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The Development of Professional Librarianship

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Librarianship is an ancient occupation, but during most of its history it has lacked many of the major characteristics by which it could be classified as a profession. Library schools that train students specifically for the field of librarianship are a product of the last seventy-five years, and even a concept of systematic apprenticeship is not much older. During much of the history of librarianship, there was no mystery of difficult techniques or special skills to be transmitted to initiates. Librarianship even lacked recognition as a self-sufficient career until very recent times. Most people who worked in libraries previous to the twentieth century were identified as something else -- critics, writers, divines, courtiers, scholars, and many other occupations.

Yet people in charge of libraries throughout the century have had some concept of their tasks and their role in their society. Occasionally people came to the fore who by precept or example demonstrated the relation of librarianship to the great periods of scholarship.¹

In this paper the writer is attempting to show the concept of the librarian throughout recorded time and his relationship to his society. The development of the library profession is most clearly shown by means of a chronological arrangement which culminates with the image and status of the twentieth century librarian. Because of the immense span of time covered it was necessary to be selective in the examples chosen to illustrate the most important aspects of each major historical period.

The first actual reference we have to librarians has been as early as 3000 B.C. to 2000 B.C. It was during this time that the ancient Babylonian civilization had reached its high point under the rule of Hammurabi (ca. 1950 B.C.) who is remembered for the codification of laws known by his name. This work called for well-arranged legal collections as sources for the laws and presupposes what must have been an excellent legal archive or law library. From the viewpoint of library history, the important thing to note is that in order to compile such histories or codes of laws, the writers must have had thousands of clay tablets from which they could draw, and those tablets must have been well organized and arranged...
for use. From the viewpoint of librarianship, it was obviously necessary that competent people be employed to supervise such collections.

The librarian, or "keeper of the books," was of necessity a well-trained individual. Initially, he had to be a graduate of the school for scribes and then he had to be thoroughly trained in the literature or type of records that he was to keep. After this, he served an apprenticeship for a number of years, learning the trade of librarian and at the same time also becoming proficient in several languages. That the librarians must have been polylingual is indicated by the numerous cases of works in several languages found in the same collections. In addition to serving as librarian, he was often called on to edit, transcribe, and translate works needed by higher government or religious officials. In the temple libraries, the librarian-scribe was a priest, often a high ranking one, while in the palace libraries he was often an important official. In either case, he was usually of the upper classes, often the younger son of a noble family. Indeed, it seems apparent that whether the librarian was employed in a temple or a palace library, a business library or in the private library of a wealthy nobleman or merchant, he
rated extremely high on the status scale of that time. The Babylonian "master of the Books" was a most important person in the history of a civilization whose most permanent fame lies in the contribution to the realm of communication.¹

Following the Babylonians, the Assyrians were probably the next western civilization to establish libraries. The first known Assyrian library was founded in 1300 B.C. at Calah by Shalmaneser I, but the most famous of libraries in that country was the Royal Library at Ninevah. It was founded in the year 700 B.C. and was made open to a limited public by Ashurbaniphal.² Ashurbaniphal was an Assyrian King who established a library of over 30,000 clay tablets. It soon developed into the greatest library of the ancient world and was open to all scholars, both official and un-official. The official seal of the king has been regarded as one of the earliest comments on the work of the librarian:

"The manifestation of the god Hebo . . . of the god of the supreme intellect, -- I have written it upon tablets, -- I have signed it, -- I have put it in order, -- I have placed it in the midst of my palace for the instruction of my subjects."³

It is possible that the earliest royal collections were concerned primarily with adding only to the royal possessions, but to Assurbaniphal, at least, a library was something more than just another possession. He boasted that he could read and his interest in the library heritage of his country was so great that he sent scribes throughout his realm in a systematic effort to make a collection of Assyro-Babylonian literature. Assurbaniphal issued careful instructions for provision of the necessary texts, kept busy a host of copyists, and insisted on careful work. The library had its own staff who arranged the works by subject and who marked them with stamps that indicated their position in the collection. It is known that a catalog of some type facilitated the use of the library holdings. From its collected holdings -- there were deeds, documents, and letters; religious texts; historical accounts; and the works in the most diverse fields of knowledge -- there shines forth the purpose for which it was designed. It was to serve the state as well as the church, to promote the lasting fame of its founder as well as scientific knowledge.¹ As the administrator of overseer of the library and librarians, Ashurbaniphal, by taking great pride in

his library and by employing the finest scribes and scholars, upgraded the profession of librarianship even more.

Although there is reliable evidence that libraries did exist in ancient Egypt, the archaeological evidence for specific collections is much less available than for those in Babylonia. However, due to the great mass of funeral and laudatory material regarding the Egyptian librarian that is available, we do have knowledge of his position in that world.

