate intention or by being unnecessarily specific.

The most usual—and most damaging—restriction is that fixing the maximum amount of expenditure, or the rate of tax to be levied. Introduced probably to pacify those who opposed library extension because of fear that it would cost more than the opponents thought desirable, such restrictions have not only handicapped progress—as in Great Britain for many years—by imposing unnecessary financial limitations, but created low standards and ideals which have been hard to overcome. Financial limitations imposed by legislation, especially early in the history of national library extension, are most
unlikely to be high enough; sooner or later they become inadequate and even though the library authorities and the people are willing to expend more they may find it difficult to secure a change in the law. Consequently there should be a general authorization of expenditure for library purposes (subject to conditions to be discussed in the following pages); the good sense of those responsible must be left to determine the actual amount expended. This is never likely to be excessive, though in this connexion it should be said that it is a grave mistake to suggest, or to believe, that good libraries can exist without adequate support. People do not expect to get good roads or sanitation without having to pay the proper cost—and the same applies to libraries. If they are well managed, libraries are always inexpensive in relation to results, however much they cost.

Nevertheless there are some things which should be required by law and others which should be specifically permitted lest otherwise there be doubt as to their legality. In the latter category are powers for local authorities to combine and co-operate voluntarily, to support and participate in regional schemes and schemes for providing centralized services, to provide facilities for the training and professional education of their staffs, etc.

SHOULD LIBRARY PROVISION BE COMPULSORY?

What should be required? Firstly should the provision of library services be compulsory? Should it be a duty of the appropriate local, state and other authorities? Where there is compulsion there must of course be some definition of the standards of service which must be achieved in order to comply with the law. There can be no doubt that in every country there should everywhere be adequate library services and if this cannot, or is not likely to be achieved with the free will of the appropriate authorities, powers to compel must be given to the appropriate state or national agency. Libraries are necessary and it should not be possible for any authority, through default, to deprive its inhabitants of essential services which are enjoyed by their fellows living elsewhere. To this general principle no one concerned with library extension can or will raise any objection.

Nevertheless two points arise: first, that the application of compulsory powers must be closely related to the development of resources. Local and other authorities must first be given the necessary finance, material and organization. To require them to attempt to
provide libraries until they are reasonably able to do so can only pro-
duce low standards and encourage the initiation of services under
conditions which must in the long run prove a grave handicap to
development. For example, as appropriately qualified staffs are
necessary everywhere it is useless to start more libraries than the
available personnel can staff; if this is attempted some authorities,
must employ unqualified personnel whom it will be difficult to
supersede and who, nevertheless, cannot be expected to create
adequate and efficient libraries. As librarians must be trained and
must enjoy practical experience, the creation of an adequate body
of professional librarians cannot be achieved overnight. So in any
state or nation with a new or relatively undeveloped library service
adequate steps towards building up a sufficiency of qualified libra-
rians must precede any legislation making library provision compul-
sory. It is the same with the other factors: e.g. until there is an
adequate machinery for the supply of books to and the exchange of
stocks for small libraries, it is unwise to compel the creation of
libraries which, obliged to rely on their own inadequate resources,
are foredoomed to failure and certain to discredit the movement.

The second point is that since compulsion implies the formulation
of minimum standards great care must be taken that minimum stan-
dards do not become maximum standards. Consequently the
required standards should not be specified in legislation which may
be difficult, or take long, to alter. Instead the law must appoint
an appropriate agency to formulate standards from time to time,
with full power to vary them.

On balance, therefore, compulsion should come at a later rather
than an early stage of library extension. Development must be
gradual and progressive. It can be hastened by assistance and
encouragement by the state or national agency; it will be much more
certain when, as extension proceeds, people are able to see for them-
selves the value of good libraries, than if a multiplicity of inadequate
libraries are brought into being hastily. Although not strictly in
its proper context here, it should be emphasized that any state or
nation seeking to promote library extension will be well advised to
seek first to create at each stage only as many good libraries as it
can. It is preferable gradually to increase their number, rather than
to create a larger number that are less satisfactory. Thus, for
example, if the amount of money available for grant each year is
limited it is better to give this to a few authorities who will receive
enough to do something worth-while than to dissipate it in innume-

rable grants individually too small to be useful. If, as will normally
be just, the local authorities who have done or will do most to help themselves are given priority, other authorities will have the greater incentive to use their own powers.

Despite the foregoing, however, there are circumstances in which compulsion may be very desirable, even at an early stage in library extension. For example, if adequate provision could result only from the combination or co-ordination of adjacent local authorities or by participation in regional schemes, and if the success of such arrangements would be imperilled if necessary elements abstained, it would be manifestly unfair to the willing elements not to insist on the participation of all.

OTHER LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

Already several library laws make obligatory provisions regarding library staff—e. g. requiring the employment of suitably qualified staff in all posts where professional librarianship is necessary to efficiency, and, a natural corollary, insisting that staffs shall be paid in accordance with appropriate salary-scales. Because there can be no good libraries without good librarians, because attempts to maintain libraries without them are certain to fall far short of needs and possibilities, the sooner good staffing is obligatory the better. Here too, however, the introduction of compulsion must be related to resources. Attempts to compel the employment of qualified people before enough have been produced or are ‘in production’ can only result in the lowering of required standards of qualification—a short sighted policy. Here too, the laws must not be too specific. It is best to set up an authority with power to formulate and review the qualifications, etc. needed for the various types of employment, and to establish a permanent negotiating machinery to deal with salaries and conditions of service.

In a valuable paper given at the Unesco Ifla Summer School in 1948, Dr. Robert L. Hansen asked that the following matters (additional to those just discussed) should be embraced in library legislation:

a) "It should be stipulated that a public library is to serve the entire population;"

b) "All libraries should lend their books (in accordance with a scheme for co-operation between libraries) to all citizens in the country;"

c) "The books in stock should cover every opinion, i. e. not
only should literary and professional interests be taken into account, but also all political and religious opinions; this should be done however without causing prejudice to any opinion;

d) “The loan of books should be free. No subscription or other form of payment should be required.”

All these matters are essential to the true purposes of a public library service; and in so far as they can be specifically covered by legal enactment this should be done at the outset.

LOCAL AND STATE-AUTHORITY RELATIONSHIP

The relationship of agencies of library provision—of local authorities with one another and with state and national authorities—must next be considered. If all the library services of a country were to be provided by independent local authorities, library laws could be relatively simple. It would be sufficient to permit provision and expenditure, in due course to make library provision obligatory, to formulate standards of staffing, and to insist on the observance of the essentials listed by Dr. Hansen. Such simple, single-unit legislation does exist today (e. g. in Great Britain), but it is now manifest that it does not suffice (even in those countries where it has been long established). There must be—as already discussed—varying types of voluntary or compulsory co-ordination of local authority units and superior (state and national) agencies.

Consequently library laws must: a) establish, provide for, and define the functions and powers of the state (or national) library authority; b) define its relationship with local library authorities; and c) define and provide for the regulation of relationships between local library authorities.

THE STATE AGENCY—ITS NATURE AND FINANCES

The functions of state (and national) agencies have already been discussed. It remains to consider their nature and constitution.

The agency may be (1) an independent department or Ministry of the state government or (2) a sub-department of another Ministry. The former is preferable because there can then be no risk that library functions are either subordinated to other functions of a Ministry or used to further other purposes of that Ministry. For the latter reason, especially, the library agency should not be a
People in rural districts and outlying city areas appreciate the convenience of the travelling library.
department of a Ministry of Information or any agency for propaganda. In the case of other likely choices—a Ministry of Education or a Ministry of Culture (or its equivalent)—the second objection is not likely to arise. There are advantages in allying libraries to education—nationally but not locally; but only if it is clearly understood that the library has purposes much wider than those of formal and organized education. If the library agency must be allied to another agency, the ideal agency would be one charged with responsibility for the promotion of the fine and applied arts and sciences, the oversight of museums and art galleries, of broadcasting, of international cultural (but not political or economic) relationships and the like.

A separate Ministry, is, however, best. Its only disadvantage is one that should disappear in time—i.e. that its importance might seem, if judged by its 'spending' capacities, small in comparison with other Ministries.

There is an alternative to ministerial control (or other form of direct government control) which may be practicable: i.e. a State Library Board consisting of:

1) persons, not necessarily members of the government but chosen for their special interest and abilities, appointed by the government (or, after first appointment by the government, appointed by the Board itself—a 'self-perpetuating' board), or;

2) persons appointed as their representatives by the local authorities concerned, or;

3) consisting in part of both (1) and (2).

The state agency needs funds (from the state treasury—sometimes also in part from the federal government):

1) for its own activities—staffing, central (and regional) headquarters administration, central book stocks and central services (e.g. central cataloguing, bibliographical and union catalogue bureaux, etc.), any provision for the public made directly by the agency (e.g. service to areas not covered by local authority services, provision of books and talking-books for the blind, etc.), inspection and field work, extension and promotion activities, professional education, etc.;

2) for grants to local authorities and to joint and regional schemes; and

3) for grants to complementary agencies—e.g. to library schools, to research bureaux, to non-public libraries in return for assistance to public library provision, etc.
Grants to local library authorities have three purposes—to make possible required standards of library provision, to encourage development, and to give the state agency a share and a voice in library extension.

The relation of grants to local expenditure must depend upon factors which will vary from country to country—especially upon the proportion in which funds for public services are normally raised by local, state and national taxes, etc. Subject to such factors, however, it is a good thing if the local authority provides at least half the total expenditure as this ensures both local interest and local independence in the moral, if not the administrative, sense. Another more practical factor arises however. The financial ability—the wealth or poverty—of the local authorities, in any country, varies considerably. There may be districts where for social and economic reasons and because of the needs of other public services it is not reasonable to seek sufficient funds to support adequate libraries. And it is a fairly general rule that country districts are less able than urban areas to finance libraries, and that the less densely populated an area the greater the disability. For this there are two reasons—one, that it costs more to provide good libraries when service points are small and scattered, and when the distance from headquarters is considerable; the other, that all the other public services needed in those areas suffer the same disability, so that the people have less to spare for libraries. Therefore it is more than likely that in every nation grants must be varied according to the type of local authority concerned.

The important thing is to ensure that, however financed, library services are good. Nevertheless very considerable disparity between the assistance given to rural areas and, say, large cities is to be avoided not only because apparent inequity may be resented, but also because even the largest and the wealthiest elements in a co-ordinated state-wide service should feel that they are equal partners with both benefits and responsibilities. To this problem there are three solutions—at least they are partial solutions sufficiently potent to ensure goodwill. Firstly, we should frankly and realistically appreciate that service to rural areas and small towns should cost more, per reader and per unit of individual service. The far too prevalent idea that the contrary is true is based upon a grave misconception. The
larger the local library system, the easier the problems of administration and communication, the more use can be made of stock, the more people can be served by each assistant. To give the rural reader the same standard of service so far as conditions permit must cost more. For instance, a qualified assistant is needed at even a small service point, and, to give any useful range of choice more books per reader must be available. Adequate supervision is proportionately expensive. Transport charges and 'overhead' costs are, in the aggregate, heavier. Consequently, if the cost is higher it is not unreasonable if state help is proportionately higher.

Secondly, help for rural areas and small towns can usually be given better by providing services (book stocks, bulk loans, advice, central purchasing, cataloguing and allied services) than by providing money to be spent locally on purely local purposes. This assistance 'in kind' not being allocated to specific authorities but being shared by all does not disclose or emphasize local differences.

Thirdly, the more the state can develop the integration of town and country (as already advocated) with grants paid to larger authorities to be expended for the benefit of the smaller ones, the less will any disparity in assistance be recognized.

Grants-in-aid will also inevitably vary from place to place (within a state) if they are used, as they should be, to encourage development on the most fruitful lines. Grants to the wrong types of authorities may well, in the long run, serve only to consolidate an uneconomical system. If it is manifest, for example, that a small city and the authority for the surrounding rural areas should have a joint library service with one central library and headquarters for the combined districts, it would be wrong to make appreciable grants to the authorities to enable them to pursue their own independent and wasteful courses. The more the grant the greater the likelihood of duplication of effort; in addition, by consolidating the local 'vested interests' the path to union or co-ordination becomes more difficult. Therefore, whenever participation in large schemes is desirable, grants should be made conditional upon their introduction and maintenance. If the pressure of local opinion is too strong to be disregarded it might be desirable, as an interim course, to give minimum grants to authorities which cling to their independence and offer much larger grants as an inducement to union or co-ordination.

Grants give the state agency a voice in library extension because naturally grants must be subject to the conditions and regulations required by the state agency. There must also be some measure of
inspection to see that the conditions have been observed—though, in practice, inspection becomes for the great majority of places a welcomed source of advice and encouragement rather than mere surveillance. Regulations should be designed to help rather than to restrict and, like laws, should be flexible rather than excessively specific. Provided the purpose of the grants is clearly appreciated, and that essential requirements are met, the local authorities should be left with the maximum of scope to do their part of the work at the dictation of their own intelligence and interest. In other words, regulations should help the local authorities to give themselves the best possible library and not tell them exactly what sort of service they should have.

FINANCING JOINT SCHEMES

In joint schemes the relationship of the joint governing body to the several authorities by which it is appointed needs careful definition, particularly as regards finance. It is manifestly undesirable that one or more elements should be able to prejudice the common good by reducing or withholding support; and administration will be most difficult if the representatives of the various authorities can or must make frequent reference to their authorities. There are three main possibilities:

a) for the local authorities each to undertake to provide an agreed amount (or rate of expenditure) for a specified period of years, leaving the administration of the scheme to the joint body. The disadvantage of this is that the 'agreed amount' will probably prove insufficient and may be difficult to change;

b) for the local authorities to allow the joint body to 'precept upon' the constituent authorities, in accordance with an agreed division of the total cost, asking of each the amount needed each year. This is in some ways an ideal method, as it enables the body most likely to be keen, to set the pace of development; but, perhaps for that very reason, local authorities are not likely to abrogate their control over local finances;

c) for the state to have overriding powers, e.g. to require from any participating authority the measure of support approved by the majority.
LOCAL LIBRARY COMMITTEES

The library authorities will in all cases appoint library committees or library boards to administer the libraries on their behalf. In some states, for various reasons (including the historical factor) library boards frequently consist entirely or largely of persons who are not members of the local authority (or who at least are not appointed by virtue of that fact). Often these boards are self-perpetuating, i.e., they themselves appoint persons to fill vacancies. Arguments favouring such boards are that the library is less liable to political manipulation or to suffer from the vagaries of political fortunes; that they permit of reasonable continuity of policy; and that they enlist the support of useful citizens who might be unwilling to enter the political arena. Nevertheless as this system tends to divorce the library service from local government and as it is not easy for the needs of the service to be made known effectively to the local authority, library committees comprising a majority of elected members of the authority are generally preferable. The minority can, if thought fit, be other persons with special interest in library development and in closely related communal activities.

Even when a library authority (or joint scheme or area of state provision) includes communities other than those with statutory authority over the library—e.g., townships within a county, or suburban areas incorporated within a city area, etc.—local library committees are to be encouraged. They may have few, if any, powers; they may, acting on behalf of the authority, supervise local arrangements, look after buildings, make sure that staffing is maintained, be responsible for the safe custody of property and the preservation of good order. There is always something useful to justify their existence, and their value is twofold—they will encourage the local people to use the library and they will be a valuable contact between the community and the library authority.
PART II

ADMINISTRATIVE ASPECTS
OF LIBRARY EXTENSION
Let us now look at libraries not from the viewpoint of government organization or finance, but with the eyes of the people who want books, information and the help of library staffs. The business of librarianship is that of bringing together people and the things they want; successful librarianship cannot exist unless it is remembered always that it is an individual service—and that library extension is a process of taking better libraries to more individuals.

This individual of ours is concerned with three things—where he has to go for library service, what he can get, and under what conditions, i.e. in what sort of environment, with what facilities and assistance.

Discussion of the last two are largely outside the range of this book. The scope and quality of book stocks, the importance of efficient staffing, the absolute necessity of full free access to the library shelves and freedom of choice, the need for proper arrangement (classification) of the books, the provision of adequate catalogues, the existence of facilities for the reservation and renewal of books and the virtue of light, clean ‘gay’ pleasing libraries, and all those other features that together make a good library cannot be discussed here in detail. Library extension is largely concerned with the first—with the places to which people go and how these places are provided with their books and their staffs.

These places we call ‘service points’ and they have an almost infinite variety, ranging from the great central libraries of the metropolis, to libraries on wheels, books delivered by the postman, books brought by a ‘flying doctor’ visiting by plane some isolated outpost.

DEFINITIONS

The names given to service points—like most of the words used in librarianship—have such varied meanings in different countries.
that it is desirable to prefix this discussion with a few definitions.

Central Library—the main library of a city system with branches, or a city plus country system.

