

Carnegie Corporation Aid to College Libraries

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COLLEGE and reference librarians are the representatives of a big business. They are engaged actively and persistently in the business of advancing and diffusing knowledge and information. They are social philosophers, specialists, and experts, devoting themselves to a great public enterprise. In their charge are 63,000,000 bound volumes on the shelves of 1300 colleges. They annually aid 145,000 students to receive the Bachelor's degree; 18,000 to receive the Master's degree; and 2800 others, the doctorate. Associated with them in this huge business are 110,000 full time educational staff members. The annual supply of raw material is 1,200,000 students, and the educational budget is \$420,000,000, 4 per cent of which is for libraries.

College and reference librarians are among the responsible executive officers in the established system of higher education in the United States. I am not a librarian, not an educator, not an expert, not a philanthropist. As a matter of fact, my position is that of a layman, a reader, a listener, a man at the side of the road where the race of educators goes by. As a reader, I may as well admit, my serious reading is not the orderly sequential kind which many librarians like to emphasize; nor is my recreational reading always

aimed at culture. I read all sorts of stuff—good and bad—to keep up with the educational world with which my daily business deals. Much of what I read I take pleasure in forgetting. Then again, I read for escape—to escape from much of the rather drab reading forced upon me day by day. And, in between, occasionally I read for the good of my soul, and that reading like my soul is often disjointed and rambling.

My purpose here is to call your attention briefly to a few major movements and tendencies which from the records of the Carnegie Corporation seem to have taken form and motion during the past twenty years—in particular during the past decade—and in which the corporation has had the privilege of associating its interests with those of the college and reference librarians of the American Library Association, and with other agencies in the library field. Much of the text of this story will deal, of necessity, with quantitative matters, chiefly dollars. As to the qualitative aspects of the story, the librarians concerned can best speak of the degree to which the hopes of the corporation have been fulfilled.

Development of the Carnegie Idea

Strange things have happened in the intellectual life of our country during the past fifty years, and strangest of all possibly, but a commonplace today, has been

the remarkable development of the library idea. In 1853, Colonel James Anderson of Allegheny, Pennsylvania, turned his library of 400 volumes into a library institute for working boys and was present in person on Saturdays to lend out the books. A certain messenger boy who was excluded from the privilege of borrowing books, because messenger boys did not have a trade, requested a more generous interpretation of the term "working boy," and, through newspaper correspondence, managed to carry his point. In this way did Andrew Carnegie, the messenger boy, secure his matriculation in a university that he never afterwards abandoned. During the remainder of his life he was never far from books, and his later library program was essentially a part of himself—his own ideal and experience in self education objectified for others. Certainly it is admitted that the gifts of this former messenger boy for library purposes served to stimulate thinking Americans to realize the advantages of books free and accessible to all, until now the free public, and academic, library is an accepted and cherished feature in American life.

As vital parts of this general movement, now so universally recognized and so generously supported, have come an increased emphasis on college and university libraries, and a broader understanding of how a central reservoir of books should function for faculty and students alike. University libraries, to be sure, date back for centuries, but new ideas for service have come into being. No college librarian in this conference, I am sure, can understand today a situation such as occurred a few generations ago, when the librarian of Columbia College at the end of the fiscal year handed back to the president, as not required for library purposes, a substantial

part of the \$1,500 allocated for operation of the library.

Library Grants Since 1911

Since its establishment in 1911, the corporation has devoted but one-sixth of its total appropriations to library interests, and even during the past fifteen years, in which library affairs have been of particular concern to the corporation, only one-seventh of its income has been made available to library enterprises. This is simply one way of saying that the American free public library and its academic counterpart are going concerns, with their own momentum and are not dependent upon philanthropic support.

The development of the free public library and the academic library may be divided roughly into two stages, separated by the war of 1914-18. The corporation has been intimately associated with both stages. In the first or prewar stage, professional and popular interest was centered on the erection of library buildings and on the initial acquisition of book reservoirs.