In order to understand the mind of the Egyptian librarian, it is needful to know something of the Egyptian god, Troth, who was the ideal of the Egyptian librarian and was constantly on his mind for imitation. This mythological librarian had two great virtues: first, he embodied the philosophy of books and libraries then current among the Egyptians; and second, he was in fact the god of the librarian who seriously worshipped him. Troth embodied the aspects of the Egyptian librarian in that he was the god of learning, numbering, and measuring, as well as the giver of written words and the "lord of sacred writings." He was the founder of all sciences, creator of heaven and earth by his words, the god who raises the dead by his words and he
who weighs and records a man's deeds at the final judgment.¹

Troth was not so much the god of the private library and confidential archives as he was of the public library by trying to issue only fit books to fit persons for proper use.² From the Book of the Dead Troth says:

"I am Troth the perfect scribe whose hands are pure, who opposes every evil deed, who writes down justice and who hates every wrong, he who is the writing reed of the inviolate god, the lord of laws, whose words are written and whose words have dominion over the two earths. I am the lord of justice, the witness of right before the gods; I direct the words so as to make the wronged victorious; I am Troth the lord of justice, who giveth victory to him who is injured and who taketh the defense of the oppressed."³

This was the key to the ideal of the Egyptian librarian.

Egyptian libraries abounded for we know that every palace and temple housed a collection of books and the keepers were called "librarians." In the temple libraries the office was passed down from father to son.⁴ That the Egyptian librarian was highly educated can be of no doubt. The various titles of the deceased found in

²Ibid., p. 12.
³Ibid., p. 16.
⁴Eaton, Contributions . . ., p. 2.
laudatory biographies of the Egyptian librarian indicate that the "keeper of the books" was also an editor as well an author. He corrected, translated, amended, and criticized the materials that passed through his hands. He also censored the materials since it was believed that the written word gave superhuman power and had to be kept from the common people.

The Egyptian librarians were most important. During a greater part of Egyptian history the king's court or council always included, as ex-officio members, the chief librarians of the palace, archives, and a librarian of the sacred writings. Some librarians also served as judges in criminal cases. The most powerful man at the court of King Dedhere-Isesi (2683-2655 B.C.) was the chief judge, vizier, architect and scribe of the king's writings, Senezomib. In short, if the Egyptian librarians were only half as important as the funeral biographies indicate, they were indeed credits to the library profession.

More famous, longer enduring, and more closely connected with the western cultural heritage was the

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1 Johnson, History . . . , p. 40.
2 Richardson, Some . . . , p. 27.
library at Alexandria. The Alexandrian Library was founded in conjunction with a museum, probably about 250 B.C., by Ptolemy Philadelphus.¹ This magnificent enterprise, reputed to have 700,000 volumes, very naturally received the attention of many men of that period who are known to history. Included among the librarians were Demetrius of Phalerum, Zenodotus, Eratosthenes, Appolonius, Aristophanes of Byzantium, Aristarchus of Samothrace, Callimachus, and others of high stature.

From the standpoint of the librarian, however, most of these men are better known for achievements other than their librarianship. Demetrius was the last tyrant of Athens and Eratosthenes was known as a geographer. The Alexandrian librarians were first general scholars and secondly librarians. They collected books and original sources with a passion that did not stop at piracy. Their duties also included cataloging, making bibliographies, editing and translating books, writing their own literature and supervising a scriptorium. Their work in the library was a general by-product of their general scholarship.² The Alexandrian librarians retained their stature of scholarship since they were not responsible for any menial

¹Thornton, Chronology, p. 11.
tasks connected with the routine work of a library. They were concerned usually with textual or literary criticism.  

One Alexandrian librarian who occupied a special place on the list of librarians is Callimachus of Cyrene. His scholarly reputation rests upon his *Pinakes* which he produced about the middle of the third century B.C. The *Pinakes* were catalogs of the manuscripts in the library. They separated prose writers from poets and broke both divisions into subject groups. The authors were also arranged alphabetically and each one was provided with a biographical notice and a list of his writings. The individual work of the author was then described as to title, first words and number of lines. While some historians do not consider Callimachus as a member of the library staff at all and others consider him some kind of subordinate official, it is certain that his *Pinakes* formed the basis of all later bibliographies of antiquity.  

In Greece libraries were quite common and there are many claims for the earliest library. Pisistratus is said to have founded the first library at Athens according to Thornten. However, Hessel disavows this theory and

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1 Eaton, *Contributions...*, p. 6.
suggests that it is more likely that there were extensive private collections first. Such intellectual giants as Plato, Aristotle and Euripides were known to have had private libraries. Eventually, Aristotle's collection made its way to Rome. The Greek librarians were outstanding scholars. Evidence indicates that they were probably administrators or advisors rather than actual librarians. "The role of the library and the librarian was held high in the Hellenistic society, and it has seldom been held higher in all of Western history."