Town library—the library of a town or city where there are no urban branches, e.g. the library of most small urban areas.

Branch Library—either an urban branch, a library provided for a district or suburb of a city; or a county (or regional) branch, a library in an urban community within the area and associated with (and probably provided with stock) from a:

County (or regional) headquarters—primarily a centre of administration and distribution, with central pool of stock, though the headquarters may usefully be closely associated with the library serving the people living in and around the town or city where it is situated.

Branches—usually in premises specially built or adapted for library purposes,—may be full-time or part-time. A full-time branch is one open to the public during the full daytime hours of all or most weekdays— with, say, a minimum of thirty hours of opening. A part-time branch is one open for less time—e.g. certain hours on some days, or whole-time on one or two.

A Deposit station is a collection of books deposited with some agency other than a library—a factory, club, society, institution—and primarily for the use of those attending there.

A Centre is closely akin but is here meant to denote a collection of books deposited in some appropriate place—a school, house, club, or almost anywhere—which is provided for general public use. For purposes of definition, a collection at a youth club solely for the use of members would be a deposit station, but if the club agreed to house the collection for general public use (perhaps only at specified times) it would be a centre.

Travelling libraries (to be discussed in detail shortly) are libraries on wheels—not collections of books in boxes sent by carrier or other means of transport, a method of service to be called simply ‘boxes of books’.

THE SMALL TOWN LIBRARY

These are merely definitions stated for purposes of clarity. In practice of course—so far as the man who goes there is concerned—a ‘county branch’ in a small town or an independent ‘town library’ may and indeed should seem very much the same.
Let us choose this very type of service point for first consideration because it is the most prevalent element in all countries.

In some countries a large proportion of the population may use city and suburban libraries but surely the great majority of libraries everywhere will be in small towns—places with populations of from, say, 1,000 to 10,000. For library extension workers these will be both the most important and the most difficult to deal with. Get the small town library properly organized and service to the rest of the country will be much easier. It can largely be based on this small town organization. Extensive territories without towns present, of course, a distinct problem.

Our typical small town is a social centre; to it come, sooner or later, more or less frequently, all those people in the country beyond who do not find it easier to go to some other town. If they come frequently enough—weekly, once every two or three weeks—the town library may prove the only service point needed, excepting probably some additional provision for school children. Never provide any service point, or other facility, that is not genuinely necessary. The dissipation of resources in excessively numerous, and consequently over-small service points is most undesirable. Aim at providing the largest possible service point and book stock that is reasonably accessible to the most people. Remember that the larger the book stock and the better the staffing, the greater the satisfaction to the readers and the higher the quality of reading. We do not of course suggest that the genuine needs of those who cannot easily go to the town should be overlooked.

Dissipation of resources arises also where, in any library system, large or small, book collections are provided from public funds for clubs, organizations, factories and the like if the members using them could with reasonable ease use the normal service points provided for the general public. It is in the long run unwise to encourage readers to be satisfied with an inadequate handful of books that is little more convenient than a proper library; and indeed if funds are limited and there are too many ‘handfuls’ there may not be enough money left for a good library anywhere.

We must aim at the largest possible town libraries, serving all who can conveniently reach them. This means that if the town library is an independent unit, arrangements must be made for ‘out of town’ residents to use it, as already discussed.

Even though they reach out as far as they can for readers and resources the great majority of these libraries will nevertheless be very small in comparison either with the range of books likely to
be wanted or with the libraries of the large cities. As, nevertheless, they are the spearheads of library extension they must be good. What does this mean? Let us, even though we trespass into the field of general librarianship, consider some of the factors that both make library extension possible and, even more to the point because more often forgotten, really worth while.

It will be clear that much of what follows applies equally to all kinds of libraries.

PREMISES

The library should be where most people will see it most often and should have its own building; at least it should, if part of a larger building, be clearly separated from other parts and have its own main street entrance. In the early stages of library extension, premises such as halls, clubs, disused chapels, above all, good large shops in a main street, may be adapted for library purposes. Unless absolutely unavoidable it is a mistake, recognized by hundreds of regretful library authorities, to build a special library building unless the authority has ample funds to pay for it from either capital or revenue. Books and staff are the vital elements and it is tragic to prejudice them by paying too much for bricks and mortar. Building can come later on when on the one hand the authority knows best from experience where to site the library and, on the other, has a reasonable idea of how big it should be. Most libraries built at the outset prove either too big, in which case they are a heavy liability, or too small—thus limiting developments.

Nevertheless, whatever its fabric, the library must be attractive, bright, gay, clean and well illuminated. It must, in fact, be a place that is pleasurable to visit. Brightness is much easier to achieve than many seem to imagine. Bright contrasting colours cost no more than drab. Apparently unsuitable buildings may often be transformed by bold but simple devices. For example, the unsightly rafters and high light-absorbing roof of a hall or chapel may easily be hidden with a false board ceiling—and the cost would be largely met in a few years by savings in fuel and light. Fluorescent lighting is very suitable; though more costly to instal it is economical in current. Library authorities should be on the watch for similar long-term economies. For example an automatically controlled, gas-fired heating-boiler may cost more to run than coke, but if the circumstances are such that, 'stoking' being thus abolished, a
part-time cleaner can suffice, the net saving may be considerable.

Don't imagine that libraries should be dusty, dim, dismal temples
of learning. Most people quite rightly shun such places. They
imagine that in a dull, dirty, out-of-date building the stock and
service will be in keeping, and they are usually right.

There should be sufficient elbow-room and space for people to
move about in comfort—a few chairs and tables will be appreciated.
Little things can make a lot of difference. For example when people
leave the library they want to stow their books in their shopping
bags or attaché cases; how seldom is there a table in the vestibule
where they can rest their bags?

Most bookcases are too high. For cases used by the general
public 6'6" is the maximum height. Over-tall cases obstruct light
and air, create a heavy appearance and inconvenience borrowers.
Most libraries have far too many bookcases in them. The surplus
ones clutter up the room, and as they are usually filled with old,
drab and completely useless and unused books, create an appearance
of gloom, inefficiency and decay. Limit bookcases in public rooms
to as many as you can keep reasonably filled with usable books;
other stock can, if thought fit, be housed in store-rooms, which can
be more tightly packed. In general, however, the small library
should not keep unwanted books just for the sake of saying that
it has so many volumes in stock.

HOURS

In the larger towns there will always be sufficient people for whom
different hours are most convenient to justify keeping the library
open for most of the day-time and in the evening each weekday;
such libraries will, of course, employ several assistants. Otherwise,
limited hours are necessary and, if they are those most convenient
to most users, are usually quite satisfactory. The one-man (or
one-woman) library should not be open so long that the librarian
has not enough time either for 'behind the scenes' routine tasks
or to get about and establish necessary contacts with schools, clubs,
churches, business men, etc. Choice of opening hours and their
weekly total must be decided according to local conditions; e.g. in a
centre thronged all market day the library should be open all that day
for the convenience of the country people. As a rough guide, in a
place serving up to 2,500 or 3,000 population the library should be open
at least 10 hours a week; and 15 hours in places with 3,000 to 5,000.
The axiom to which there should be no exception is that at every library whenever it is open (except possibly in times of emergency) there should be at least one person who is sufficiently qualified and experienced to make the best use of existing resources to meet each reader's needs, b) to know that there are wider resources and how to call upon them when necessary, c) to have sufficient experience of library routine and methods to run his or her library on simple, efficient lines and d) enough conception of the possibilities of library service not to be satisfied with the achievements of the day.

The number of staff will depend upon the population to be served, the kind of service given, the 'busyness' of the library, etc. It is very undesirable that a reader in need of help should at any time fail to find anyone with time to assist him.

In larger town libraries one assistant for every 2,500 to 3,000 of population served is a reasonable minimum. In smaller libraries the ratio decreases. Places serving 1,000 to 2,000 may be content with one. In some cases smaller places if reasonably near may share one librarian—e.g. alternating days. It is definitely better for two towns to enjoy half the services of a good librarian than for each to have its own unqualified, inexperienced officer.
Book stock is, of course, the vital element in every library. The small library must face the special problem already mentioned, i.e. it must somehow arrange for a large proportion of the books to be changed and refreshed at frequent intervals. This point may seem to have been repeated ad nauseam but it is probably the most important thing to be said about library extension. Neglect to meet this need is responsible for most of the failure, waste and disappointment suffered by past library promoters and has made the way harder for the pioneers of today. It is not only important because otherwise readers cannot enjoy adequate choice of books; it is important on the most material grounds of economy. To the librarian the value of a book depends on how much it is used. This doesn't mean of course that the most valuable books are those that are issued most often. On the contrary a book used only three or four times might well bring great benefit to the community and one read hundreds of times probably would not. Nevertheless it is the librarian's duty in the interests of economy to get the maximum use for every book. Since, in a small community fewer books will be fully used and many will be only partially used, the sensible course is to send them, in due time, to another library where other people will be able to use them. As the first library will get other books in exchange, everyone benefits.

What happens if this is not done? It is easy to tell as it has happened in hundreds of libraries in many countries. Useful books are bought; when the few who want them have read them they stand on the shelves unused representing money that cannot be spent again, gradually becoming more and more useless. Sooner or later some one says 'It is no use buying that kind of book, it isn't economical; let us buy the books that everyone wants', and soon the library ceases to do much that is worthy of the expenditure of public money, and people who truly need real books have to go without. Conver-
sely, of course, many books—popular fiction and non-fiction of wide appeal, and many children's books—need not come within any exchange scheme since local demand will be ample to ensure full use.

This exchange of stock is not difficult to organize. Where one library authority (county, regional, etc.) embraces several service points including town libraries, these exchanges are a matter of basic routine, but where the town library is an independent authority it must either:

a) contract with a larger library authority for the supply of the required number of volumes to be exchanged at specified intervals, say every six or twelve months, or

b) enter into a co-operative scheme with some similar, probably nearby, town library or preferably libraries.

The former is preferable because the large library will draw upon a larger, more varied stock and, apart from the fact that this will benefit the reader, it will obviate the need for any special precautions against the loan of books already stocked by or recently lent to the borrowing library. Of one thousand volumes drawn from a large pool of several thousands it is probable that most will be 'fresh' material and if a few items are repeated they can easily be exchanged at once. Where small libraries co-operate, however, the position will be different.

Small libraries tend to buy much the same kind of books. Consequently where small libraries agree to exchange stock in bulk there must be full consultation over the selection of books for purchase. Much simpler than this, let one librarian select and buy for all the libraries in the scheme, each of the others, however, enjoying the right to suggest items for inclusion. The simpler the routine the better, both when starting the scheme and when dealing with current purchases of new material. Purely arbitrary schemes are just as likely to work out as satisfactorily in the long run as the carefully planned and balanced. Take the case of three libraries which agree to start an exchange scheme with an initial contribution of 500 each and an annual contribution of 200 each. Library No. 1 is authorized to buy for all—an obvious economy of time and labour. The initial collection being put into classified order, take the first book on the shelves for Library 1, the second for Library 2, the third for Library 3, the fourth for Library 4, and so on to the end. Mark all the books allocated to Library 1 as belonging to Collection A, those for Library 2 as collection B, etc. At the end of the year the libraries will exchange collections. As regards the new additions, as it is desirable to get these into the hands of the public as
soon as possible after publication, do not wait until a large batch is ready but send the first £20 worth, as bought, to Library 1, the next to Library 2, etc. and change the order next year. These books can also be given letters indicating the Collections for exchange purposes. These methods may seem artificial and unscientific but they will work out very well in the long run.

In all schemes for the exchange and loan of books in bulk, care must be taken to reduce to a minimum the operations involved at each exchange. For example, adopt a general book-plate applicable to all participating libraries; if thought desirable to state anything that does not apply to all the libraries, e.g. the hours of opening, amount of fines, or summarized rules, do so on a date label that can be tipped in and torn out on exchange; otherwise it will be sufficient to rubber stamp the name of the library issuing the book before the date stamp for the first issue from that library. Elaborate cataloguing can hinder exchange schemes if numerous entries have to be removed or altered on each exchange. Let it be said that in the author’s experience far too much attention is paid in small libraries to niceties of detail which may have a real importance in the large library but waste time and labour in the small. It is understandable that librarians trained at schools where they are shown all the best methods should seek to apply them at their libraries. But, whereas schools tell students how many things they may do, experience alone can tell how few things need to be done. Though in a small library a nice neat dictionary or classified catalogue may look impressive, it doesn’t serve as much purpose as may seem. Borrowers are on the whole mostly interested in what is immediately available; the librarian will probably know most of his stock. Two simple lists of the books, on cards, one of authors, one of subjects, will be amply sufficient as an inventory and guide. If a large part of the stock is ‘on exchange’ there is no reason why these cards should not be kept separate; in any case the cards for each ‘collection’ could be a different colour to facilitate withdrawal.

UNWANTED BOOKS

Two further and very important general observations regarding book stock—both applicable not only to small libraries: Many libraries have too many books; some have too few.

1. The catalogues that matter in the small library—where they matter very much indeed are the catalogues of the books that are not in stock at that service point list can be obtained on request. This is a different proposition.
The postman delivers library books.
The county librarian attends an evening meeting of the rural farm club and helps the members select books.
As regards the first, most of the hundreds of libraries visited by the present author in several countries have housed, on the public shelves, far too many books—old, useless, dreary, unwanted books that accumulate dust or cause waste of labour to prevent its accumulation.

Most librarians are reluctant to throw away useless books, which is a great pity. If librarians would try to view their work with the realistic unsentimental eye of a profit seeking shopkeeper, they would shed many limiting illusions. The draper for example tries to sell his stock while it is still saleable, just as the librarian should get the maximum use of books while they are most useful. But if the draper fails he doesn't clutter up his window with the hats, underwear and blouses of his grandfather's day and expect people to buy them. He knows that, like our librarian's useless books, they discredit his enterprise and insult his customers. Just as the librarian should, if he had any he would get rid of them as waste. There is, of course, a wider aspect of this problem, i.e. that somewhere in each large area there should be a central depository in which at least one copy of everything can be kept against possible need.

STOCK PROVISION FACTORS

The other observation applies chiefly to the newly established library—and it also has its 'business' parallel. The shopkeeper does not open his doors until he has or can quickly obtain sufficient stock to satisfy demand and make his venture profitable. It is, however, by no means unknown for a new library to open with insufficient books. The initial book stock must be regarded as a major item of capital expenditure (see later—section on State aid); it cannot be accumulated gradually out of current revenue.

Thus, if enough shelving is provided to accommodate the range and variety intended to be kept available for the reader to choose from—not more or the shelves will be half empty or gradually accumulate junk; if each borrower is allowed to borrow two books at a time, a usual minimum; and if it is anticipated that within the first few months 20 per cent of the population will enrol as borrowers, not an excessive estimate; then the minimum initial stock is as many books as the shelves will hold plus twice twenty per cent of the population covered by the library area. There are various estimates of the desirable ratio of book stock to population; remember however that the smaller the service point, and the greater the number of small service points needed to give coverage, the more books per hundred of population are needed.
Consequently any hard and fast formula—such as 1 book per head of adult population and 1½ books per head of juvenile population—may be very misleading. In a very large compact city as few as 70 or 80 current books per 100 of total population, provided these were 'good' books and not 'junk', would give an excellent stock; in a region with small, widely scattered communities and few if any fair-sized cities, twice the number would not be too many. A small town that relied solely on its own resources would need very many times more.

As a useful 'happy medium' take a well populated county with a population living partly in a number of small cities, partly in villages, and partly in isolated farmsteads, served by branches, centres and county vans. Assume that 25 per cent of the adults and 40 per cent of the school children are regular readers and that on an average each reader has two books 'out' at once. If the adult population is X and the school population is Y, there will always be in circulation 50 per cent of X plus 80 per cent of Y books. Allow the same number of books in addition, as a minimum to cover books on display at branches, centres, etc., books in vans and in transit, a necessary headquarters pool from which exchanges to service points can be made up and from which the special requests of readers can be supplied, for books being bound, etc. Yes, this formula does give practically the same answer, i. e. 1 volume per head of adult and 1.6 volumes per head of school population; but the point to note is that the total stock must be increased as the proportion of active readers increases. The reverse is not necessarily the case because, in a new system especially, if the proportion of readers is less than 25 per cent adults and 40 per cent children, the additional equivalent cannot be reduced proportionately but only so far as will still permit good stocks at all service points and leave reasonable operating reserves. Similarly the larger the number of small service points the greater the stock required, because every service point must offer a reasonable choice on its shelves. The smallest effective part-time branch serving, say, 1,000 population, needs a shelf stock of say 2,000 volumes which would suffice for a much larger place. Note that the bulk exchange of stocks will improve the quality of book provision but it does not substantially affect the total quantity of books needed.