After the war, a series of studies revealed the need, among others, for more well-trained professional librarians of general competence, for an effective central organization, and for better library schools. In an effort to meet these needs, the corporation made large general grants in 1926, covering a ten-year period, to stabilize the American Library Association and to establish library schools of high academic standing. Likewise, at various times, the General Education Board, the Rockefeller Foundation, the Rosenwald Fund, and scores of benevolent citizens have given generously to encourage the public and the academic library.

As a result of all this there is already in evidence a new type of library service, and also a new type of college librarian. Whether these new products are better than their antecedents is a matter now being discussed on almost every campus.

Two Growing Movements

To those who study educational institutions and practices, two growing rather than established movements seem evident: one, the shift of interest from the subject to the student as the center of educational attention; and, the other, the shift from the book to books. Educators hope to make the education of the student depend less upon what he hears in the classroom or what he is told by the teacher to study, than upon what he digs out for himself not from a textbook but from many books.

Recently President Wilkins of Oberlin said to a group of college presidents:

Six hundred years ago the instrument of education was *the book*. It wasn't a printed book, for printing had not yet been invented. It was a manuscript, in book form. The professor had it, and no one else did—except as the professor dictated the words of his book, and the student wrote them down.

You might think that the invention of printing would have changed all that, but it didn't—not very much, and not very fast. Sixty years ago, the professor still had the book—and each student had a copy of the same book. That was all. That was the textbook stage of education.

But the last sixty years have seen a change—more especially the last thirty years, most especially the last ten years. There are still plenty of classrooms from whose procedure you would never know that printing had been invented. But the trend sets strongly now from the book to books, from the single textbook to a multitude of equally accessible books, from the five-inch shelf to the transforming riches of the library.

The professor is no longer the one exponent of the law; he is no longer the slave or the critic of the author of the one textbook. The professor is but one of any number of men wise in a given field of study. Scores of other wise men, through their books, are eager to say their say to the professor's students. And the part of the professor is to say what he has to say that is really his own, but beyond that to reveal to his students the range and wealth of other opinions now available to them, and to guide them in their selection and their appraisal of their so greatly multiplied possession.

When this educational conception prevails, college education will be really different. To make it prevail calls for a farsighted agreement among college presidents, college teachers and college librarians. The librarians alone cannot reform education or even a campus attitude toward books.

An Illuminating Experience

In the decade following the war years of 1914-18, many colleges began to make curricular changes away from the textbook system, but queerly enough they took very modest steps or none at all to equip their libraries to meet the demands which they were creating. Recognizing the importance of the library in the new plans, the corporation engaged, during 1925-29, in a series of scattered grants totaling about \$200,000, for development of college libraries through purchase of books. These grants were not only helpful to the recipient colleges; they were illuminating to the corporation. Experience showed that the average liberal arts college library was not equipped to handle effectively as much as \$5,000 worth of new books annually, and that the ordering of books was not well done, the librarian often not having ready access to the market and very often having little skill in purchasing.

This situation appeared to offer the possibility of useful activity to the corporation, and in 1928 there was set up an Advisory Group on College Libraries, to study the whole problem of improving the quality of book collections in American four-year liberal arts colleges.¹ As a result of this study, nearly one hundred colleges have been aided, through grants totaling \$961,000, over a period of years to develop their libraries through purchase of books for general undergraduate reading.

Advisory Group's Aims

These colleges are widely scattered over the United States. In trying to attain its general purposes the advisory group aimed at many specific things: a national distribution of recipients; a representative list of different types of colleges; aid to colleges where "intellectual ferment" was in process; the development of the general resources of the library, as distinguished from provision of extra copies of textbooks, etc.; the selection of a few widely scattered colleges already possessing excellent libraries, which by additional funds could round out their collections so as to be demonstration points. Through the centralized purchasing plan recommended by this group and put into operation, the recipient colleges pooled their orders in one central office maintained under professional supervision at the University of Michigan and have profited by having their books purchased at reduced expense, both of time and money. At the same time, the corporation has learned still more about procedures and practices in college libraries.

¹ This first advisory group, whose study of college libraries lasted more than three years, was composed of librarians, deans, presidents and consulting experts, as you see from the list of members: Bishop, Keogh, Milam, Waples, Wilson, Aydelotte, Gildersleeve, Glass, Lewis, Wilkins, Randall and Shaw.