The libraries of ancient Rome were direct inheritances from the Greeks. As the Roman Republic spread its military influence from 200 B.C. onward, the conquering legions carried back the booty to Rome. It was in this way that Rome's first major libraries were acquired. They were actually manuscripts from the conquered Greek libraries.

The early Roman librarian was more often than not a highly educated slave or a prisoner of war from Greece or Asia Minor. Later in Roman history the position of librarian was held by a native scholar who often was an author as well. Still later, however, the position became more one of a civil servant. Tyrannin, one of the earliest librarians in Roman history, was an example of a prisoner

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"Johnson, History . . ., p. 76."
who improved his lot in life greatly. He was taken prisoner by Lucullus on the island of Rhodes and was brought to Rome about 72 B.C. He was soon given his freedom and established himself as a teacher of Greek. This ambitious man later became wealthy through his trade in books and was a friend and confident of both scholars and politicians. He was known to advise both Sulla and Cicero concerning the building of their libraries and he helped Cicero in the cataloging of his collection.1

The libraries of Rome seem to have been administered by a central library administrator who was known as the Procurator Bibliothecarum. Beneath this general library administrator were the individual librarians for each of the city's libraries. The administrative positions were known as political civil-service jobs which were seldom filled by persons who were particularly interested in librarianship. The actual library work was done by well-educated but less important assistants and often even by slaves.

The records that have survived regarding the staff of the Roman libraries indicate that not a single man of real distinction in scholarship and letters was associated with any of the libraries. Gaius Julius Hyginus was

1Ibid., p. 77.
appointed as director of the Paletine library by Augustus Caesar. He was a freed-man from either Spain or Alexandria who was also at one time a schoolteacher; he died very poor. He was then succeeded by M. Pomponius Marcellus, a grammarian, who began his life as a boxer and ended it as a pedant. Gaius Helissus was appointed by Augustus to the Octavian library. His claim to literary distinction rests on the compilation, in his old age, of some collections of quips and jokes; he also invented the fabula trabeata, a type of high-life comedy. The impression was left with history that neither Augustus nor his successors took the libraries sufficiently serious.¹

The great libraries of the classical world were not destined to survive. Some were destroyed in accidental fires or natural disasters and many more were destroyed in wars and barbarian raids. However, just as many simply died of neglect. By 370 A. D., it was reported that the great majority of the libraries in Rome were even then like tombs, closed forever.² "If there is one lesson that the history of classical libraries teaches us, it is that a great library must have at its head great scholars to carry out not only bibliographical research, but creative work. No

²Johnson, History . . ., p. 28.
library can be left to take care of itself. Unless it is fired by genius and ability, it dies."

With the collapse of the Roman Empire in the first century A.D., the literary heritage of our Western world was in grave danger. The great libraries of antiquity were gone forever. Fortunately, however, for the Western civilization, even before the old order had ended, there was a definite beginning of a new institution that was to preserve a part of the ancient culture through the dark ages until it could be revived again during the Renaissance. That institution was, of course, the medieval monastery. For nearly a thousand years the typical European library was to be the small collection of manuscripts, laboriously copied and jealously guarded, in many monasteries scattered from Greece to Iceland. 2

One of the most important figures who was associated with the monastic library is that of Magnus Aurelius Cassiodorus. As the civilized world began to crumble under the monastic idea took hold in southern Italy and it is there that we find Cassiodorus. Cassiodorus was born c.487 at Squillacein, Southern Italy, where his family had been distinguished land owners and statesmen for at least three generations. He held all the offices of state from Quaestor to Praetorian Prefect, and served the Ostrogoth emperor

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1Irwin, Heritage . . . , p. 90.
Theodoric as his chief advisor. The primary aims of Cassiodorus were to preserve peace in Italy and to build a new Italian nation from a blend of Latin and Goth.\(^1\) He had aspired to founding a university in Rome similar to the Museum in Alexandria. However, due to the uncertain political conditions of the time, he failed at this and instead, he retired from public office. Upon his retirement he used his accumulated wealth to begin a monastery at Vivarium in Benevento. It was through his organization and supervision of the scriptorium and library at Vivarium that both the classical and Christian letters were rescued from total oblivion.