Footnote: i.e. apart from books which are used only occasionally and those which are retained for purposes of 'conservation'—the inclusion of such 'reserve' stocks would of course increase the number of volumes per 100 population in the larger libraries.
WEAR AND TEAR

Remember, too, that books are consumable goods. They wear out, they become out-of-date and less useful; before long a considerable proportion are out of use while being rebound or mended; they get lost; they are stolen—and it is useless to protest that they aren’t. Consequently, to maintain a stock of the same value and numbers, i.e. without in any way improving its range or providing for additional readers, there must be adequate annual expenditure.

How can one calculate how much should be spent each year? Books need replacing for two main reasons:

a) because they are worn out through use (it must be emphasized that book stocks must be kept in good physical condition; dirty, torn and tattered volumes are unattractive and repel decent users, encourage thoughtless readers to treat all books carelessly, and damage the repute of the service), and

b) because they cease to be useful, e.g. because they become out-of-date or the matters with which they deal cease to be of interest and value.

The rate of ‘wear and tear’ undoubtedly varies from district to district, e.g. it is much higher in libraries used by workers in ‘dirty’ industries, in smoky industrial cities and with poorer homes and bad social conditions, and lower in better placed suburban districts and in the country. But the rate can be calculated, e.g. by taking sufficient samples of books that have been withdrawn as dirty and worn-out and noting the number of times each book has been borrowed. The rate of obsolescence varies from class to class, e.g. technical books in some trades may quickly become out-of-date whereas in others the basic texts are unchanged for many years; and works of literature or biography have a longer ‘life’ than those on current political affairs or some aspects of science. The problem is complex and indeed needs more research than most librarians can reasonably be expected to conduct. So it will probably suffice to state general factors with the understanding that the ‘cleaner’, the more conscientious, the more intelligent the average user, the longer the life of the average book; and the higher the percentage of books of ‘topical’ interest the shorter the life of the stock.

It is therefore reasonably sound to assume that:

a) the average novel will last from 3 to 4 years;

b) the average children’s book from 2½ to 3 years, and
c) the average non-fiction book in general use (i.e. excluding older and more specialized material which may be kept in reserve stocks but would not be included in normal branch shelf stocks) will last between 7 and 8 years. This means that if (and this is a purely hypothetical proportion; desirable proportions depend on a variety of factors) 25 per cent of the total stock are children's books, 30 per cent fiction and 45 per cent non-fiction, and if the average cost of each children's book is 6s., of each novel 7s., and each non-fiction work 10s. (also hypothetical figures), the amount needed every year to maintain a stock of 100,000 volumes (i.e. 25,000 children's books, 30,000 novels, 45,000 works of non-fiction) will be approximately:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Children’s books} & \quad \frac{25,000}{3} \times 6s. = 50,000s. = \£2,500 \\
\text{Fiction} & \quad \frac{30,000}{4} \times 7s. = 52,500s. = \£2,625 \\
\text{Non-fiction} & \quad \frac{45,000}{8} \times 10s. = 56,250s. = \£2,812 \\
\text{Total} & \quad \frac{55,000}{8} \times 10s. = 56,250s. = \£2,812
\end{align*}
\]

The capital cost of such a stock with these prices would be:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Children’s books} & \quad \£7,500 \\
\text{Fiction} & \quad \£10,500 \\
\text{Non-fiction} & \quad \£22,500 \\
\text{Total} & \quad \£40,500.
\end{align*}
\]

This would suggest that, for a stock so proportioned, something in the nature of one-fifth of the capital cost needs to be spent each year for maintenance.

These figures may seem alarming but remember firstly that 100,000 is quite a big stock—enough for maybe 90,000 people—and secondly, that stocks are usually in practice built up gradually. Nevertheless there is no virtue in trying to escape from reality; too many librarians have done so in the past. And the moral of these alarming calculations is twofold—that it is useless to try to run libraries without providing for maintenance and that it is useless to start with more than can be maintained.

Another heavy annual cost which often seems to be overlooked in the estimates of some new systems is for binding and rebinding. Between 25 per cent and 30 per cent of the amount spent on book 'maintenance' is an average estimate.
What now of the man whose life is lived where daily or weekly contact with even a very small city is impossible? His environment will perhaps have much to give him that he can value higher than the gifts of city life. Nevertheless he probably needs books more than the city dweller for three main reasons. The first is that he meets fewer of his fellow men to hear from them news, ideas and opinions; he enjoys less of the discussion, argument and interplay of minds and so he needs books to tell him much that other men might have given him by word of mouth. The second is that he has to rely more upon his own resources, both materially and intellectually. Because there are fewer ‘specialists’ to whom he can turn for advice, or to do things for him, he has to ‘figure out’ more for himself—a process in which practical books can be very useful; and he has—and may count himself fortunate to be able—to do more of his own thinking. Thirdly he has fewer leisure-time occupations from which to choose. Moreover the children have more need to supplement their necessarily limited educational opportunities. On all counts the country dweller needs and deserves a good library service. It is not good enough to say how difficult that is to achieve and so for him off with the grossly inadequate.

Let us have no illusions. It will cost more to give a good ‘country’ service than to provide city libraries. Moreover the countryman may not be able to contribute as much through his local taxation. Consequently—a matter to which we shall return—country services must be supported, by finance, and organization, from state agencies. Here, we are concerned with methods.

There are three main methods of country service to places too small to have branches—the ‘centro’ (supplied by ‘boxes of books’ or otherwise), the travelling library and the mail service.

In every community large enough to have a social centre—every village, every township, with even a score or more inhabitants who can meet together occasionally—a library centre should be established.
It can be a focal point, a social institution as well as a place from which people can obtain books. Centres can be established in a great variety of places—shops, village clubs and institutes, workshops, private houses, inns, schools and chapel and church halls. Local and national conditions will determine the choice of centre. In some countries, schools are not in favour; there is the general objection to church and chapel premises that those who support some other religious belief or none hesitate to go there; to most centres some people will object. Nevertheless an effort should be made to find the best common ground. Often it may be possible to house the library in the office of some local government agency or to build or hire suitable premises specifically for library purposes.

Centres must be provided with proper facilities for the storage and display of books—e.g. bookcases capable of being locked when the centre is not operating, or boxes suitable for transport, which can be set up to form shelves—and with tables and chairs, good light and warmth.

Usually centres will be staffed by volunteers or by local people who give part-time service in return for small payment. Opinion is divided as to which is better. Some librarians maintain that it is desirable to have such measure of control over the staff as can only come if they are paid; others insist that the voluntary system enlists the help of a much better type of person, more keenly interested. The first group of librarians may say that their 'keen' volunteers are less likely to conform to 'official' systems and more likely to want to interfere with other readers' freedom of choice. The matter must be decided everywhere on the merits of prevailing conditions.

Whatever the choice:

a) the centre should be visited and supervised as often as practicable by a qualified librarian representing the county, region, state or other larger agency supporting the centre (it is taken for granted that nowhere can any community be an independent library authority if it is so small that it must rely on a centre; it must be part of a larger scheme). This visiting librarian will help the centre 'librarian' and act as a connecting link with headquarters, and

b) centre librarians must be properly instructed and helped to appreciate that their centres are but part of a larger scheme with much greater resources upon which readers should be encouraged to draw. Occasional conferences of centre librarians and visits to county or regional headquarters can be very useful and stimulating.
The book stock of centres must be changed frequently with fresh supplies from headquarters or from a town library with which centres are associated. The smaller the centre and its stock the more frequent should be the exchange.

Exchange of stock can be effected either a) by boxes of books sent by normal methods of transport (rail, carrier, etc.) or by the library authority's own transport, or b) by means of a travelling library.

Except in unusual circumstances consignments of books should be made direct from headquarters, to which the centre in due course returns them. The alternative—a chain system in which one centre sends its books to another, and so on until each batch has been used at several places in turn—is most unsatisfactory. The batch steadily deteriorates in quality as it proceeds on its travels, becoming more out-of-date, more worn, tattered and torn; though the proverb 'a stitch in time' applies some books do not receive attention until it is too late. They get lost, too, and it is impossible to fix responsibility. And it is, further, impossible to relate the centre stocks to the special needs and conditions of each community.

As an intermediate stage between the centre and individual service it is sometimes desirable to send boxes of books to small groups of families or to families willing to share them with their neighbours.

TRAVELLING LIBRARIES—PURPOSES

Nothing associated with librarianship has ever caught the public imagination like the travelling library, the library on wheels, the 'bibliobus'. There is such a novelty, a boldness, an apparent practicability about the idea that to many the travelling library has become the answer to every prayer, the solution of every problem. Librarians in thickly populated cities are experimenting with travelling libraries; so are those who have to take books to the lonely people of the deserts and icebound wastes.

Faced with such attitudes we must be realistic and dispassionate. Then we shall find that the travelling library can and should do some things; and should not be used to do others.

First let us have a clear idea of the purposes of a travelling library. We say 'purposes' because it can fill at least four quite distinct functions (and maybe two or more of them at the same time).

Firstly—a large van fitted with shelves and small counter may serve as a travelling branch library with a stock of two or three
thousand volumes and be capable of serving quite considerable populations. We will call this a *Mobile Branch Library*.

Secondly—a van smaller than the above for reasons of mobility and economy, displaying books on shelves, can be used to give service to rural communities, isolated farms and homesteads, etc. Since we need a name call this a *Country Van*.

Thirdly—a van similar to the last mentioned may be used primarily to take stock, properly displayed, from which centre librarians can select stock for their collections. Call this an *Exhibition Van*.

In practice it is very easy and usual for one and the same van to combine both functions. If the Exhibition Van is sufficiently convenient for the centre librarians to use, it is probably quite suitable for a few individual readers. Nevertheless the two functions are distinct and might well have an effect upon the operation of the van and its relation to other service points.

Fourthly—the van may be intended and used primarily for the transport of books in boxes or trays and provide no facilities for selection—in brief, be simply a means of conveying books to centres, etc. Call this a *Delivery Van*.

Again a Country Van may act partly as a delivery van, being provided with some space in which boxes of books can be carried.

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**The Mobile Branch**

The idea of Mobile Branches is not new. In more than one large city a van was used long before the war to serve districts (new housing estates, etc.) in which normal branches had not yet been erected. It went on a regular round spending some hours every week at each of a number of fixed sites. Wherever it went it was in fact nothing more or less than a small part-time branch. The idea was adopted in several other city areas during and since the war, chiefly because it has been difficult to find or build suitable permanent premises and consequently it seemed to be the only available means of providing a service point.

The objections to a Mobile Branch are 1° that it can only stay a short time at any one place which is for the rest of the week or fortnight without any kind of service; 2° that it is too small to accommodate many readers at once but if used (as has so far been the case) in thickly populated districts will attract many. If too many come at once they must wait outside probably without any protection against rain and bad weather. There is the minor compensating
advantage that readers are given a better selection of books than it would be economical to provide in each of a large number of part-time branches for which it is a substitute. Details of cost, capital and ‘operating’, as well as details of dimensions, etc. are given in an Appendix. Despite the fact that say twelve part-time branches in their own premises would involve quite a considerable annual charge for rent, cleaning, heating, etc., it is not claimed that the Mobile Branch is cheaper. When used in the suburbs of a thickly populated city, it is frankly an expedient—one of several possible, and perhaps better, methods which happens in existing circumstances to be the only one possible. Nevertheless there are conditions in which the large Mobile Branch is worth consideration, for example in a fairly large but scattered urban community, such as one which stretches along a main road without any real and convenient centre.

Incidentally it has been found that in suitable circumstances it is economical to have a Mobile Branch which is without its own power but is either a towed trailer or part of an ‘articulated’ combination, because then if its stay is long there is no need for the driver to remain; he can return to his depot for other duties and, indeed, could handle two or more Mobile Branches.

THE COUNTRY VAN

The Country Van is quite a different proposition because, whereas the Mobile Branch has limited uses, this must be the backbone of any successful attempt to take library services into country districts.

It is a sound general principle that any ‘travelling library’ should carry as many books as possible, because the outstanding virtue of the country van or the exhibition van is that it offers its users a good selection. Moreover, the heaviest item of ‘running cost’ is staff, which is the same whatever the size of the vehicle. But the deciding factor is mobility: our vehicle must be able to travel over country roads—even off them—in all kinds of weather. Experience shows that the happy medium is a vehicle capable of displaying 1,500 to 2,000 volumes and carrying a driver and a library assistant. In many districts even this may be too large to negotiate the available routes, to visit isolated homesteads, etc. It might be noted here though out of context, that if in an area there are sufficient large centres on good roads to justify the use of a 2,000 volume van but also a number of other ‘ports of call’—isolated communities and homesteads off the beaten track—it may be more economical to use
a second smaller van with its own independent itinerary to serve the latter. To use a smaller van for all places in that area because the larger one could not reach some of them would deprive all the centres of the best available selection.

The Country Van (in the sense of our previous definition) is, let it be remembered, not a substitute for a branch (whole-time or part-time) in a place where it is practicable to provide premises capable of displaying a shelf stock of 1,500-2,000 volumes or more (i.e. for a city with 1,000 people or more within easy access). It is a substitute for local 'centres' with perhaps only two or three hundred books and probably with unqualified part-time voluntary staff, which may be all that it is possible to provide for smaller places.

The advantages of the Country Van are:

a) that it carries a selection of up to ten times more books than there might be in an average small centre. Most important is the fact that better displays of non-fiction, and better and more useful books in general, are possible.

b) it brings qualified professional librarianship with it—an incalculable advantage. There is some one capable both of helping readers to get what they want (and it may well be assumed that most of those receiving country van service have had little or no experience of books and libraries) and of establishing contacts between readers and headquarters so that material found to be desirable can be sent specially (e.g. by mail) or brought on the next journey.

c) it can provide some reference service. The man in the great city can visit or telephone the reference department whenever he needs any information; and a well developed, properly stocked and staffed information service is of inestimable value to the community. Something must be done also to help the man in the small town or in the country who needs information. Firstly the country van can carry a shelf full of simple question-answering books; secondly the assistant can obtain an accurate idea of what is needed—something which the enquirer might well be incapable of stating in a letter—and arrange for headquarters to send the answer (or requisite material).

d) excepting when very bad weather renders the roads impassable, it can maintain a regular service all through the year. This is particularly important in districts where the only available 'centres' are in schools which may be closed during long periods for holidays.

e) it can take books to people who might find it impracticable to use any centres. This again is especially noteworthy if many centres
are in schools because it is then common for the 'centre' to be open immediately after school finishes for the day, a time when most men are working and the women may be preparing the evening meal. Experience in one country at least shows that there is no van the adults rely upon the books brought home for them by their children—an obviously unsatisfactory arrangement; besides, what happens when the children leave school? or if there aren't any? So, in practice, the country van can reach many who would otherwise have to go without books.

The chief disadvantage of the Country Van is that it cannot as a rule visit many places at a really convenient time. It must of course operate according to a pre-arranged and regular time-table, preferably one which takes it to each place at the same time on the same day each week or alternate week; otherwise people will forget. As this time-table will naturally be determined by geographical factors, and by the working day of the staff which is all too short, most calls will be made when most people are away at work, and few evening calls or 'market day' visits will be possible. The disadvantage is less than may appear. The van can call at homesteads, farms, factories, and its visit will attract all who can leave their other activities for a few moments; elsewhere, readers will leave their books for return, and a note of their requirements, with friends and relatives.

A country van service will, of course, cost a good deal more than a 'boxes of books' centre system. The reason is very simple. The country Van will give an entirely different and very much better standard of service and it is idle to imagine that the librarian is more capable than anyone else of producing results without incurring the necessary expenditure. Too many librarians in the past have attempted miracles and been allowed by their governments to do so. They have failed and in the long run failure is very expensive.

Readers must of course be allowed to take enough books to last them until the van comes again. The number will vary considerably not only upon the reading habits of the individuals but also upon the extent to which books will be passed from reader to reader in the family or circle of friends.

How often should the country van call? As often as possible. In fairly closely settled countries a fortnightly visit is usual. Much must depend, however, upon geographical factors—upon the number of places that can be visited in a day's run, or a week's run, on how much of the day is spent on the road as distinct from at the points of call, upon where the van is based.

Daily journeys are practicable in relatively thickly populated
country districts where few places are far from some town upon which the van can be based. Such conditions exist throughout very few countries, however.

Usually much longer journeys are necessary. In one not very thinly settled country the van makes six weeks' journeys, the one librarian driver sometimes sleeping in his van, usually with friends at his ports of call. Long journeys are of course very trying to the staff and seldom is it desirable as in the above example to have it a solitary pilgrimage. Unless costs in relation to readers served are exceptionally high two people should be employed; the driver will find plenty to do helping the librarian at stops and looking after his vehicle, etc.