An earlier project, involving \$75,000, to develop dental college libraries and including a centralized purchasing service was successfully carried out in 1929, shortly after the publication by the Carnegie Foundation of Dr. William J. Gies' report on dental education in the United States and Canada. About five years ago another advisory group made a survey of junior college libraries with a view to making recommendations for library development in this new type of educational institution.² As a result the corporation made grants totaling \$300,000 to some ninety junior colleges, and is now watching what happens in their libraries. Through the work of an advisory group in Canada during the years 1931-33, the corporation made available \$210,000 to thirty-one Canadian colleges for library development through purchase of books. There is a greater diversity of colleges in this list since the Canadian academic pattern differs widely from that in the United States.

Endows Librarianships

Not to be overlooked is a very unusual group of grants made in 1930-32, when the corporation voted grants of \$150,000 each to Lafayette, Mount Holyoke, Oberlin, Swarthmore, and Wesleyan, for endowment of the college librarianship. These endowments were intended chiefly to call attention of the academic and the gift giving world to the fact that the position of librarian is as important as a professorship in some more widely recognized field where endowed chairs are common. In addition to making possible those endowed librarianships, the corporation has devoted \$680,000 to general endowment of academic libraries. Here, for information,

² This group was composed also of librarians, deans, and presidents: Bishop, Edmonson, Fells, Haggard, Koos, Milam, Rush, Wilson, and Wood.

it should be said that the corporation is not looking forward to continuing this type of grant. In fact, in recent years with declining interest rates the word "endowment" has lost much of its magic charm, when contrasted with money that can be spent now.

With the experience gained from programs with liberal arts colleges, Canadian colleges, and junior colleges, the corporation two years ago began a preliminary study of the libraries in state-supported teachers colleges. Here new factors appeared, and the corporation decided to limit its grants to some thirty-one well scattered institutions which seemed to offer the most promising plans for library development. Naturally, the few selections made may have called a disproportionate amount of attention to the colleges which were not selected. But it has never been the purpose of the corporation to do other than to call attention to the possibility and advisability of library development in a given field. It has not tried to support development at all possible points. The amount now being spent experimentally on teachers college libraries is \$198,000.

Just what, if any, the next group of institutions will be upon which the corporation may base a series of grants remains to be seen.

Other Grants

Two other groups of relatively small but none the less important grants may be mentioned here.

The first includes support grants for a bibliographical-research assistant project at Pennsylvania and Cornell; cataloging of southern historical material at the University of North Carolina; re-cataloging at Tulane and Virginia; and a rural ministers' circulating library at Van-

derbilt. These total some \$92,000.

The second is composed of grants to make possible books on academic libraries. One has but to examine the rapidly growing body of literature on the college library to discover that a great amount of unusually well-directed thinking on the part of all who are interested in higher education is being done on the place of the library in college education. Some books resulting from corporation grants are:

George A. Works *College and University Library Problems* (1927)

William M. Randall *The College Library* (1932)

James T. Gerould *The College Library Building* (1932)

Klauder & Wise *College Architecture in America*, Chapter V (1929)

Charles B. Shaw *A List of Books for College Libraries* (1932)

F. E. Mohrhardt *A List of Books for Junior College Libraries* (1937)

Harvie Branscomb *Teaching with Books* (in process)

College Library Standards for Liberal Arts Colleges and for Junior College Libraries

In addition to these, there have been produced during the past ten years at least a score of other far-reaching studies—one degree removed from corporation aid—and hundreds of articles. In fact, the by-products of corporation activity in the college library field may prove to be far more influential than the money grants themselves have been.

This is a good time to insert in the record a statement as to the corporation's interest in what a few years ago was regarded as "a little cloud out of the sea, like a man's hand"—microphotography and the other mechanical or scientific aids

to learning. Still disregarded by many librarians, these processes will probably revolutionize many aspects of library work and service within the next twenty years. The corporation during the past five years has made possible a variety of experiments in this field and has enabled the National Research Council to set up an operating committee on scientific aids to learning. The work of this committee, headed by Dr. Irvin Stewart, promises to be of the greatest importance, and the corporation is glad to help pave the way for a modern approach to many library and educational problems.