Cassiodorus had a great respect for learning and a reverence for books in general. Thus, although he had assembled a great library in which the nucleus had been his own private collection to which he had added many works of classical, Latin and Greek authors, he was not satisfied to cease at that accomplishment. It was Cassiodorus who made both sound learning and the copying of books a definite part part of monastic discipline. He also provided the early monastic institutions with the bibliographical guide that they needed for the organization of their libraries and scriptoria. This was done through his *Institutiones* which

\(^1\text{Raymond Irwin, *The Heritage of the English Library*, (New York: Hofne\'e Publishing Co.), p119.}\)
describes in detail the practical work and purpose of the community at Vivorium.\(^1\)

In the *Institutio*nes, Cassiodorus began with a justification of literate scholarship as opposed to the prevailing predilection of depending on heavenly visions. He argued that through the pursuit of reading, those things which are closed to man might be opened. His divine readings reviewed the text of the scriptures, commentaries on them, and other writings of church fathers. He discussed secular learning as organized in the seven liberal arts, summarizing ideas and alluding to important authors. He commented on the problems of textual criticism and clearly outlined the work of a scriptorium.\(^2\) It was in the *Institutio*nes that Cassiodorus made special reference to the brothers who copied the texts. He admonished the brothers to copy industriously since he believed that Satan received as many wounds as the monk copies words of the Lord. He was most attracted to the task of the copyist and not only took care that the manuscripts should have good appearance, but he also laid great stress on the correctness of the texts. Cassiodorus, a survivor of the classical tradition who blended it with Christian scholarship, reaffirmed the Alexandrian tradition,

\(^{1}\text{Ibid., p. 121.}\)

\(^{2}\text{Winger, *Aspects* ... , p. 24.}\)
or the goal of Alexandrian librarianship, which was the preservation of a cultural heritage. It is to him that we are indebted for transmission of many literary monuments from antiquity to the Middle Ages.

One of the most attractive monastic librarians during the Middle Ages was the English scholar, Alcuin. While it is acknowledged that the monastic library was in existence continuously through the Middle Ages, the period from the sixth to the ninth centuries was an unproductive one from the library point of view, and the period between Cassiodorus and Alcuin has been described as the darkest era of the Dark Ages. The early ninth century saw a revival of learning under what was known as the Carolingian Renaissance of the Emperor Charlemagne. This revival of learning brought with it the creation of schools, churches, and libraries, particularly after the arrival in France of Alcuin. Alcuin was placed in charge of a school in Tours in 782 and soon set up a scriptorium and library. Later, as Bishop of Tours, Alcuin planned the establishment of school and monasteries throughout Charlemagne's Empire.¹ Alcuin brought with him not only the training and literary resources of York, but also a wholly new attitude toward ancient literature. To him, the ancients were marvels from whom came all knowledge. The liberal arts were not

¹Hessel, History . . . , p. 17.
the works of man, but of God, who created them as a part of nature for men to find and develop. Since this is what the ancients had done, Alcuin exhorted his monks to abandon the spade for the pen and thus he enunciates the function of Christian humanism.¹

Excluding such rare men as Cassiodorus and Alcuin, the position of the monastic librarian was not particularly of the highest esteem. The librarian, or custodian of the library, was usually one of the monks designated for the task. In some monasteries the job was rotated while in others an older or incapacitated monk was given the job of caring for the books. Since the task was often a simple one, owing to the small number of books and the small circulation in the monastic library, the position of librarian was usually combined with some other duty. In many church libraries in England, the position of keeper of the books combined with that of the cantor or sub-cantor. Rules for the libraries read:

"Let not a book be given to anyone without a proper and sufficient voucher, and let this be entered on the roll.

"Thou must have full knowledge of what is given to thy charge. The first duty of a librarian is to strive, in his time, as far as possible, to increase the library committed to him. Let him beware that the library does not diminish,

that the books in his charge do not in any way get lost or perish. Let him repair by binding books that are damaged by age. Let him know the names of the authors."

In many monastic libraries the librarian was held personally responsible for the safety of the books in his charge and had to replace any that were lost or damaged.

Although a high degree of scholarship was attained in the period from 800 to 1200 A. D., the entire structure of monasticism began to decay from about 1200 to the end of the medieval period. During this period of decay, the libraries suffered; some were destroyed and others just simply disappeared. Many buildings were destroyed by fire and books that were saved from the buildings were often piled into great heaps and were allowed to disintegrate. The low regard with which the later Middle Age monasteries held their books caused them to allow other institutions and individuals to carry off the works to add to private collections. By 1500, books could be either bought from the monasteries or could be picked out of the rubble where they had been thrown and discarded. Even if the monasteries had not declined physically and intellectually, the advent of the printing press would have effectively ended their cultural importance in the library aspect. The ready

1Johnson, History . . . , p. 113.
2Eaton, Contributions . . . , p. 12.
availability of books by the hundreds and thousands meant that many types of libraries and institutions would come into existence. However, the role of the monastery library and its librarians in the preservation of Western culture cannot be denied.