One thing that must not be forgotten is that the book stock also gets 'tired'—at each stop someone will return books that either need withdrawal for repairs or rebinding or were provided in the first instance to meet special needs and so lack in general appeal. Before long—even by the end of the day—the shelf selection will be much inferior to the attractive well balanced collection with which the van set out. Consequently every time the van returns to headquarters the stock must be drastically overhauled; it may well save time to have a completely new stock ready for en bloc replacement. There should, of course, be time and opportunity for the librarian to look out the books he needs on the next trip to meet special requests (unless he has been able to send prior postal notice of them to headquarters—and that may not be a suitable way of handling some requests for, after all, only he knows the reader).

A further disadvantage of the long trip is that, as every reader must be given enough books to last him, a considerable stock will in time become 'boiled up'.

When the country van does not return to headquarters often enough, collections of fresh material can be sent to rail-heads, stations, or other places to which they can be sent in advance, in cases. The librarian collects the fresh material and weeds out an equivalent quantity for return to headquarters by the same means. It is grossly uneconomical to use an expensive means of distribution without giving it the best possible goods to distribute.

**VAN CIRCUITS**

Experience alone will tell how many and what kind of vans with what itineraries are necessary. Nevertheless much unnecessary
and expensive experiment can be saved by sound preliminary planning and reconnaissance. For example, plot on a large-scale map the places where there are communities needing service and consider which of the many possible routes will serve the most points with the minimum of mileage. Generally it will be best if possible to arrange separate (one- or two-day) circuits for nearby places and let the drivers who have to go further start and finish with a clear uninterrupted day's run; also, as already noted, it is better to have, if possible, separate circuits for the off-the-road and difficult spots and for the places on the main roads.

A country van service will usually be initiated by gradual stages. Here, as in every other aspect of library development, the author would insist that it is thoroughly unsound to try to stretch available resources, hoping that they will achieve more than they are reasonably capable of doing. Nothing succeeds like success and, apart from their primary duty of giving service, the first country vans must, above all, demonstrate their value and efficiency when properly used. They should also provide data which will guide as well as encourage the expansion of the system. For these reasons it may be well to use the first vans for different types of territory. If they are all used for either 'easy' or 'difficult' routes they will give a false idea of cost.

THE EXHIBITION VAN

The Exhibition van—i.e., one intended primarily to display a stock from which centre and small branch librarians may select their stock—will have much more limited uses. Some county librarians, indeed, suggest that a better selection can be prepared in advance at headquarters than can be made by a centre librarian, inevitably pressed for time and more likely to choose items of popular appeal than to include a reasonable proportion of less 'obvious' books. A compromise—the bulk selected in advance, the centre librarian choosing say 10 or 20 per cent—has been suggested. Usually the work of an exhibition van is combined with that of the country van. Remember that the latter need not always be a substitute for centres; it can often usefully be a supplementary service. Those readers who can find some of the things they want to read in a small centre stock will use it most of the time, selecting from the van only occasionally; those desiring a larger selection will use the van in preference to the centre. When such is the case the visit
of the van can be a chance for the centre librarian to refresh her stock. If this is to be an effective opportunity, however, the van must stay long enough and the centre librarian must be given a chance to examine the stock unhampered by many members of the general public.

Mention of centre exchanges, reminds us that (whether carried out by van or by 'boxes of books') there are two methods of exchange — (a) total exchange at one time, and (b) partial exchange. The latter is infinitely preferable. The former is sometimes adopted because it is administratively easier but as it involves all the books being called in and readers consequently being without books for days or weeks it should only be used in cases of absolute necessity.

THE DELIVERY VAN

To the function of delivery van it is not necessary to devote many words. Experience has, however, shown that unless factors of distance and communications prevent, it is better for any county library system to have its own transport than to rely upon hired transport, or the ordinary rail or road transport systems. Hired transport may be both expensive and unreliable; it usually involves much more careful and consequently expensive packing and may not give direct delivery. With a delivery van driven by an employee of the library system interested in his job, there is, moreover, a very valuable contact with local centre librarians. When considering the size of a delivery van note that 1,500 books in boxes or trays weigh about one ton. In a 10 cwt. vehicle only about 500 books could be carried—not enough to justify use on any but very short or difficult runs. Usually the 25 cwt. to 30 cwt. type is a good compromise between carrying capacity and road conditions. The rear doors of a delivery van should be so hinged that they can be folded back flat against the sides and kept in position by hooks. In this way risks from passing traffic can be avoided and the side-walk is not obstructed. Moreover, it is possible for the van to park beside high embankments.

COUNTRY VANS—VEHICLES

For the success of a country van service, careful consideration must be given to the type of vehicle used and the way it is equipped.
If possible choose a passenger (and not a goods) chassis because the more flexible springs will be more comfortable for driver and librarian-passenger and minimize the risk of books being thrown off the shelves while the van is negotiating bad roads. For normal operating conditions the country van should fulfil the following requirements:

**CHASSIS**

a) the wheel-base (i.e. the distance between the centre of the front and of the rear wheels) determines the length of the body which may not usually overhang by more than half the length of the wheel-base. A wheel-base of between 13 feet and 15 feet 6 inches is recommended;

b) a small turning-circle is desirable;

c) that type of construction which permits the driver to sit *by the side of* instead of *behind* the engine (as on a London omnibus) makes a larger body possible;

d) prefer a chassis provided with a mechanical tyre pump and built-in automatic jacks;

e) pay serious consideration to the makers’ ‘service’ organization in the area in which the van will operate—how easy it is to get running repairs put in hand, to get spare parts, etc. The country van runs on a schedule. Delays and disorganization through breakdown must be kept to a minimum.

**BODY**

There are two distinct types—

a) the inside type with shelves inside the van which borrowers enter to make their selection, and

b) the outside type with shelves outside covered by hinged flaps which are raised when the van is being used, the readers standing outside.

The former is the invariable choice of British libraries; some Americans prefer the latter, which undoubtedly permits more readers to choose their books at once.

The former is strongly recommended—for where in the world can one guarantee perpetual good weather; how much better to be able to come inside out of the rain or the cold. Moreover it can display more books.
There are also types with both inside and outside shelving. For detailed specifications of an example of this as of the more usual 'inside' types, see the Appendix.

The following notes refer to an 'inside type' van.

a) The entrance should be on the side nearest the curb, not at the rear to avoid the danger of readers, especially children, stepping out into passing traffic. A sliding door has two advantages—it allows the van to pull up against a high embankment and it is easier to handle in a high wind.

b) A small staff counter, with space for books, drawers and cupboards underneath, is necessary, best placed immediately behind the driver's cab. Alternatively, a table-top can be mounted on runners so that it can be pulled into the driver's cab when the van is in use (the driver uses it as a desk when charging or discharging books) and pushed into the van itself while it is on the road.

c) The shelves should be fixed the correct distance apart, some for fiction, the rest for non-fiction, with some accommodation for 'oversize' books. The exact distance between shelves will vary from country to country according to customary book sizes; in Great Britain, 8" between shelves for fiction and between 11" and 1' for non-fiction would be ample. To prevent books being thrown off, the shelves can be inclined; the front should be about 1 1/4" higher than the back; and the backs of the shelves being inclined at the same angle. Otherwise the top corners of the books will get worn and damaged. Well designed wood shelving of light construction is preferable to steel shelving which is heavier, and in most patterns takes up a little more space.

d) Lighting, natural and artificial, and ventilation must be adequate. As wall space must be used as far as possible for shelving, good natural lighting and ventilation are obtained by providing either a clerestory roof or flush-fitting windows in the roof; in both cases the windows should be hinged, and arranged to open in such a way that rain does not blow in if the van is travelling with some windows open.

Obtain artificial lighting either from the vehicle batteries (for this an additional battery is needed) or by Calor gas or some similar form of portable gas. When a van operates in districts which are supplied with electricity, arrangements can be made to provide at each stopping-place an electric 'point' into which the van can 'plug'. For this purpose about 150 feet of suitable flex should be carried on a drum or winder. If this source of electricity is available the van may also be heated by electricity.
The opening of a rural library.
Children's room in a branch library.

Children enjoy a recorded story hour arranged by the county librarian.
e) A Clayton heater or a similar type which draws hot water from
the cooling system of the engine to a radiator behind which a small
electric fan is mounted has been found satisfactory in some vans,
but would not be satisfactory except when the van is travelling.
Calor gas can also be used for heating. Slow-combustion stoves
have also been tried in some vans.

f) The van should have a special horn or siren with a character-
istic loud note, used to announce its arrival.

f) Some of the more elaborate vans provide seating accommoda-
ction but it is doubtful whether this is wise as space for shelving and for
borrowers is inevitably reduced.

For specifications of typical vans, see the Appendix.

COUNTRY VANS—COSTS

It is impossible to give an accurate estimate of capital and running
costs as so much will depend upon local conditions (e. g. taxes on
vehicle sales, 'road' taxes, the cost of petrol, insurance-rates,
wages, etc.).

As a very rough guide, however, such a van would cost in England
about £500 for the chassis and between £900 and £1,400 for the
body and fittings.

Assuming the annual mileage to be 10,000, the annual cost would
be in the nature of £1,150 made up as follows:

- Drivers' wages................................. 300
- Library assistant's wages and subsistance allowance... 450
- Tax, insurance, petrol, oil, garage and maintenance
  (including tyres)............................. 200
- Allowance for depreciation.................... 200

In America it is estimated that a medium-sized bookmobile, on a
standard chassis with a special body, will cost between £900 and
£1,000, a larger bookmobile with special fittings from £1,250 to
£2,000. The annual cost of operation and maintenance including
storage, insurance and depreciation will cost between £200 and £300
excluding staff and stock.

The last-mentioned item, stock, must of course be included in any
total assessment of the cost of a country van service. A van 'uses'
a considerable number of books—how many will vary considerably
according to the size of the places served and the interval between
visits. As an example, it has been found that a van serving a fairly densely populated country district, visiting each place every fortnight and making 18 single-day journeys, absorbs 10,000 volumes, i.e. books in the hands of readers, stock in the van, reserves for replenishment, books temporarily out of service for repairs and binding, etc.
CHAPTER VII

SERVICE TO INDIVIDUALS

In most areas branch, centre and travelling library provision will need to be supplemented by one or both of the types of personal service now to be discussed: a) personal service to those who cannot be reached by, or who cannot conveniently use, normal service points, and b) personal service to those with individual requirements which cannot be met from the stock at the time at their service points. The two categories are not mutually exclusive.

SERVICE TO ISOLATED READERS

In the first we are concerned with people living far from their fellows—in isolated farms, on islands, in mountainous regions, in mining and construction camps, lighthouses, etc.—to whom books must be sent by any possible means of communication and transport. Wherever boats, carriers, aeroplanes can go books can be sent. What concerns us here, however, is not the method of transport but the problem of how these people can make known their needs—a dual problem because, though the despatching headquarters must have a good idea of which books are needed, the recipient borrowers far from libraries and the world of books can hardly be expected to know what is available. Indeed the librarian will find it extremely difficult to ensure that these potential readers even know that any library services are available. The ideal, where it was practicable, would be for a travelling field officer to visit the region, personally contacting as many people as possible, explaining the scheme, describing resources and ascertaining needs, tastes and standards of reading ability. In most regions, however, this will remain only an ideal; the next best course is widespread circularization, followed by the periodical despatch of reading lists and bulletins. One state with a large, very thinly settled, almost desert province to serve uses a printed catalogue of a representative stock of some three or four

perhaps a small centre, it is best and quickest to send special requests by post not to the service point but to the reader’s home.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS OF READERS

Reference to this matter leads us to a wider question—not how do we send these books to the reader but where do we get them in the first place; in other words how can the library services of any area, of any state or nation be so organized that the reader anywhere can secure the books, however specialized or ‘individualized’ that he wants. In this organization there are several stages:

Firstly the needs of an isolated reader, or of one using a centre or a small branch may be met by recourse to the stocks of the larger local system of which it may be a part or with which it should be associated. As has been stressed throughout this book small libraries simply must not operate in isolation. This is one of the reasons. Small library systems cannot possess stocks capable of meeting many specialized needs. The only sensible course is the formation of larger agencies—large ‘counties’ embracing their public libraries.
thousand items from which readers make their choice. When they return one batch of books they enclose a list, with ample alternatives, of those they need next. As this means that the readers are without books for at least a few days it is best to have requests sent by post in advance so that the new batch reaches the reader before he returns the old one. The catalogue is kept up to date with occasional supplements. A catalogue of this kind can give very little information about each book, however. Consequently brief descriptive lists on special subjects and of interesting new books should be despatched as well. With such assistance readers can enjoy a very reasonable choice especially if, as in this state, the ‘country library department’ conducts a heavy correspondence with hundreds of its readers who write not only about the books they have enjoyed and those they would like to have but also about their families, their homes and their work. It would be very wrong to say that this was not the job of the librarian; on the contrary it helps him to get that understanding and sympathy without which an effective service cannot operate and it helps in no small way to show the isolated countryman that he is not forgotten by his ‘distant’ governments that he ‘counts’ in the national economy.

The cost of post or transport should be borne by the library agency not by the individual borrower—on the one hand because it is unfair that his library service should cost him more, perhaps much more, than it does those more conveniently situated, on the other hand because for many readers the cost might deter or limit full use of the service. Nevertheless any system must be very costly in staff time which either involves innumerable petty payments by headquarters to postal authorities, etc. for parcels sent ‘carriage forward’ or the refund of postages incurred by readers. Consequently for economy’s sake as well as for other reasons all countries are urged to arrange for library books sent to and from readers to be carried ‘post free’ or at least at very favourable rates. In countries where the State makes a contribution to library expenditure free postal service is, indeed, little more than a question of book-keeping—of paying from one purse rather than another; with free postage the payment will be much less.

Personal service for those who use branches, centres, etc. but who need books not in their ‘local’ stocks, may be given in several ways—e.g. by sending the required books to their local branches, taking them out with the country van, etc. Postal service is necessary, however, when books are needed urgently and cannot wait for the next ‘exchange’ or the next visit of the van. It has been found also

In a county-city system incorporating a large city system the greater resources of the latter, available both to city users and country readers, will to a large extent serve the purpose of a county ‘students’ section’ with resulting economy, as the more people can use a stock the cheaper it becomes.

In systems involving not large united agencies but, instead, the co-operation of smaller independent services, it is not impossible to have such ‘students’ sections’ and pools of more specialised stocks. For example, the largest element in a combination could form one for the common benefit, either with financial assistance from the other participants or with a special grant from the state or national agency. Alternatively, the libraries in the co-operating scheme should maintain, at one place, a union catalogue of non-fiction holdings to permit inter-library borrowing.

Secondly, as even a large well-organized local county-city system will not be able to meet many of the more specialized demands, there must be means of passing these on to larger or more specialized sources of supply. For example the state library agency (to be considered later) may maintain its own central ‘students section’—or it may, in a large state, establish regional centres as an intermediate stage. The state library agency should also itself provide a central
that when a reader has to use not a larger, full-time branch, but perhaps a small centre, it is best and quickest to send special requests by post not to the service point but to the reader's home.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS OF READERS

Reference to this matter leads us to a wider question—not how do we send these books to the reader but where do we get them in the first place; in other words how can the library services of any area, of any state or nation be so organized that the reader anywhere can secure the books, however specialized or 'individualized' that he wants. In this organization there are several stages:

Firstly the needs of an isolated reader, or of one using a centre or a small branch may be met by recourse to the stocks of the larger local system of which it may be a part or with which it should be associated. As has been stressed throughout this book small libraries simply must not operate in isolation. This is one of the reasons. Small library systems cannot possess stocks capable of meeting many specialized needs. The only sensible course is the formation of larger agencies—large 'counties' embracing their neighbouring cities, 'regional' schemes, etc.

Where large county systems exist they usually have at headquarters what is called (for want of a better word) a 'students' section'—a collection of books, often very extensive, partly of material too specialized to be suitably included in the normal stock of branches, etc., partly of books on educational, scientific, technological and economic matters, normally stocked by branches and likely to be requested by the isolated or centre readers. Such books justify duplication in the students' section because it is cheaper, quicker and more effective to be able to supply them direct than to call them back from branch stock. This can be—and frequently is—done because at the county headquarters a record is kept of the non-fiction books (or at least of the less common items) in any branch at any time. It is thus simple to ask the branch to return or to reserve the required item—simple but not usually quick and economical of staff time.

(In parentheses it may be said that the wise librarian relates, in his calculations, the respective costs of book supply and staff work and knows that it is false economy to save on the former at the expense of the latter. For example, if it costs two or three shillings in staff time and postage two or three times a year to 'borrow a book back' from branch stock it is much cheaper to buy an extra copy in the first instance).
In a county-city system incorporating a large city system the greater resources of the latter, available both to city users and country readers, will to a large extent serve the purpose of a county "students' section" with resulting economy, as the more people can use a stock the cheaper it becomes.