This is as good a place as any to present a few final figures which may be a surprise; they surprised me when I compiled them from the corporation books. They carry farther, also, my opening statement about big business. They are in specific reply to the question: What has the corporation done to aid the academic library in the United States?

years—\$1,794,000—represents a lot of books. But the corporation is not interested simply in making big and bigger libraries. When is a college library adequate? What is a good working collection for undergraduates? Is it true that libraries are becoming so bulky and complicated—or so scattered and diverse—that students are repelled *from* books just when teachers are trying to impel them *to* books? A lot of books! Are these books being used?

Recently I was told that the Harvard undergraduate, if he is persistent enough, has available to him the greatest university library in the world, but on the average he rarely comes into direct contact with a collection any larger or more comprehensive than the 10,000 or 15,000 volumes in the Freshman Union and the house libraries, and he is at a real disadvantage in comparison with a man in most of the other first-class colleges of the country.

What will make the academic "working

CARNEGIE GRANTS FOR ACADEMIC LIBRARIES

Buildings and equipment	\$639,146
Library endowment (including Vassar, Smith)	680,000
Librarianship endowment	750,000
Purchase of books:	
Liberal arts colleges	
Before advisory groups	335,000
After advisory groups	961,000
Junior colleges (92)	300,000
Teachers colleges (31)	198,000
Advisory groups: field work, studies, publications, centralized purchasing, etc.	125,000
Bibliographical-research experiments; experimental and special services, etc.	92,000
Vanderbilt-Peabody cooperative library in Nashville, Tenn.; largely aided by the General Education Board and by the friends of the two major participating institutions	250,000
Total	\$4,330,146

This is a large total, \$4,330,146, and the total for books during the past fifteen

boys" of today want books? How can the

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and students. At least one junior college has been inspired to undertake a very interesting survey of the reading habits and library attitudes of its students, as affected by the Carnegie grant.

Some report that the grant has provided the impetus needed to secure a new library building, new furniture and equipment, an addition to the staff, or an increase in the library's appropriation. Others describe additional gifts from other sources, gifts which might not have come without the publicity attending the Carnegie grant.

One librarian eloquently summed up the matter by writing:

The grant seems to be the force for bringing about many of the things we have long planned for. To see the library grow in usefulness, to see a renewed interest by the faculty as a whole, and to feel that we can begin to approach the type of service that we should give as a junior college library is very gratifying.

The grants should in the long run prove of benefit to all junior college libraries. The standards prepared by the advisory group, the *List of Books for Junior College Libraries*, the numerous articles and statistical studies initiated by the group should be of service. An increased demand

for trained librarians in the junior college field can be attributed in part to the work of the advisory group. Most important, executive officers and governing boards have been stimulated as never before to think about library problems and are coming to realize the need for more adequate appropriations.

To quote Dr. Eells:

The primary object of the Corporation, after all, was not so much to aid particular junior colleges as to stimulate all junior colleges to improve their library collections and service. Within a short time the grants will all have been expended, but the influence of the entire study will far outlast this limited period. All of the junior colleges in the country, whether included in the smaller number which actually received grants or not, can and will profit greatly from the other phases of the study, the book list, the standards, the statistical information, and most important of all in many cases, the realization on the part of administrators of the fundamental importance of the library in any real program of college education. Perhaps in the long run general junior college stimulation and development of library consciousness will be the most important and permanent outcome of the three years of work of the Carnegie Corporation's Advisory Group on Junior College Libraries.³

³ *Junior College Journal*, 6:17, January, 1937.

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academic "Colonel Andersons" make them accessible? These are questions that give us pause.

The trustees and officers of the corporation are certainly not under the delusion that the average undergraduate—if there be such—is panting for knowledge and yearning for books to the detriment of his health and the despair of his professors. But it is believed that as the

years go by, the usefulness of books will become more and more impressed on the consciousness of the academic community, and that the wide-awake professors, librarians, and presidents—and there are many of this kind who drive students to books—will so adapt college teaching that students will be eager to draw upon what President Wilkins has termed, "the transforming riches of the library."