The libraries attached to monasteries, cathedrals, abbeys and other religious institutions had been pioneers in the field of librarianship in many countries but they were followed and in certain instances displaced by libraries belonging to other bodies. Universities and colleges were springing up and on the continent, town libraries were being founded. The libraries affiliated with the monasteries had been largely concerned with preserving the cultural remains of the classic era and thus they were not concerned with the dissemination of knowledge. Though it is true that some cathedral schools did, to a certain extent, put their libraries to work, it remained for the coming of the medieval university to bring libraries that would not only preserve the heritage of the past, but that would also open that knowledge for general use.

The university library that emerged in the latter part of the thirteenth century was not a library as we would think of it. For the most part, it was a collection of

1 Johnson, History . . ., p. 116.
2 Ibid., p. 28.
books loaned or donated by a teacher or master. Often the bookseller in the vicinity held a very prominent position in the academic community since his stocks were also often the basis of the "library." As the universities increased in the fourteenth century and after, libraries were formed on the donations of private collections that had been given to the university. Librarians as a professional class did not emerge with the libraries of the early universities. On the contrary, the keeper of the books was usually a minor faculty member or at times, even a student. In the event that the college was connected with a religious order, the books were in charge of one or more monks. In some cases, they were left as the responsibility of the chaplain. Sometimes the librarian was a scholar who was well-versed in the contents of most of the volumes he guarded, but at times he was little more than a "keeper of the books" who has charged more with the care of their physical condition than with knowledge of their contents. The library caretaker was often held personally responsible for every book in his charge and was liable for their costs if any were lost or damaged. Inventories were usually made annually and were often carried out in the presence of a high college or university official.
The university library and librarian was, for the most part, a direct outgrowth of the defunct monastery library and resembled it in many ways. However, the university library was a working library in which the emphasis was placed on maintenance of the books for use and not on keeping the volumes for rarity only. In a sense, the medieval university library might be called the earliest modern library in the sense of service. It was from the universities and their modest collections that came the learning that was to pave the way for the Renaissance in Western Europe. If it can be said that the monastery library preserved the knowledge for a thousand years, then the credit must be given to the university library for putting that knowledge to use and in doing so it ushered in the modern era and put an end to the Middle Ages.¹

At the onset of the fourteenth century there was a literary movement toward humanism that quickly captured the imagination of scholars and promoted a change in the role of libraries, and thus, promoted a change in the role of the librarian. Humanism as a literary movement resulted in men such as Petrarch who searched in old monastic libraries for Latin classics and who read them for their content and their literary style without medieval apologies for showing interest

¹Ibid., p. 129.
in pagan authors. This humanistic book collecting was the prelude to librarianship and resulted in the establishment of the princely libraries of the Renaissance. It was in these libraries that there originated a differentiation between librarianship and private book collecting and general scholarship.

In the libraries of the princes, the public, although it was probably a somewhat limited public, were able to use the collection. This public introduced some of the diversity of private and individual concerns to library use as opposed to the institutional purpose of the medieval library. Since the library then became an independent center of study, it required someone to plan appropriate accommodations to meet the various and multiple needs of the public.¹

The beginning of the seventeenth century was marked by the opening of the Bodleian Library, one of the most significant events in the history of librarianship. In 1598, Sir Thomas Bodley had offered to restore Duke Humphrey's Library at the University of Oxford in England. The offer was accepted a few years later by the Vice-Chancellor of Oxford and Bodley at once began collecting books from the world over. He spared no expense in an effort to make the Library as complete as possible.

¹Winger, Aspects ... , p. 25.
The first Keeper of the Library was Dr. Thomas James who was appointed in 1601 and who, in addition to presenting many books to the collection, also gave valiant service in spite of many restrictions on him by Bodley. Bodley remained the administrator and each item of the smallest routine had to be submitted for his approval. The correspondence between James and Bodley reveals that not only was Bodley interested in the smallest detail of the library but he also seemed to be at times attempting to extend his control into the private life of his librarian. James, in addition to being a scholar, was probably a better librarian than he was allowed to reveal. Based on remarks made by James concerning library catalogs and their need, he seemed to fully grasp the essentials of librarianship. He left a subject catalog of the Library in manuscript form in the Bodlerian Library that is an outstanding example of this type of catalog.¹

In spite of Bodley's prejudice against books, written in English, he followed the advise of James who suggested in 1610 that it be arranged with the Stationers Company for the free supply of copies of all works printed by their members. This was a far-sighted action which formed the basis of the library's so-called Copyright Privilege which received statuary authority after the restoration in 1660.