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Secondly, as even a large well-organized local county-city system will not be able to meet many of the more specialized demands, there must be means of passing these on to larger or more specialized sources of supply. For example the state library agency (to be considered later) may maintain its own central 'students section'—or it may, in a large state, establish regional centres as an intermediate stage. The state library agency should also itself provide a central bureau, with necessary union catalogues, enabling specialized items to be located and supplied; alternatively it might assist another agency to provide this bureau. In one country, at least, a nationwide system of co-operation has been developed. The country is divided into regions, each with a regional bureau where a union catalogue is maintained of non-fiction books in all the public libraries and many non-public libraries in the region. If a book cannot be provided by this means the request passes to a national central bureau which is able to draw upon (i) its own resources; (ii) other regional bureaux, and (iii) a number of co-operating specialist libraries.
In this book it has been necessary to cover all types of library service-unit and to accept the fact that there are, and are likely for many years to be, a great many small library authorities. Nevertheless experience everywhere demonstrates the advantages of the large country-city system embracing as many people and as large an area as can be brought naturally within the scope of one administrative and distributive system, and also be capable of local control and genuine relation to local needs. The size and nature of this ideal system will vary considerably according to local circumstances, but the organization must usually conform to a basic pattern.

COUNTY HEADQUARTERS

For the typical county system, headquarters premises are needed embracing the following departments:

1) Administration department—for personnel dealing with staff, records, finance, development projects, etc.

2) Accessions and cataloguing department.

3) A Public Lending Library serving the local population of the city where headquarters are situated and any others who can visit it. If the city authorities provide an independent city library there is no need for this department, provided the city library will cater for non-resident visitors.

4) Reference department and bibliographical centre, capable of answering questions of all kinds posed by people throughout the area served and also of supplying information about books for public and staff use. Reference and information services must not be the prerogative of the city dweller; the people in the country districts are just as much in need of a good reference service. They must be able to send their enquiries either direct or through their local branches, etc. and receive from the service the answers, or books.
capable of giving answers, or extracts or photographic copies of extracts from books. Unless there is a city-provided reference library this county department must also serve the local population. Conversely if there is a city reference library arrangements should be made to avoid duplication of effort and resources. Here is another strong argument for unified county-city organization.

5th Students section—the main function of which has been described. It will usually be responsible also for arranging inter-branch loans, providing collections of books for adult classes, etc. and collecting and supplying books for special displays and special subject loans.

6th Distribution department—from which books are sent to local branches and centres for bulk exchanges. Here also the vans which operate from headquarters will be stocked and replenished.

BULK EXCHANGES

Bulk loan stocks and 'students sections' are best kept separately shelved.

For bulk exchanges good reserves are needed. The work of exchange will necessarily be spread as evenly as possible over the year; there will be a constant flow of books in and out of the department, and much thought must be given to the three-fold problem of ensuring that every selection despatched is well balanced and in good condition; that centres and small branches are not sent books which they have recently returned; and that the physical 'manhandling' of books is kept to a minimum. A simple method of dealing with small batches is to lay out the returned books, in order, on a bench; check and mark off the 'issue' records; remove books needing repair, etc. and any items which are no longer suitable; make up the number with fresh items including any books specially appropriate to the new centre to which it can then be sent after making the proper issue records.

Naturally this simple method applies only when the centres concerned are receiving much the same number of books—an argument in favour of adopting a few standard-size units rather than attempting to secure a close mathematical ratio between population and centre stocks.

To avoid sending the same items twice some libraries keep a record of books sent to each centre and check each new batch with the list. This involves a great deal of labour, however, and it is
cheaper and simpler to take a chance; it is unlikely that more than a very few unwanted books will be sent and if this happened they could be returned and substitutes despatched by post. Another method is to make up a number of exchange ‘sets’ which are all different and to send these sets in turn to the various centres. This is a good idea so long as it is applied reasonably, for obviously it will become more and more difficult, as books need repair, to maintain the original contents of any set.

**BRANCH EXCHANGES**

Branch stocks are usually exchanged a part at a time and here also the provision of different ‘sets’ is useful up to a point.

Total exchange is not impracticable if there are two or more branches with much the same number of books. If such total exchange is contemplated the books in each branch must bear a clear distinguishing mark (e. g. a different coloured board label) and the only reference to the location of the branch should be on a date-label tipped on the endpaper and easily removable. The exchange would be made only at very infrequent intervals (say every four or five years) and would be in two stages: Firstly, every book in Branch A would be taken to Branch B and vice versa, and new date-labels substituted; the catalogues would be transferred also (a great advantage of this system as few processes can take more time than constant revision of catalogue records to keep pace with stock changes). Secondly, the books that were ‘out’ on the day of the exchange would be put aside and, in due course, sent to the other library.

**COUNTY LOAN RECORDS**

Records must be kept to a minimum consistent with efficiency. Every record that is maintained represents an expenditure of manpower; therefore, of every record the realistic librarian must ask himself what would happen if it wasn’t kept. This is an important matter. Whatever the reasons may be it is the author’s experience that in young library services—and in small libraries—there is a tendency to adopt processes that are much more detailed and elaborate than are really necessary, e. g. to adopt all manner of ‘safeguards’ the value of which is discounted by experience, to keep detailed
'statistics' that serve no real purpose. Remember that the smaller and the younger a library system the less staff time is there available for non-essentials.

Nevertheless county librarians are agreed that, as distinct from catalogue and bibliographical information, the following records are necessary.

The county headquarters should know:

a) what books there are in the whole system;
b) what books are at each service point;
c) where each item of non-fiction is at any time; and each service point should know:

a) what books it has in stock;
b) which borrower has each book that is 'out'.

Consequently at headquarters there should be two cards—it is best to use the standard 5" × 3" size for all such records. One complete set is kept arranged in whatever order is best (according to the cataloguing system, etc.)—author, alphabetical, or classified. The location of each non-fiction book is noted from time to time on its card in this set. The second card is kept in the book itself when it is at headquarters; when the book is sent to a service point it is filed with the cards for all the other books there.

When the book goes out it carries with it two cards—a 5" × 3" 'stock' card and a 'charging' card. When it reaches the centre or branch the local librarian removes the former and files it with the cards for the other books at the centre thus having a list of the books in his stock. The other card stays in the book until it is borrowed when it is taken out and put with the borrower's ticket. Of all the controversies that from time to time shake the library profession none are so virulent as comparisons between 'charging' methods. Nevertheless, having studied innumerable systems from the prehistoric written ledger to the 'photographic', the author humbly suggests that the simple system of having a card for each book and a ticket (or tickets) for each borrower and putting the two together when the book and the borrower are together is the best and simplest and achieves all that is necessary.

COUNTY HEADQUARTERS STAFF

The headquarters staff of a well developed county system will include a few specialists—e.g. officers in charge of reference and information work; of work with children and schools; of adult
education, youth services, music, etc. It is wise also to employ a specially qualified finance officer and secretary. This applies equally to every fair-sized library system; it is wasteful to use qualified librarians for this kind of work as is too often done—especially as they are not likely to do it as well. In any large system non-librarians should also be employed to deal with the maintenance of the premises, etc. (repairs, construction and adaptation works, etc.) and the maintenance of vehicles.

Nevertheless, apart from the non-librarian specialists last mentioned, there should be reasonable interchangeability between the staffs of headquarters and of service points in the field; thus the two elements will better understand one another’s problems, and excessive centralization and ‘remote control’ will be avoided.

COUNTY DECENTRALIZATION

In the larger county systems decentralization has been adopted; sub-headquarters being established from which the centres and branches in the surrounding area are serviced, provided with exchange stocks and supervised by sub-headquarters staff. The system has many advantages—it brings good calibre staff further out into the field, the transport and staff costs of supplying branches and centres can be much reduced, sometimes part-time branches in the neighbourhood can be staffed from the sub-headquarters. Usually it gives a general lending and reference service to the town where it is situated which enables better stocks to be available than would otherwise be possible. County vans are also often centred upon sub-regional headquarters. The chief disadvantages of the system—and they are far outweighed by its virtues—are that it absorbs more stock, as reserve pools for distribution must be kept at each sub-headquarters; and that it is less easy quickly to locate individual books that are specially required at headquarters. Headquarters records of stock location will only show that a book is in the sub-headquarters area, not the actual service point where it is located; this will be shown by area records. Incidentally as these are often called ‘regional’ libraries and ‘regional’ schemes readers must be careful not to confuse them with ‘regional schemes’ which cover large territories and are a sub-division not of a county but of a state.
REGIONAL SYSTEMS

A regional scheme, as the term is used here, may be provided by:

a) several ‘counties’ or other local authorities amalgamated for this purpose, with a joint governing body.

b) a ‘regional government’ perhaps appointed only for this purpose, but possibly one appointed for the general government of the region or for some specific governmental function to which library provision can usefully be allied, or

c) the state library agency itself, when it in fact represents a ‘decentralization’ of state provision.

However provided, the machinery of administration does not differ in essentials from that of a large county, with headquarters, sub-headquarters, branches, centres, travelling libraries, etc. and much the same services will be given.

The difference is one of distribution. Most of the service points will be smaller and further apart; there will probably be greater reliance upon ‘personal services’ and travelling libraries. The period between van visits, centre exchanges, etc. may be longer, which will mean that more stock per reader is needed. There will often be large tracts of territory difficult to reach regularly, throughout the year—which may involve the provision of larger centres for relatively small communities. It is fairly certain that the proportion of State aid will need to be larger; moreover, as the size of the territory will be large the type of library committee appropriate to more compact systems (i. e. one on which the various local elements are adequately represented) will be impracticable; there must be more reliance both on the officers and on such elected representatives of the public as can most conveniently and effectively, at headquarters and sub-headquarters, exercise a general oversight.

Conversely, as it is essential to relate a regional service to the needs of the people whose conditions of life will probably vary considerably within the region, the library staff must include a high proportion of ‘field officers’, travelling (perhaps with the country vans) as widely and frequently as possible throughout the region.
The functions and constitution of state agencies were noted in an earlier section. Now, having considered some of the practical problems and opportunities of local, county, and regional libraries, what of the activities of the state agencies, particularly in relation to the local agencies? What shall the State Library Board when appointed try to do?

**STAFF**

Firstly it must see that its own staff—and particularly its principal officers—are of the right calibre. This is no question of comparing and ‘ranking’ the state librarian with the librarians of large city or county systems; these too need the ‘best’ men and the administration of a local library service may well both appeal more strongly and offer equivalent or even better rewards to the most capable librarians in the nation. Nevertheless the state librarian has great responsibilities, needs vision, drive, outstanding organizing abilities and that type of personality capable of creating good relationships with both librarians and the members of governments, of inspiring enthusiasm and of ‘getting his own way’ when it is the right way with a minimum of friction and opposition. Above all he must deserve the respect from other librarians that they will give only to the man who knows their job as well as any man can; when possible (i.e. except when library services are newly initiated) he should have ‘gone through the mill’ himself and had practical experience in the field.

**STATE ASSISTANCE TO LOCAL AGENCIES**

Secondly, library development throughout the state should be based upon a thorough survey of conditions, close consultations
with local authorities and representative groups and organizations, and a clear conception of the objectives to be achieved. Plans for extension, progressively stage by stage, must be prepared—plans so flexible that the lessons of experience can be applied without dislocation, and that any opportunities, local or national, can be seized; and yet so definite that all concerned may know where they stand, what help they may expect, what responsibilities they incur.

These plans should be conducive to progress and secure continuity of service. This is most likely to result from a careful consideration of the respective interests and abilities of local and state authorities, in other words if the state does not expect too much from the local authority either in enthusiasm or financial support. For example, it is useless to start a local service with considerable grant aid if it is withdrawn or reduced before the local authority is able or willing to provide not merely the difference, but also the additional amount necessary for expanding development. This does not mean either that good grants should never be given lest they encourage local authorities to lean too much on grant-aid; or, conversely, that local authorities should be tempted, by continuing grant, to neglect their own responsibilities. Local authorities may be required to promise to meet their own agreed share of permanent maintenance on an approved sliding scale.

In some countries, however, local expenditure on libraries is optional and depends on the free will of the local council; and generally it is not legal for local councils to anticipate the wishes of their successors by long-term undertakings of this kind. Consequently the only safeguards against local defection are a) to pass overriding state legislation specifically to permit long-term contracts and make them binding; and b) much better in every way, to give sufficient initial support to create really good libraries so that the public may be relied upon to insist on their being maintained. As regards the other factor, financial inability, plain truth must be faced: the State must not start anything that it is not prepared to support sufficiently to ensure permanent efficiency. In other words it must be prepared to continue indefinitely 'making-good' genuine local deficiencies, and so the state agency must seek sufficient support from state funds.

In the above we have been thinking of 'maintenance' grants, i.e. grants for annual costs of staff, buildings, maintenance of stocks, etc. Grants for 'capital' purposes are even more important. Indeed, if capital grants are adequate it might often be practicable to adopt a permanent ratio of state maintenance-grants, e.g. a certain percentage...
tage of local expenditure, the percentage being determined by local financial ability. Thus as the library system develops both parties, local authority and state, will provide more money. Capital grants, let it be repeated, are most important. As already mentioned, capital expenditure on book stocks must always be incurred; it is necessary also for the building and adaptation of premises, the provision of fittings, equipment, vehicles and the like. Some part of this capital expenditure will arise from time to time as a system expands, and if the system is large enough much of it may be met from annual income. But the library must start with the necessary resources; and in the long run it is a mistake to provide this by raising loans the repayment of which with annual interest may well prove a grave liability. There are already too many library authorities in the world so saddled with debt that they cannot afford to buy the books that alone would make the buildings useful.

STOCK PROVISION

Thirdly, the state agency must secure the best results from its own and, indeed, from local expenditure. Grant regulations, inspections and all the devices of supervision and advice will achieve much, but in the last resort it is a question of stock. The value of a library service depends absolutely upon the quality of the stock that is provided and used. This is not a simple matter and it is useless to pretend that it is. Local library authorities must enjoy the maximum freedom; no one is more fervently opposed than is the present writer to any dictation, by anyone, as to what people shall read. The basic principle of his whole philosophy of librarianship is that the public library must be a full free opportunity for the individual. Yet the inescapable fact remains that it does not by any means follow that left to themselves all, or even most, local authorities will provide the best material, will, indeed, afford their readers that full free opportunity. Thus the dilemma arises—leave them alone and they might not do their proper job; make them do their job and they will lose interest and resent interference. The problem is not serious in the larger authorities with competent professional leadership; in the smaller authorities, which will always be in a great majority, it is real. Consequently we are strongly in favour of grants 'in kind' not in substitution for financial aid but as an important supplementation. Every local authority must have freely at its own disposal some substantial part of the money to be spent on
books. In addition there should be book stocks provided and selected by the state agency, at the disposal of the smaller local authorities. For example, in at least one country the national library agency lends books to all but the larger authorities. No charge is made. The books are exchanged at frequent intervals and the number of books lent is related to the population served in accordance with a sliding scale that provides more books per 100 of population to smaller places and less to the larger. These loans serve another purpose apart from ensuring that some useful representative books find their way into every service point. The librarian and the readers of all local services are at liberty to ask for any items they want, but in truth the librarians and readers in the smaller places cannot know what material exists. In other words they cannot undertake truly representative book selection because they lack the necessary bibliographical information. Realizing this limitation, in some countries steps have been taken to publish select lists of 'books for small libraries'. They are surely better than no guidance but their ultimate effect is to stock a large number of libraries with the same small selection from a rich and varied range of material. It is far better for the state to provide the widest possible selection and see that it is freely circulated throughout the library system.

STAFF ON LOAN

The national library agency just mentioned does something else that is worthy of imitation: it lends qualified staff to local authorities to help them either start or reorganize their library systems. Despite the fact that every library should have its own qualified librarian this assistance has several virtues. For example the man sent from state headquarters will probably be of much greater experience, personality and enthusiasm than the librarian employed by a small authority could reasonably be expected to be; he can both set affairs on the right course and do things, drastic and realistic, that a local employee would neither think nor dare to do—and do so in such a way as to retain good will and interest. Moreover, in the case of an existing system that needs reorganization, it might well happen that the local librarian, who will remain after the 'visitor' leaves, lacks the necessary experience himself but will learn a great deal that will help him in later years.
Hospital patients, young and old, have plenty of time to read.

certification. It also means that the State must ensure that adequate facilities for the training and certification of professional staff exist. If necessary it should provide, or assist, adequate training schools. If the state (or the nation) is large enough to require more than one training school, it is definitely best that professional education should be provided by educational agencies independent of the state agency, e.g., by university schools or schools supported by library associations. Indeed this might be equally desirable in the case of the single state training agency. Schools of librarianship which can work independently of the State are more likely to bring independence and variety of outlook—a valuable corrective to any tendency to impose one accepted, standardized pattern upon library development. Nevertheless the State must be responsible for ensuring the supply of sufficient qualified personnel.