¹ Thornton, Chronology . . . , p. 49.
² Morland, English . . . , p. 76.
The seventeenth century is conveniently labeled as the beginning of modern times because of the extended range of inquiry that became evident in almost all realms of human expression. This extension of interest was naturally felt in the libraries and consequently in librarianship. One of the more important names associated with librarianship during this time is that of Gabriel Naudé. He was one whose real distinction was as a librarian. Prior to this time most librarians were scholars or persons who were trained in professions other than librarianship.

Gabriel Naudé (1600-1653) made a career of librarianship. Although he initially set out to become a doctor of medicine, he became interested in a library position and spent the majority of his life working in libraries. His primary contribution to librarianship was his treatise, *Avis pour dresser une bibliothèque*, which he published in 1627. In this work, he set forth to show his views of what he felt was the correct concept of librarianship. Aside from the fact that his treatise is the earliest monograph in print on the establishment and conduct of libraries, Naudé revealed the two influences which were changing the character of libraries in his time. One of those influences was the increased importance attributed to the broad range of both current and past works. Naudé recommended collecting all
the best editions, old and new, including those of little-known authors as well as those of the famous authors. He even recommended not neglecting the works of authors who were considered as heretical. Thus he described an enlarged scope of library collecting which implied a need for an intelligent and active knowledge of both current and retrospective bibliography and a program of systematic and unremitting collecting. The second influence introduced by Haude1 was a concern with an enlarged reading public which indicated more diverse needs.1 After he presented his recommendations on book collecting and library organization and management, he wrote:

"In vain does he strive to carry out any of the preceding suggestions or go to any great expense for books who does not intend to devote them to the public use and never to withhold them from the humblest of those who may reap any benefit thereby."2

Although the concept of the "public" in Haude's time might well have been somewhat other than what is considered the public in our contemporary world, it is clearly evident that Haude1 obviously had a reading public in mind when he advised against buying expensive bindings on the rationale that the money should be saved to buy texts useful for

1 Winger, Aspects . . . , p. 39.
actual circulation among the library clientele. He also proposed the construction of library catalogs and the logical arrangement of books on library shelves in order to make the use of the library books easier for the readers.

Kaude's comment that librarians, like kings and poets, had to be born. Regardless, he proposed a three-point program for anyone who worked in a library. He first suggested that the librarian should counsel with other librarians. Secondly, the librarian should read whatever was written, no matter how slight it might be. As a final suggestion, the librarian should study the catalogs of libraries to improve his knowledge of bibliography. These suggestions indicate clearly that Kaude's concept of the librarian was that of a specialist in the sources of information and in the service of a broader, and at the same time, more intensive, scholarship.¹

A second person who was important in the seventeenth century concern with librarianship is John Dury. Dury, who served for a short time as assistant librarian of the King's Library, made a sharp attack on his contemporary librarians when he labeled them as mere "place holders." He did, however, blame the lack of adequate pay for librarians for their lack of devotion to the profession. In his compiled letters, known

¹Winger, Aspects . . , p. 27.
as The Reformed Librario-Keeper, Dury professed his concept of the librarian as a master of the sources of learning, both recorded and otherwise, whose task it was to organize those sources and to direct scholars to their effective use.

The greatest librarian of this time was Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz (1646-1716) who was the librarian and historiographer to the Duke of Brunswick-Lunenburg at Hanover in 1676, and who, in 1691, took charge of the 30,000 volume library at Wolfenbuttel, Germany. He was perhaps the first scholar-librarian to have real vision of an organized, comprehensive, scholarly reference library that would be adequately endowed with regular acquisitions, and with the emphasis on quality rather than on variety or cost. As was not unusual for good librarians of the earlier days, Leibniz was also a great philosopher, a great mathematician and a historian. He is pointed to today with pride by librarians because he had so many of the characteristics they like to see in applicants for library schools. He not only emphasized the great importance of current collecting and was an active propagandist for adequate financial support for libraries, but he also proposed the publishing of a semiannual selection of books to be cumulated and expanded eventually into an inventory of human knowledge contained in books.  

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2. Irwin, heritage . . . p. 139.
By the nineteenth century librarians were beginning to speak about library science. The term was used in connection with a search for common principles of library work. F. A. Ebert of Dresden wrote a manual entitled *The Training of Librarians* in which he presented his views on library science of that time. His concept of the science of librarianship was conditioned of course by the attitude he had toward the role of the library in society. He considered libraries as scientific archives for future generations instead of places that were designed to affect directly and immediately the actual life of the day. With this view, his librarian was one who was prepared to study and appreciate the timeless literary texts and works of scholarship in their original languages. He thought a German librarian should know English, French, Italian, Spanish, and Portuguese, a smattering of Hebrew as well as Greek and Latin. The librarian should have a profound knowledge of history and an acquaintance with literary history, bibliography and basic diplomatics. That should be topped off with a general study of the encyclopedia. In addition, the librarian should have a neat and rapid handwriting, some knowledge of carpentry, and the ability to repair torn books. However, these qualifications were only to prepare a beginner to take a position in a library. Once employed, he should continue his education by studying the systems and
practices in use in various libraries in order to develop the best system for his own use. Although Ebert was a theorizer, as is indicated by his profound principles, he was important in that he attempted a systematic delineation of the educational requirements for a librarian. It was the emphasis that he placed on the general system and the importance of administration that distinguishes his thought on the nature of librarianship.¹

Sir Anthony Panizzi was another important figure in the development of the library profession in the nineteenth century. He had started a legal career, was an inspector of public schools, participated in political activities and was chairman of Italian literature at University College in London before he accepted the position as Keeper of the Printed Books in the British Museum. He began preparation of a new catalog and drew up ninety-one rules for cataloging. In 1856, he was appointed Principal Librarian, and in 1869 he was knighted. "Sir Anthony Panizzi left his mark upon the British Museum Library, and influenced librarians in general for the better."²

The story of American libraries began in the

¹Winger, Aspects . . ., p. 29.
²Thronton, Chronology . . ., p. 62
eighteenth century. Colleges and universities were rapidly developing and most had libraries. However the keeper of the libraries was usually considered just an usher or clerk. The books were chiefly for faculty use and the library was open for only a few hours a week. The libraries contained mostly classical and theological material with particular exclusion of current literature. In the 1770's Benjamin Franklin started the subscription library in Philadelphia. The collection was usually in charge of a member who usually devoted a few hours a week to the task. Sometimes the collection was placed in charge of a non-member who was allowed to use the books in exchange for his service. The role of the colonial librarian was not a position of any prestige but instead it was more of an extracurricular activity for which the librarian received little, if any, compensation. 1

Many important events took place in the nineteenth century concerning librarianship in America. On April 24, 1800, an act was passed to establish the Library of Congress. Two years later, John Beckley was appointed as the first librarian of the institution. The appointment of the library of Congress librarian was and still is a matter of political favor. Its history is marked with disagreements arising

1Johnson, History . . . , p. 277.
over the appointment and removal from office of this person. The Library of Congress is of special importance in this story of librarianship not only because of its size and position, but because it has greatly influenced other libraries.¹

During the latter part of the nineteenth century, several librarians distinguished themselves by their contributions to librarianship. Some of those mentioned most frequently are Melvil Dewey, Charles Ami Cutter, William Frederick Poole and John Shaw Billings. Most of the daylight hours of the well-known librarians were spent in administering library programs and in advising others how to proceed with them. Such men as these represent the same face of librarianship that has been revealed in records of earlier years in that they were the responsible heads of libraries with staff members subordinate to them. After 1850 occupational identification extended to lesser lights, and librarians, in the customary American fashion, organized themselves. The first attempt at organization came at a librarian's conference in 1853, but a permanent association did not result until the founding of the American Library Association at Philadelphia in 1876. This event serves as evidence of the establishment of occupational identification.

¹Thornton, Chronology . . . , p. 62.
However, the self-identification of librarians as a whole did not result in greater ease in identifying a single concept of librarianship; for within their association were absorbed the full range of people who worked in libraries. This raises the question of who speaks for librarianship and this question brings in the issue of the public image and status of the contemporary librarian.

The librarian of the twentieth century is not so easily characterized in the manner used previously. The profession has been widely integrated into society as a whole. A librarian such as Dewey Panizza would have great difficulty in identifying with librarianship as it is today. Libraries and librarians are now found in business offices, research laboratories, hospitals and atomic energy plants as well as in academic areas. As an example of the wide range which the librarian now reaches, the Del Mar Racetrack in Southern California established a library for the summer racing season of 1962. In it interested racing owners and fans could locate information about the horses pertaining to breeding, stud fees, the odds, and other related data.

Even though libraries and librarians have increased in number and have seemed to integrate into all phases of society,

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1. Winger, Aspects . . . , p. 32
the popular image of the librarian has not favorably altered with equal speed. Many of the characteristics that were associated with the ideal librarian of past centuries are tenaciously clinging to the contemporary librarian image. A pamphlet entitled The Old Librarians' Almanach which was published first in 1909 and republished in 1962 describes at great length and detail the librarian of the eighteenth century. Among numerous and other characteristics given, the librarian is described as a sentry whose duty it is to guard well the books which are the riches of the library treasury. He was a person of the most sober and Godly life, learned, virtuous, chaste, moral, frugal and temperate. Matrimony was seen as no fit diversion for the librarian since it would interfere with his devotion to duty. The librarian lived surrounded by the noble thoughts of great minds and took no concern for pecuniary success since that was considered an impossibility. He was rather meek, seeking neither fame nor fortune, and lived a protected life in the "goodliest" of all occupations.\footnote{Edmond Lester Pearson, \textit{The Old Librarians' Almanach}, (Boston: Hall & Co. 1962).} Although the final page of the pamphlet reveals that the almanack was written as a hoax, the disturbing element about it is that, to a great portion of the public, the qualities mentioned concerning the librarian of the eighteenth century are recognizable in the accepted stereotyped image of
today's librarian.