The state agency can also publish simple manuals of library practice. There should always be, in every state, a properly orga-
The ship's library as part of a national library service.
CENTRAL SERVICES

Fourthly, the state agency must seek to avoid and reduce that unnecessary duplication of work that inevitably arises when many people try to do independently things that can be done better centrally or co-operatively. The central cataloguing and classification of books is an obvious example; it is fantastic that hundreds of local librarians, who have much more urgent local tasks to perform, should all independently catalogue their additions to stock when the work can be done once and for all at a central agency. But there are numerous other examples, e.g. the central production of book lists, of publicity material, posters, etc. Many routine methods, and the necessary stationery, forms and equipment, can usefully be standardized. For example, if all libraries use the same 'charging' and recording system, the same kind of borrowers tickets, etc., not only is inter-availability of service facilitated; centralized purchase of forms and equipment may result in considerable savings.

OTHER STATE ACTIVITIES

What else should the state agency do? It should, as already noted, insist that all local authorities shall employ appropriately qualified staffs and this means the adoption of standards of qualification and certification. It also means that the State must ensure that adequate facilities for the training and certification of professional staff exist. If necessary it should provide, or assist, adequate training schools. If the state (or the nation) is large enough to require more than one training school, it is definitely best that professional education should be provided by educational agencies independent of the state agency, e.g. by university schools or schools supported by library associations. Indeed this might be equally desirable in the case of the single state training agency. Schools of librarianship which can work independently of the State are more likely to bring independence and variety of outlook—a valuable corrective to any tendency to impose one accepted, standardized pattern upon library development. Nevertheless the State must be responsible for ensuring the supply of sufficient qualified personnel.

The state agency can also publish simple manuals of library practice. There should always be, in every state, a properly orga-
nized active library association; as its activities will benefit all concerned with library extension the state agency might most appropriately subsidize its work—though it should not interfere in any way with its liberty of thought and action.

Reference has been made to 'demonstration' schemes specially aided by state and federal grants and expert guidance. The ideal is for all schemes to be demonstrations of the value of library service; the particular function of the 'demonstration' scheme, as here understood, is to show library authorities elsewhere how much can be achieved by good organization and administration and to show librarians sound methods in operation. Such demonstrations are valuable but to fulfil the joint purpose they must be practicable in every respect for the particular area selected; e. g. the cost must be such that the local authority could reasonably bear its appropriate share. Otherwise other local authorities will be able to say “That's very nice but it costs more than we can afford.” Needless to say 'typical' areas should be selected.

CO-OPERATION

The people of a nation can be given a full, rich, varied, efficient and economical library service only if there is full co-operation between all the many and varied elements, so that resources and experience may be shared for the common benefit and unnecessary duplication of effort avoided. With the most important aspect of co-operation, i. e. the inter-availability and inter-loan of book stock we have dealt often in these pages, but there are certain other matters to be brought together under this heading.

First of all it should be clearly understood that co-operation is not confined to mutual assistance between public libraries. A full system of national co-operation must include a great many and a great variety of other libraries. Every library must think first of its own special purposes, of the needs of those who provide it and whom it exists to serve. Consequently no university or research library, no library of a trade organization or profession, can be expected to prejudice its proper work by giving help to the general reader through the public library. Nevertheless much can be done without prejudice; conversely the non-public library may gain some compensations.

It is impossible to draw a dividing line between the provisions appropriate to specialist non-public libraries and those appropriate
to a well developed public library. The latter must be able to supply everything that any reader cannot better and more easily obtain from the former; many people with perhaps occasional specialist needs do not enjoy access to the appropriate special libraries; there are limitless territories of common interest. The narrow view that the public library should not attempt to provide specialized materials must result in many people having to go without materials that, in their own interests and those of the community and nation, they should have. The opposite view that the public library should be willing to provide anything and everything would, if practicable, only lead to wasteful duplication. The right compromise lies in full co-operation between public and specialized library agencies, enabling the one to draw, when necessary, upon the resources of the other. Schemes for state union cataloguing should for this reason embrace both public and non-public libraries.

To return to co-operation between public libraries themselves:

In addition to inter-lending of books between libraries, borrowers' tickets should be available at any library to which any reader, regardless of where he lives, may go either because it is more convenient or because one library meets his particular needs better than another. This inter-availability of tickets is especially valuable in the case of a) city areas served by more than one library authority and where the arbitrary local authority boundaries seldom bear any real relationship to the comings and goings of people; and b) where country districts and suburbs are served by library authorities different from that for the city or town which is the natural centre (otherwise people in the country districts may not be able to enjoy access to adequate stocks).

Co-operation between libraries is facilitated by the adoption of uniform methods and standardized forms (e.g. borrowers' tickets of the same shape and size). Some measure of uniformity may be imposed from above—though there should be the least possible interference with local liberty of action, because rigid standardization must prevent experiment and consequent improvements. Usually common methods are best achieved by full consultation between the librarians of all libraries in a suitable region—not so large that frequent meetings are impracticable. Such joint committees of librarians will achieve many things much more important even than the adoption of common techniques. They can share experience, learn about one another's resources, devise schemes for the division of labour, and plan their services so as to provide maxi
mum coverage and uniformly high standards. Consultation is especially useful regarding the provision and siting of service points. Given inter-availability of tickets, two carefully placed branch libraries, for example, might give better and cheaper service to the public than three or four sited without consultation.
CHAPTER X

WORK WITH SPECIAL TYPES OF READER

CHILDREN

It has been taken for granted throughout this book that library services must be provided for all classes and ages—for children as well as adults. No one will deny the importance of teaching and encouraging children to use books and of providing them with ample and suitable book supplies. Provided the emphasis upon the child does not lead to extremes, e. g. to the neglect of adult provision, it has both practical and sentimental advantages—"sentimental" because experience shows that it is sometimes easier to secure support for work with children than for more general development. What we must consider here, however, is how best we may give service to the children—though first let it be noted that book supplies for children must be more ample than for an equivalent number of adult population, for two reasons: one, that usually a higher percentage of the child population will be active readers, the other that children are more voracious; they will read more quickly, they have more time for reading, and they 'get through' more books.

There are two schools of thought regarding work with children—those who believe that children should be served through school libraries and those who prefer children to go to normal community service points catering for both adults and children. The former claim that library use is easier—as they go to school they go to the library—and that the teacher can encourage and guide their reading. The latter fear that the teacher may tend to be too educative, too restrictive, too dictatorial; and they fear that if a child comes to regard book use as part of his schooling he is more likely to relinquish it when he leaves school than if, as a child, he makes use of the same premises he will use in later life. There are good arguments on both sides. In practice the choice will be determined by other considerations and depend upon local conditions of service. For example, in large cities it may be easy for children to visit the child-
ren's departments of nearby branch libraries and, whether there are school libraries or not, they should be allowed to do so. But in country districts the only possible centre may be the school; for instance, the adult centre or part-time branch or country van may not be available at times when children could use them or they may not be able to cope with children as well as adults.

The one thing that matters, therefore, is that wherever the children get their books the service for children must be part of the one general library system. Though the library authority must work in the closest association with the education authority and teachers, the responsibility for providing general books (as distinct from 'class' books and the actual apparatus of teaching) must be the responsibility of the library authority. Any other plan is likely to lead to duplication of service—or perhaps, conversely, failure to provide any. Neither can it be economical because if children's collections at schools are to be properly provided, exchanged, and maintained, a centralized machinery for supply and distribution is necessary and it can best be the same machinery that looks after adult needs.

SERVICE TO OTHER GROUPS

This is true also of book supply and library service to other sections of the community for whom normal service points are inappropriate, particularly if these are, as they should usually be, supported from public funds. Consequently libraries in hospitals, infirmaries, asylums, institutions for the aged and the poor, should be an integral part of the general library service. And it cannot be denied that these are necessary. It is a fairly sound generalization that a local library authority has equal responsibility for providing books to those of its citizens who are unable to visit normal service points as to those who can use them. Nevertheless some financial and administrative adjustment is sometimes necessary. If all the patients at a hospital were residents in one city the position would be simple, but such will seldom be the case; they will probably come from a wide area embracing several library authorities. This fact must not, however, be cause either for neglecting library provision at the hospital or for establishing a separate hospital library service. The matter is capable of adjustment, e. g. by joint schemes for responsibility; or by special state grants, etc. With details of library provision for these various institutions it is manifestly impossible to deal here. Let it suffice to say that whenever possible they should
be provided with books from normal stocks, properly selected, main-
tained and exchanged, with some staffing and supervision by
employees of the library authority. Apart from other obvious
advantages this link-up with the public library will enable the special
needs of patients, etc. to be met—and people in hospitals and asy-
lums, etc., do have their own individual interests and do often want
to read purposively. Naturally this kind of service is imprac-
ticable in some types of hospital, e.g. for infectious diseases. What
must be shunned at all costs is the make-shift provision of odds and
ends of gifts, worn-out library books and so on.

Library facilities are needed also in prisons and for soldiers, sail-
ors, airmen, merchant seamen, lighthouse keepers and the like
and here, also, appropriate public library agencies should play a
large part and accept much responsibility. For example, in one
country the prison authorities make grants to the library authorities
of cities where prisons are situated in return for which the library
provides books and staffing. Again some sea-port city libraries,
with or without financial help from the shipping companies, supply
book stocks sufficient to last the crews of merchant ships on every
voyage—at the end of which the books are recalled and a new batch
supplied. Military establishments often pose a different problem
as they may be situated far from public libraries capable of assisting
them adequately; this then becomes a task for state or national
library agencies.

A brief reference to two related matters! Firstly, many sick and
infirm people are not in institutions but in their own homes; many
are without friends and relatives who can bring them books from
the library. Therefore in some cities every fortnight an assistant
visits those old and bedridden people who cannot go to the library,
taking them both enough books to last them till the next visit and
a kind word and a pleasing contact with the outside world.

Secondly, that vitally important task, library service (books and
talking books) for the blind is best organized on a state basis, though
it may well utilize normal library agencies for distribution. Few
local library authorities have need to provide, for their own readers,
a really adequate range of material. Consequently attempts by
independent local authorities to supply books for the blind will
usually result in a very poor service.
PART THREE

INCENTIVES TO EXTENSION
Library extension will not happen spontaneously or inevitably as a matter of course. It will only happen if a sufficient number of people are determined that there shall be public libraries and if those people are so organized that they can influence their fellow men, and their governments. This is true of most social developments. The people—the ordinary man and woman in the streets or in the villages—may desire eagerly the wider opportunities a public library can afford, but it is too much to expect the 'motive power' for extension to come from the masses. They cannot know enough about the possibilities or the problems of library development or appreciate the practical steps that must be taken. Consequently leadership is needed from men of vision who take the trouble to discover how to give reality to their ideals. If, as may well be the case, the generality of the people know nothing or little about books and libraries, leadership is even more important, and those few who do understand how much libraries can contribute to the well being of their fellow men are under a serious moral obligation to promote library extension activities to the utmost of their powers.

Much of what has already been accomplished in several countries can be directly attributed to the enthusiasm and leadership of a few individuals capable of inspiring others, and of uniting them in persistent, tireless effort. The same will surely be as true of the future as it is of the past, and it is important for readers of this book, for two reasons—one, because it means that every one concerned with library extension must be willing to think, act and struggle for himself with a genuine 'missionary' spirit; it is no use waiting for others to lead. The other reason is that the efforts of individuals must be directed into effective channels permitting both unity of action and a sure sense of direction and the fullest possible contacts with the machinery of government and administration.

In effect there can be little hope for library extension in any coun-
try unless adequate agencies for the promotion of library services exist or are created.

Promotion agencies are of two main kinds—official and unofficial. There is usually room for both in any state—the unofficial agencies working hand in hand with the official so long as things are being done but at other times, if so justified, acting as a critic and a spur. Naturally the unofficial agencies are likely to be first in the field, though not necessarily so.

OFFICIAL PROMOTION AGENCIES

Official promotion agencies may be permanent or temporary. The usual permanent agency is the national or state Libraries Department (or Ministry, etc.)—i.e. the department, with both its elected board and officers and its paid officials, charged with the responsibility for promoting library extension by giving financial and other assistance, by guiding the course of development and encouraging local authorities to participate. The main functions of such agencies have already been discussed.

The usual type of temporary official promotion agency is the commission or committee appointed by the state or national government to report to it on the general library situation—on needs and objectives, on what is being done elsewhere and could and should be done in the state itself, on existing conditions and how they may be improved. This kind of commission has several times been a most valuable stimulant and is an excellent 'first step' strongly recommended both for states where library services have not yet been provided and for states where there is healthy dissatisfaction with existing conditions. Sometimes in place of commissions, individual experts have been invited to report. In either case those charged with the task must be impartial, well informed and courageous. It is more than likely in either case that the government will be recommended to establish a permanent promotion agency, in which case its position will probably be considerably strengthened by the findings of the commission.

LIBRARY ASSOCIATIONS

The usual form of unofficial promotion agency is the Library Association—an organization of men and women in some way concern-
ed with library development, including a) those who are interested in library development though not personally engaged in librarianship or library management, educationists, social workers, authors, industrialists, business men, representatives of trade unions, women’s organizations, farmers’ unions, etc.—in brief, those progressive individuals and those representatives of or spokesmen for the public who want active library extension programmes; b) representatives of local library committees, etc.; and c) those who are engaged in the profession of librarianship.

A state (or national) library association thus formed on the broadest possible basis can be immensely valuable. Internally it will provide means for the exchange and dissemination of views and experience, it can organize discussions, conferences (local and national), conduct experiments in selected fields, and generally create a great body of good will and interest. Externally it can keep libraries before the public by all kinds of publicity and propaganda and each one of the members can, through his own personal contacts, act as a spearhead in the campaign against apathy and lack of understanding.

The advantages of a broad basis, especially if the association is concerned with all types of library development and service, are many. The professional librarians are brought into close contact with the people responsible for library provision and the people libraries must serve. There will be better co-operation with organizations and individuals interested in educational and social progress. The association cannot be accused of self-interest, as might be the case were membership limited to practising librarians. The laymen will gain by contact with the practitioners and the danger will be avoided of conflict between the two elements which can easily arise if they are separately organized. Moreover it is not unimportant that by drawing upon a wider field of support the association should enjoy greater financial resources.

Nevertheless there is need also for a purely professional organization either within the framework of the wider association or independently. The members of the profession have their own interests, distinct from, though closely related to, the interests of libraries. Every profession needs its strong, united professional society able to speak for its members and to deal with such things as professional qualifications, salaries, conditions of service and relations with other professional organizations.

Interest in library extension should however be as widespread as possible. Indeed much more will result when the local authori-
ties, the townsfolk and the countrymen express a desire for libraries and make this known to the central government, than when the initiative comes from a central agency. Governments are always, and not unwisely, more willing to listen when the people to be served themselves ask for service, particularly if the request is accompanied by willingness to undertake a share of the cost. Consequently the library promotion organization must from the outset enlist 'local' interest. This can be done by establishing local and regional 'branches' of people willing to help create interest among their neighbours and associates, which can best be done by telling them, simply and intelligently, about the scope and purpose of the library.

ENCOURAGING THE USE OF LIBRARIES

The task of library extension is not finished, however, when the library first opens its doors or the van sets out on its maiden trip. It has only begun. The value of a library service depends upon how much and how well it is used. Whether a library service is new or long established there will always be some people—few or many—who for one reason or another do not use it at all; and most of those who do use a library can be helped and encouraged in various ways to use it to better purpose. Non-use arises chiefly from three causes—ignorance of the service, prejudices or misconceptions, and the absence of desire to use books.

The remedy for the first is publicity—the widespread dissemination of information about the library, where it is, when it is open, who can use it, what it provides. Library publicity is not easy because it is not usually sufficient to talk in general terms; to provoke action the advertiser must make a direct, specific appeal to each reader who must thus realize, not just that there is a library, but that there are good reasons why he should use it. There should, therefore, be less reliance upon general slogans and common-denominator appeals and more emphasis on some of the many ways in which books can be related to the different activities and interests of readers—to farming, mechanics, nursing, cooking, citizenship of the community and of the world, the enjoyment of music, nature study and so on. Tell a man, for example, that 'there is nothing like a good book' and that his 'library exists for the public service' and he may say that the next time he wants a good book he will try the library—and then promptly forget; tell him when he is struggling to locate a fault in an ignition system that there are handbooks
on the electrical equipment of automobiles, and he will borrow one, if not then, probably the next time the same or any other practical problem arises.