The stereotyped librarian who is found in the comic strips, newspapers and jokes, radio, television and movies is the projected image of the public concept of the librarian. This librarian is usually portrayed as a drab, shrewd-tailed female who grimly demands silence as she collects fines. She wears thick-lensed, horn-rimmed glasses and her scentless-mouse-colored hair is usually confined to a knot or bun at the nap of her neck. She might be considered as a "protector of the temple of knowledge" or "savior of civilization." She is often envisioned as introvertic, eccentric, grouchy, inhibited, frustrated, impatient and intolerant. She is the prime inhabitant of a professional field that has been accused of harboring rejects and failures from other professions, and a haven for the lame, the halt, and the withdrawn. ¹ Regardless of the validity of this image, or the rebuttal offered by librarians, the fact remains that this negative picture of the librarian is widely accepted by much of the public.

Librarians have often been accused of having a morbid preoccupation with the matter of image or status. It has been implied by some that if librarians could forget about the image and mind their own business, the problem would take care of itself. However, the popular image of the librarian is of concern for more than just the reason of pride or vanity. "The

popular image of the librarian has a direct effect upon
the degree of support given to the library, book funds,
salaries, housing, equipment, policies in book selection,
reader guidance and expansion of service and personnel. 1
It is especially important in the recruitment of librarians.
"The library profession has long had difficulty in attracting
qualified persons to enter the field." the problem is much
more crucial since the demand for professional librarians
continues to increase sharply, and the supply produced by
accredited library schools remains disproportionately low. A
recent survey predicted that in 1970 one out of five librarians
would reach the age of retirement. 2

We can only conclude that one of the most vital concerns
and basic problems of librarianship of the twentieth century is
the public image. For the general good of librarianship it is
time that librarians face the situation and deal with it ob-
jectively. This task requires the librarian to discover how
the unfavorable image is formed and perpetuated and then the
means must be discerned by which the image might be reshaped.

There are several sources from which the unfavorable
image originates. First, there is the failure to realize that
not all employees in the library are librarians. Secondly,
early contact with small community libraries whose operator is
called a librarian, but who is not professionally trained and

2 Ryan, Career . . . , p. 170.
who does menial and **clerical tasks** is a contributor to the problem. A third factor is a failure to **classify** and separate the clerical tasks from professional work. Fully trained librarians are often seen engaged in routine tasks. And finally, the identification of librarians with a general, rather than specific knowledge, results in a low evaluation of a librarian as a jack of all trades by specialists who are important users of academic and special libraries.¹

There are four suggested **means of changing the image** which are directly related to the sources of the unfavorable images. First, an effort should be made to increase the visibility and direct contacts of the librarians and the libraries' professional staff of work within and outside of the library. Secondly, it might help to tie some small public library units into larger regional systems so that a differentiation can be made between skilled librarians and untrained employees. Thirdly, librarians should push forward vigorously with separations of professional and clerical tasks in all libraries. Finally, librarians must develop subject specialities and subject knowledge to gain recognition as a special contribution to special knowledge and scholarship.

It is also suggested that librarians improve their relationship with society. Librarians should encourage a

general realization of the value of library service and be informed concerning movements, organizations, and institutions whose aims are compatible with those of librarians. The librarian should participate in public and community affairs and so represent the library in such a manner that it will take its place among the educational, social, and cultural agencies. Finally, the librarian's conduct should be such as to maintain public esteem for the library and literary work.\(^1\)

Viewed against the perspective of history, librarianship can be seen to have made only slow and gradual evolution as a profession and exists now as only a marginal entry in the competitive race for professional status. The conditions of modern times, however, are such that if librarianship does not move much more rapidly forward toward enhanced professionalism, the field will not only decline rapidly, but ultimately face obsolescence. In order to fulfill the original mandate of librarianship as guardian of society's information needs and in order to influence positively the forward motion of progressive information development in a time of competition with other emergent information-oriented disciplines, librarianship must more fully take on the responsibilities and substance as well as the forms of a profession. Without such commitment, librarians may ultimately find themselves left with custodial tasks while the intellectual aspects, as well as the more active forms of information service are yielded to other groups.

\(^1\)Leigh, *Popular* . . . , p. 2091.
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