This is not the place to discuss the details of library publicity, but at least it be stressed that book displays and exhibitions and demonstrations of library facilities arranged in connection with such local activities as agricultural and horticultural shows, music and drama festivals, teachers' conferences, public health demonstrations, and the like, will both serve the above-mentioned publicity purpose and, possibly even more important, ensure fruitful contacts with community activities. As the library exists primarily to help people in their individual and communal interests, encourage all possible organized groups and associations to advertise the library by adopting it as a means of promoting their own interests. Library publicity that is conducted from outside the library reaches new potential readers. For example a booklist on bee keeping distributed at the library must be largely a preaching to the converted; instead (or as well) get the bee keepers' association to distribute the list to its members many of whom may never have used the library.

Displays in shop windows (e.g. relating to the commodities on sale there) have also been found effective.

It must not be forgotten that library publicity is in competition with normal trade and commodity publicity. To give a favourable impression of the library it must compare favourably with this other publicity. Inefficient, amateurish, ill-conceived publicity will suggest an inefficient library. Library displays at agricultural shows, for example, must be as attractive as the rest of the trade exhibits. It is also important that they should be well staffed with assistants capable of answering questions and explaining the work of the library.

Despite this advocacy of 'directed' publicity, however, it is a first duty of a library authority to ensure that its services are known to everyone in the community. The opening of a new library in a small town will of course be 'an event' and its own advertisement, but it by no means follows that the inhabitants of outlying districts or the scattered population to be served by centres or travelling libraries will ever hear about the library unless they are told individually by an appropriate communication. And in the larger cities, especially those with a considerable 'floating' population, it is extremely difficult to ensure that every one knows about the library; consequently frequently repeated advertisements, plentiful sign-posts and the full utilization of opportunities for varied publicity are needed.

86
Prejudice against the library exists more in countries where library services have long existed—particularly where they have been inadequate. Those who have tried a library and found it sadly wanting are often unwilling to try again—a point mentioned chiefly as a warning to those about to provide libraries. Prejudice does, however, arise from other causes, chiefly from the idea that the library is provided for particular groups or social classes or with particular limited objectives—e. g. that the library is primarily for the 'working classes' (the 'poor man's university' idea) or that it is not for the working man but only for the 'black-coated' classes, that it is primarily an 'educational' institution, or for children and young people, that it has a political or a religious bias, that it is essentially a 'woman's' institution used and manned by the weaker sex—a prejudice often responsible for insufficient use of library services by business men and technicians. Prejudices always seem silly and irrational to those who do not share them; nevertheless, in this instance they are much more widespread than many librarians realize, and they can be overcome only by careful deliberate efforts to demonstrate their stupidity.
Much fruitless effort, disappointment and unnecessary expenditure can be avoided if a realistic, logical programme of library extension is prepared at the outset.

There is today ample evidence to guide the country about to embark upon library provision or to develop services which are as yet only in their initial stages. It can benefit from the trials and errors, the failures as well as the successes of countries which, starting earlier, have so far accomplished more than other nations. Of no such national library system could it be claimed that had it a second chance it would proceed in the same way. In most of them there are eager critics, anxious to remove limitations due to the accidents, mistakes, misconceptions inherent in the process of ‘growing up’. For example, nowhere would librarians if they were able to start again encourage the establishment of small library systems.

So it follows that any sound library extension programme pays heed firstly, to the conditions in which it must operate, secondly, to the lessons of history and thirdly, to certain basic principles which may now briefly be stated.

Library extension is a process of creating and increasing library resources and of securing their use. A national library service cannot be provided overnight by the wave of a magic wand or by the signing of an edict. It is an organization and must grow, gathering strength and influence stage by stage.

The four vital factors in library extension are 1) understanding, 2) staff, 3) desire to participate, and 4) material resources. In other words it is useless starting to provide libraries until those who are responsible know reasonably clearly what they are trying to do and why. Nor is it of any use to provide libraries without suitable staff, since to do so would condemn the future to inefficiency. As any effective library service must be both the servant and the expression of the community, rooted in the individual and the locality, it cannot be imposed from above but must be desired by the people and their
governments, local and state. As the amount of money available will always be limited, expansion must be so planned that the most valuable things are done first, and that at no time and nowhere is anything done badly and discreditably.

UNDERSTANDING

Of the first point little need be said. Whether a new library service is projected or an existing one is to be improved it is essential that the most senior people—those who will be responsible for shaping policy—make themselves acquainted with what has been done in other countries. They should visit and study existing library services, discuss ideals and objectives with those concerned. It does not follow that they will copy what other countries are doing, but they must know what has been attempted and how, what has failed and what has succeeded.

Such interchange of ideals and information is mutually beneficial and stimulating and by encouraging and facilitating it Unesco can make one of its most useful contributions to library extension.

STAFFING

The second factor—staff—must above all others determine both the rate and the quality of progress. The effect of staffing on quality is generally recognized; it is not always realized that its effect on rate of progress is equally potent. There must be sufficient suitably experienced and qualified personnel to man the nation's services at each stage in their development, and it is a grave mistake to start without a cadre of carefully selected people who have had the maximum possible training and experience. How can this be effected in, say, a country without any public libraries? It certainly is not always wise to draw the initial personnel for public librarianship entirely from other branches of library work. There are, of course, exceptions to every rule but a man with, say, a university library or government department library background may well find it difficult to avoid the misconception that a public library is but a different kind of university or government library. The problem is not easy. If one draws upon civil servants or school teachers they might easily be obsessed by the outlook gained in their previous vocations. Consequently the choice should be made on
the broadest possible basis; for example, a man experienced in the administrative side of a business with widespread contacts, a social worker, or even an engineer or a scientist might well, given the right personality, make an excellent pioneer librarian. The word 'pioneer' is used advisedly, for the above remarks only apply to countries with no sufficient existing body of public librarians. Once the libraries are well established the personnel must be recruited and trained specially for library work; to introduce 'laymen' into the ranks of librarianship at that stage would be a most undesirable attack upon the prestige of professional librarians and a serious limitation of their prospects—apart from other reasons.

The essential procedure is this:

a) Select the best available people on the basis of personal qualities, abilities and suitability.

b) Send some at least to other countries with appropriately developed library services, to study conditions, to attend library school courses, to work in public libraries. This will take at least a year. It is sensible to wait that long before doing anything further. They are learning how to tackle their problems. When they have learned they will be able to advise and to lead. Anything done prematurely in their absence might either have to be undone or remain a handicap for years to come.

c) Establish state or national schools to train further personnel of various grades—staffed by those sent abroad, perhaps with the assistance of teachers and executants brought for a while from other countries. Particularly in the early years of development grants must be available to enable suitable students to attend these schools, otherwise the best material will not be attracted. In some countries scholarships and maintenance grants are available from education authorities; in at least one instance, the national library service pays the students a modest but sufficient salary while undergoing training; in yet other cases the young men and women are first employed by the local library authority, and then, if they prove suitable, are sent to library schools at the expense of the authority which continues to pay their salaries. Especially at first it will not be practicable for even a majority of the younger people to take full courses as the authorities will not be able to spare them; shorter courses, summer schools, etc. will therefore be necessary.

In the early stages of library extension the supply of suitable students for library schools (who will become 'pioneer' librarians and assistants) presents a very serious problem which must be solved. These people will mostly become the employees of local authorities.
Until local library services are started, however, they will not be chosen or appointed as such. As library training must be the first thing to be provided by the State it may not even be known, when the school begins, what local authorities will start libraries. Consequently the first batches of students must be the direct responsibility of the State which must bear the cost of training and maintenance, while the students themselves must be willing when ready to take employment wherever they are needed and take the very reasonable chance of finding good openings, confident that being 'first in the field' their prospects will be good. Naturally, however, it will be wise to draw these students from all over the State. Where library services are already partly developed it is probable that most of the local authorities will not be able to spare their staffs to attend schools; consequently the State should help to provide a pool of ex-students able to act as temporary 'locum tenens.'

d) These first people must man the first library service agencies. They will have a lot to learn. As the service expands they will be joined by recruits—juniors from school, older people from the library schools. Some of the juniors when they have a little practical experience must be sent to the library schools.

This procedure has three implications:

1) that to each new scheme or service agency must go some man or woman with the maximum possible experience, with the realism and the idealism of the pioneer, who knows both how much he can attempt and how much he would like to do;

2) that, if this is to be, there must be the maximum mobility of staff; and

3) the rate of library extension must be closely related to the rate of staff production—and it is no use being impatient.

Mobility of staff, i.e. the ease with which they can move from one place and from one post to another, and possibly from local authority to state employment or vice versa, is important. It enables the young man of ability to play an increasing part in national library extension by proceeding from post to post of greater responsibility and opportunity; it enables librarians to enjoy variety of work and acquire a wide understanding of the problems of library service; it makes librarianship an attractive career. Consequently care must be taken that mobility is not prejudiced by avoidable limitations, e.g. superannuation and pension rights that are not transferable, rigid 'civil service' regulations that do not permit the entry of mature local authority employees, or conversely, absurd local authority regulations requiring applicants for posts to be residents of the area.
All library posts should be open to the best candidates whoever they are or wherever they live.

LOCAL INITIATIVE

The third factor is closely related to what has just been said. Since the rate of extension must be gradual (which does not mean 'slowly' but only step by step) all the local authorities, all the regions, and counties, cannot have fully-fledged library services—or even any library services at all—all at once. Some must enjoy them first, some next, and so on. Who shall these be?—those localities which needing them most want them most. If those authorities which are most willing to support library development, financially and morally, are the first to receive help from state agencies, the new movement must start under the best auspices and so become the best demonstration and the best encouragement for other authorities.

RESOURCES

The fourth factor is really part of the third. Those pioneer authorities to be given the means to provide books, staff, equipment and service points must be few or many according to the total resources available for distribution. If more authorities are encouraged to start than these resources can justify, many inadequate and useless libraries will result. Unless a few men of exceptional faith and ability succeed, despite their limitations, in making bricks without straw, no one may ever know how valuable and enjoyable a good library may be—and when twenty or fifty years hence some one tries to tell, no one will believe.

LIBRARY EXTENSION AND THE PUBLIC

There are two other factors which will influence programmes for library extension—the condition of the people and the existing state of library services.

Libraries are no use without readers. In every country there are people who can but won't read; in some there are people who would but can't. Where there is a high percentage of illiteracy it is useless
to expect the same amount of library use as in countries where the percentage is low, but this does not mean that libraries are less necessary, or that library provision can be proportionately reduced. On the contrary the literate population in illiterate areas will need libraries not less but more, because their responsibilities as citizens and their opportunities as leaders and educators will be greater.

It is difficult to see how this minority can be provided with adequate libraries by any machinery different from that needed to serve a normally literate community, and the variety and range of materials required, if not the quantity, will be much the same. Nevertheless in such communities it is probable that financial resources, particularly those of local authorities, will be inadequate, and the urgent demands of educational programmes will be expensive and will, rightly, enjoy priority. Consequently economy must be sought by the organization of large units, interchange and consequent maximum use of stocks, and more reliance upon postal services and 'students collections' than would normally be desirable. Despite this any reduction in service points is to be avoided because always there will be an ever increasing body of semi-literates—of those who are learning to read and whom it is important to accustom to the use of books. Therefore everywhere where there will ultimately be need for full library service points there should, as the extension programme develops, be collections of material appropriate and attractive to the new-fledged readers. Such provision is essential. It is no use teaching people to read and denying them the material they then become able to use.

And it follows that in this task libraries must be closely associated with the educational agencies. Let us not minimize the task. Usually the percentage of illiteracy is highest in the more remote country districts and, as we have seen, library provision in such districts is inevitably more difficult and more expensive. No task could, however, be more worth while or more rewarding.

PUBLIC VERSUS NON-PUBLIC LIBRARIES

The second factor—that programmes for extension must be determined by the existing state of library services—may seem a
glimpse of the obvious, but it has interesting implications, parti-
cularly if one remembers that there are libraries other than public
libraries. Indeed in many countries such limited library services
as exist have grown up on some basis other than that of public
ownership and control. Typical of such libraries are the subscrip-
tion libraries, the working men’s or mechanics’ institutes and the
libraries established by religious and political groups.

Let there be no misunderstanding. The point has not been argued
because it has been taken for granted. There can be no substitute
for the public library, i.e. the library which is provided by the com-
munity, at its expense, for the full free use of everyone, and with
no objective but the well being of each individual who may use it.
All these other types of library are limited in some way:
i) because if they charge for their services they do not give faci-
lities to those who cannot afford to pay or will not do so;
ii) because they appeal to limited sections, or classes;
iii) because they have objectives which preclude the full presen-
tation of the world of books;
iv) because in so far as they seek to meet majority demands they
fail to cater for minorities and individuals;
v) because they inevitably lack the greater resources of properly
organized nation-wide public library services.

Consequently where these libraries exist they must not be accepted
as adequate alternatives. No honest man would wish to deny any
group or interest the full right to provide whatever libraries it wishes.
But they must be regarded as additional to public libraries not as
a reason why public libraries should not be provided. In actuality,
of course, there are seldom any grounds for conflict. Usually people
have provided themselves with these libraries solely because they
lacked public library facilities and did the best they could to make
good the deficiency. Consequently the process of library extension
will be one of changing the nature and scope of these libraries so
that they form the nucleus of normal public library units. Wherever
possible this should be achieved. Occasionally there may be oppo-
sition due to the natural human desire to cling to a vested interest.
Usually this opposition vanishes when it becomes clear that the public
library is intended to do everything they have done and more, and
the active supporters of, say, the subscription library, become the
keenest local advocates of the public library.

The normal procedure is, therefore, to encourage those respon-
sible for the subscription or institute library or any similar non-
public library which is seeking to give a general (i.e. non-special-
ized) service to hand over their functions and property to the local government agency. If the property is that of individuals as distinct from that of the common body of members there must of course be compensation; and the local authority should give supporters of the old library adequate representation on the library committee so as to maintain their interest and utilize their experience. The transfer will of course be conditional upon the library becoming free to all; the local authority must undertake to maintain a satisfactory service and the state agency should make grants for necessary stock revision and augmentation, for reorganization, improvement of premises, staffing, etc., seeking, at the same time, the maximum co-ordination with other library agencies (i.e. county, regional, etc. schemes).

Where this sensible and mutually beneficial course cannot be adopted there is no alternative to the provision of new and separate local authority services on genuine 'public library' lines. State agencies and local authorities are strongly advised not to give financial and other assistance to any libraries which will not 'become public'. Such assistance has been common in the past and has usually served not to promote but to hinder library extension. Apart from the fact that it is questionable whether public funds should be used to assist services which are not equally available to all, such aid if small will be largely wasted, and if large, will consolidate and strengthen a type of library service which can never play the same full, fruitful and varied role in the life of the community. Subsidies and grants to subscription libraries are often defended on the grounds of expediency—because they represent an interim stage. The argument is a dangerous one. Though it may be unwise to allow these institutions to die out before they are replaced, one must avoid helping them to develop as obstacles to the formation of public libraries. The best compromise yet devised is that which has been adopted by the National Library Service already mentioned as lending and exchanging collections of good books to the smaller libraries. This loan is free to free libraries. Subscription libraries can obtain exactly similar loans by paying rent for them at the rate of some £4 to £5 per 100 volumes a year. Thus the users of the subscription library are shown the kind of service the public library will offer and very soon ask whether it is not wiser to 'become public' and save the expense, and are likely to present this point of view to their local authorities.
ALL SERVICE TO BE FREE

In some countries it has been customary to provide everything free excepting the lighter types of fiction for which a small charge is made (the ‘rental’ or ‘pay collection’ system). This practice must be strongly deprecated. The public library should not use its resources of staff, premises and organization to circulate books which are not worthy of circulation as genuinely useful to the community; so, if the books provided are worth circulating they should be circulated without fee or limitation. If people want low-grade worthless books they can get them, all too easily, from commercial agencies. Remember, too, that it is extremely difficult to draw the line between ‘good’ books that are free and the ‘less good’ books that must be paid for. Particularly in communities with a high percentage of people who are just learning to use books, who have had few educational opportunities or whose social and cultural background is poor, the literary and cultural standard of the books most likely to be read and to be useful will be much lower than it would be in an advanced, well educated community. And these same people are most unlikely to be able to pay for books from either ‘rental’ collections or commercial agencies. It is quite impracticable to have ‘pay collections’ for some people and not for others. Some libraries try to dodge this issue by transferring books to the ‘free’ collections when they have been used for a time in the pay collections, but this merely introduces class and social discrimination and may lower the standards of the general free collection.

In brief we have no doubt whatever that the public library must provide all people with the best and most useful books they are able and willing to use and must do so freely and without discrimination against any social classes or racial or religious elements.
CHAPTER XIII

AN OUTLINE PROGRAMME

The precise programme for library extension in any country will depend upon many different factors, and there is no one sequence that will either suit or prove practicable generally. Consequently the following notes are primarily a reminder of matters requiring attention, and of the order in which they may usefully be tackled.

Assuming that in any country there are, so far, no public library services, the following may well prove a useful plan of action:

1. Appoint a state (national) Library Commission to examine conditions and needs, to study what has been done elsewhere, to seek expert guidance and prepare a general Report.

2. Adopt legislation authorizing the appointment of a state Library Board and outlining its powers. General legislation relating to the library powers of local and state authorities may also be promoted at this stage but it should not be so specific as to tie the hands of the Board. If the State is not, therefore, in a position to give 'general' powers it may be wiser to leave this until after Stage 8.

3. Appoint a permanent state library agency with a Board and a nucleus establishment of officers including a director and assistant director or directors.

4. Give them a full opportunity to study public library organization and administration, to visit other countries, to consult experts and generally acquire their background and formulate their objectives.

5. The Board and director to select a team of senior officers to be employed as 'field officers' responsible for 'promotion', and as specialists in such departments as work with schools and children, professional training, central cataloguing and bibliographical services, headquarters administration and finance, etc. Give these opportunity to acquire their background.

6. Meanwhile the appropriate department of the government (e. g. Ministry of Education, or Ministry of Culture and the Arts, etc.) should institute an enquiry into the existing literary resources and
needs and take steps if necessary to promote the publication of suitable books in the vernacular.

7. Establish a library training school, recruiting people of sufficient maturity to become the librarians of the newly established local library systems—and providing the cost of training and maintenance.

8. The director and his assistants to prepare a detailed plan of campaign—including an outline provisional scheme, for ultimate coverage and organization, and a short-term programme of work to be undertaken. The latter would be based upon the deciding factors just mentioned—the amount of state grant likely to be available, the likelihood of local authority support, and the number of staff available.

The programme should also define the work to be undertaken by the state agency itself—and the staff, premises, stock, and equipment needed. Arrangements regarding premises, whether to be rented or erected, must allow for future expansion of work.

9. Apply to the State Government for financial grants 1) for the purposes of the state agency itself and 2) for grant-aid to local authorities.

10. Formulate conditions on which grants are to be made to local authorities. Conduct full discussion with associations, etc., representing local authorities—both to secure their support and to benefit from their experience and knowledge of local conditions and reactions. Ascertain which of the local authorities are willing to establish library services and select those to be granted assistance. This selection should be based upon joint consideration of a) where libraries will be of most immediate value; b) degree of local interest and financial ability; c) how far each library can serve as a focal point for development, e. g. as a centre upon which, later on, subsidiary libraries and branches can be based, or as suitable headquarters for country van services; d) how far they will make good 'demonstrations', provide useful experience under 'typical' conditions, or provoke the emulation of other authorities. Avoid scattering the new services too widely and sparsely over too large an area; aim rather at building up moderately good coverage for selected regions and districts.

11. Having made the selection give the local authorities every possible assistance to ensure that they are from the outset really good. As already noted this help must include adequate grants for capital expenditure—for books, equipment and the adaptation, etc. of premises. At the same time the state agency's own organization and services must be established.
12. It is very difficult to give advice as to what library services should be established first as so much depends upon existing conditions. As a general indication, however, some such plan as the following would probably be useful in a country that had no public library services:

(a) establish in the city in which state headquarters is situated a good central lending and reference library, with particular regard for the more purposive types of reader.

(b) establish at state library headquarters a good students' section and arrange for co-operation with the city library. This will provide the initial stock for postal service to those throughout the country who are in need of books for the most important and urgent reasons.

(c) establish good libraries, lending and reference, again with a bias towards the purposive, in each of the main provincial towns and cities, especially those which can act as regional (sub-state) centres—to make library service more accessible and to decentralize the work of the state library headquarters.

(d) establish a number of more general libraries in smaller towns, linked with the regional centre and giving special attention to the needs of children, teachers and adults who are learning to read and to use books and those who are teaching them. Increase the number of such libraries as resources permit.

(e) develop a few 'complete' schemes—country-town schemes with central 'county' headquarters, branches, country vans and centres.

(f) extend the city and town services to comprehend the full range of library provision, develop city branch services (starting with branches for 'outer' areas).

(g) gradually increase the number of country-town systems—always with emphasis on a) the people who really want books, b) the children and the teachers, and c) all efforts to increase the number of people who can read—to reduce illiteracy.

Where a partial public library service exists:

13. Take such of steps 1 to 9 as have not already been implemented.

14. Step 10—which may be implemented in part a little earlier—will take much heed of existing libraries because, if these are on, or are capable of being put on, the right lines progress will be much quicker. For this reason existing public libraries (or non-public 'subscription' libraries which will become public) should be given preference with grants, because they will have some books and premises and they will not need to wait on the 'production' of new
personnel (though care should be taken to ensure that where necessary the staff of existing libraries shall enjoy facilities for training and for 'refresher courses'). Develop, therefore, as much as possible around existing services. Usually their very existence implies that their local authorities have had a keener sense of their responsibilities than those of other authorities and their past support deserves the reward of preferential State support.

In a country with a more or less well-developed system:

15. Preferably after a thorough survey and review, note any essential elements that need strengthening, e.g. if there is no State agency start one, adapting its functions to prevailing conditions; if facilities for professional education are inadequate strengthen and expand the training institutions; pay heed to standards of staffing and to salaries and conditions of service; and to book supplies.

16. Work towards the amalgamation and co-ordination of smaller agencies into the most suitable and economical schemes, joint and co-operative.

17. Concentrate on strengthening the weaker elements.

18. Fill in the gaps. Aim at nation-wide coverage.

19. Assist, or if necessary initiate and support, demonstration services, designed to demonstrate higher standards and better organization.
In conclusion the author would express his apologies and regrets for shortcomings which are only too obvious to himself and surely also to his readers. He has perhaps endeavoured to cover too much ground, although he has had to omit many matters with which he would like to have dealt. Consequently the book cannot have proved 'easy', much less pleasant, reading. He can but hope that his readers will appreciate his two major difficulties—one, the difficulty of finding any common ground applicable to countries so different as regards social, geographical and economic conditions, the stage of library development and the systems of local and state government; the other that while seeking to help those countries where support and interest is, and is likely for some time to be, small he has had to be very careful to avoid any recommendations as to standards or procedure which could be used to hinder progress in better situated countries. He has always faced the danger that in trying to serve several masters he might serve none, and risked being criticized by some for not asking enough and by others for asking too much.

From the former he would seek forgiveness; to the latter he would say this: Library services that are not based upon high standards are probably not worth bothering about at all. Libraries that are not really good are likely to be no good at all. Many of the public libraries operating in many parts of the world are a gross, extravagant waste of public money because they are too bad to do anything that is worth doing. A good library is never extravagant; a bad one always is.

The most important thing that can be said in any book on library extension is, therefore, this: Adopt good standards from the beginning; do nothing that is not worth doing, that is not certain to bring good repute to the words 'public library'; if resources and opportunities are limited be patient; do as much as you can do properly and attempt no more; increased support will surely come more
quickly, more certainly, more permanently, if whatever you do is manifestly useful, efficient and inspired by a clear understanding of the functions of the public library.

You will however ask what are 'good standards'. By what criteria can any library service be judged? Some librarians think, not unreasonably, in terms of what they did last year or ten years ago, of what their neighbours do, some in terms of their resources and opportunities. The obvious advice is to judge achievements in the light of the functions the library should be performing. But such advice is too easy to be useful—for how can any man understand how important libraries can be unless he has experience of what good libraries are in fact achieving. The man who is struggling with small beginnings in the face of apathy and opposition surely has his ideals, and if he remains true to them he will gradually overcome some of the obstacles in his path; but it is only the librarian who has enjoyed the opportunity to administer an exceptionally well supported system who can know how much further he, too, has to go.

This can point to only one conclusion—that there must be the fullest, frankest exchange of experience and ideals between the librarians, and the governing bodies of the libraries, of the nations of the world. Rivalry between nations may in some matters be undesirable but in others it is the leaven of civilization.

Because it lay outside his terms of reference the author has said nothing about the fundamental philosophy of librarianship, but if he is right to say that it is the function of the public library to provide every man with a full free opportunity to secure, at his own free will, whatever books can give him for the better enjoyment and utilization of his life, surely it is a good thing for nations to seek to outstrip one another in their efforts to make this opportunity the birthright of their peoples.
APPENDIX

SPECIFICATIONS OF TYPICAL LIBRARY VANS
EXAMPLE I (American) Capacity 1,250 volumes.

CHASSIS—Ford, cab-over-engine model, 3/4 ton heavy duty. Generator 30 amps. Battery 100 amp. hours.

BODY—Custom-built walk-in type. Length (inside) 11'2", width (inside) 5'10", height (inside) 5'10". Door: both sides of front; and rear double; side doors slide into concealed pocket; windows in front and rear doors. Heater—Southwind, gas, at feet of driver. Ten lights. One stationary step at rear.


COST—total £750.
EXAMPLE 2 (British) Capacity 2,000 volumes.

CHASSIS—Bedford passenger chassis, wheelbase 14'6", maximum gross laden weight of 7 tons. Engine, standard Bedford 28 h. p. 6 cylinder unit.

BODYWORK—specially built but incorporating a number of parts used in the standard Vista coach. All exterior corners and edges are rounded.

The framing is of best oak and ash and the panelling in 18 s. w. g. half hard aluminium below the waist-line and in 22 s. w. g. above. Insulating lagging is inserted between the inner and outer surfaces of the roof to reduce extremes of heat and cold. There is a Perspex roof-light, 10' long by 4' wide. Floor is covered with brown battleship linoleum which is extended 3" up the front of the bookcases to form a kicking panel.

The driver's cabin has two coach-type doors and sliding door on the side near curb gives access from the pavement to the body of the library. Screens on each side of the door-well reduce the risk of borrowers falling down the well and protect the staff at the counter from draught.

Ventilation is by 12 hinged lights in the clerestory and two roof ventilators at the rear. Heating is by one large Clayton heater wired from the batteries so that it may be used when the engine is not running. Good natural lighting is provided by the Perspex roof. Artificial lighting is by four 36 watt electric lights on each side and two over the counter; the lights on each side are wired on separate circuits. An additional 85 amp. hours battery is fitted in parallel with the standard battery, and a plug and socket is provided for a battery charger or inspection lamp. There is a luggage-boot below the floor at the rear which holds the spare wheel and two standard book boxes.

LIBRARY FITTINGS—The library is shelved on both sides and across the rear; the staff counter divides the body from the driver's cab. Shelving is in 1" soft wood, on the off-side eight shelves high.
at 9" centres for fiction and, on the side near curb and rear, six shelves high at 12" centres for non-fiction. Each shelf has a \(1\frac{3}{4}''\) inward and downward slope and is fitted with a back at right angles to the shelf. Slats are provided for the upper three shelves all round to prevent books becoming dislodged. Shelving is not adjustable. Book stock carried is about 1,100 fiction and 900 non-fiction, including 30 standard quick reference books.

The wheel arches are extended into the body to form occasional-seats below the shelving.

The staff counter is designed to be used from both sides, the librarian standing on the public side and the driver on the cab side. It is 3' high, 1'9" from back to front, with hinged flap and door for access from the cabin to the library. On the public side it has three catalogue drawers, a locked cash drawer, self-closing waste-paper basket and two cupboards, on the cab side a hot water container and bowl for washing. At the off-side there is on the cab side a wardrobe for staff coats, the outside of which forms a display case over the counter. Above the counter there is a deep shelf and an eight-day clock. At the end of the side next curb is a press for books reserved or in need of binding or repair.

The staff required is one driver and two qualified librarians who take duty on alternate days.

**DIMENSIONS**

- Over-all length 24'4"
- Over-all height 10'2"
- Over-all width 7'6"
- Unladen weight 3 tons 15 cwt
- Laden weight 5 tons 5 cwt (approx.)
- Floor area of library 80 sq. ft.

**COST**

- Chassis £470
- Body and fittings £1,280
- Total £1,750
EXAMPLE 3 (American) Capacity 4,000 volumes.

CHASSIS—White, 1½ ton. Generator 40 amps. Extra leaf added to rear springs.

BODY—Walk-in type. Length (inside) 17’, width (inside) 8’2”, height (inside) 7’3”. Doors—front and rear on curb side; front, driver’s side of cab.

Heater—Stewart-Warner gasoline, right centre, mounted in special compartment.

Lights—nine 120 v. 40 w. with gasoline-engine driven A. C. electric generator (Onan 750 watts, 120 volts); can also use outside electrical connection.

Steps—3 stationary at each side door. Ventilator—White. Insulation (2” fibre-glass and treated felt) in roof and side-panels and between double doors. Floor covering—battleship linoleum.

SHELVING—wood. For regular sized books, 310’ (capacity 3800) located inside and outside, height 10”, depth 8”, not at an angle, with corrugated rubber matting and 3/10” round steel sliding grill for holding books on shelves. For odd-sized books, 18’ (capacity 200) on left rear side. For magazines, rear wall racks, ceiling to floor, with capacity for 100. Charging desk—at right front, 3’ long with 30” leaf fold-over top; height 2’6”, width 18”; card well, drawer space. Clothes compartment. Bulletin board.

COST—total £4,000.

STAFF—3 per trip.
SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY


INDEX

A
Aged persons, service to, 78.
Agencies for promotion of libraries, 83.
Asylums, 78.

B
Basic pattern of service, 11.
Bibliographies, national, 19.
Blind, service for, 79.
Boards, Library, 29.
Boards, State Library, 25.
Bookcases, 36.
Book stock, 38.
— see also Stock.
Borrowers’ tickets, inter availability, 75.
Branch library.
— definition, 33.
— exchange of stock, 65.
Buildings, 35.
Bulk exchange of stock, 38, 64.

C
Catalogues, for service to individuals, 59-60.
Cataloguing, in relation to stock exchange, 40.
Centres, 45-6.
— definition, 33.
— staffing, 46.
— stock exchange, 47.
‘Charging’ methods, 66.
Children, work with, 77.
Cities covered by several authorities, 13.
City and country systems, 14-5.
Commissions, library development, 83.
Committee, library, 29.
Compulsory library service, 21.
Contract arrangements between authorities, 16.
Co-operation, 74.
— national and regional, 62.
Country vans, 47-49.
— book stock, 42.
— circuits, 52-3.
— costs, 57.
County decentralization, 67.
County library organization, 33, 63.
County loan records, 65-6.

D
Decentralization, county, 67.
Definitions, 33, 74-5.
Demonstration schemes, 74.
Deposit station.
— definition, 33.
Delivery vans, 54.
Dissipation of resources, 24.

E
Education, Ministry of, and libraries, 25.
Entire population should be served, 23.
Exchange of stock, 38.
— branch, 65.
— country, 64.
Exhibition vans, 48, 53-4.
Expenditure, limitation, 20.
Extension programmes, 90.
Federal agencies, 18.  
Federal union catalogues, 19.  
Financial ability, 26.  
Free service, 24. 98.  

Grants from State, 18, 25-6, 70.  
— 'in kind', 18.  
Groupings of authorities, 16.  

Heating, 35.  
Hospitals, 78.  
Hours of opening, 36.  

Iliiterates, 94-5.  
Individuals, service to, 59-60.  
Infirm, service to, 79.  
Inspection, 27-8.  
Isolated readers, service to, 59.  

Joint governing bodies, 16.  
Joint schemes-finance, 28.  

Legal requirements, 23.  
Legislation, 20.  
Library Associations, 83-4.  
Librarians, meetings of, 75.  
Library Schools, 73-92.  
Library vans.  
— specifications, 105.  
— See also Country Vans, Mobile Branch Libraries, Travelling Libraries.  
Lighting, 35.  
Loan should be free, 24-98.  
Local and State authority relationships, 24.  
Local initiative, 94.  
Local versus State responsibility, 11-2.  
Limitation of expenditure, 20.  

Methods, uniform, 75.  
Mobile Branch Libraries, 47-8, 107.  

National Book Centres, 19.  
National union catalogues, 19.  
Non-public versus public libraries, 95-6.  

Opinions, all to be covered, 23-4.  

Postage to individual readers, 60.  
Prejudices against libraries, 87.  
Premises, 35.  
Prisons, libraries in, 79.  
Programmes for library extension, 90-99.  
Promotion of library extension, 82.  
Public versus non-public libraries, 95.  
Publicity, 85-6.  

Reference service to country districts, 50.  
Regional schemes, 18.  
Restrictions, legislative, 20.  

School libraries, 77.  
Schools of librarianship, 73-92.  
Seamen, service for, 79.  
Service points, 32.  
Single authority systems, 14.  
Small town libraries, 33.  
Special requirements of readers, 61.  
Staff, 37.  
— of county headquarters, 66-7.  
— for new library services, 91.  
— in relation to development, 91.