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Class 1896.

Trained Librarian.

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Trained Librarians.

It is in this age when intellectual growth is so rapid, when hundreds of publishing firms send out thousands of pamphlets, magazines, and books daily, that we need the librarian. In the future the work of the librarian will be very different from that of the past.

As the world has advanced and the people have become cultured and care more for good reading, the librarians have marched to the front. The libraries of the country have become more numerous and with the increase of the libraries has come the need of more librarians; as the need for more workers becomes greater so, too, is the world calling for better work, hence for those who expect to take up this profession, there is great advantage in being trained for the library or the work of the librarian.

The opportunity for those

who seek such training will be found in the training schools for librarians. These schools are yet in their infancy. The subject of library work has been greatly agitated in the last quarter of a century and one effect of the commotion is these schools. They provide for different kinds of work giving the student experience in each kind and impressing upon his mind the true relations of the work. The first record we have of such a training school in America is of one established in 1882 which was of short duration.

Melvil Dewey is the one to whom we are greatly indebted for these training schools. He is the father of the school at Albany, New York where he is state librarian. His most important work is that of the decimal classification which is adopted in the largest and most prominent libraries of our country.

Shortly after Dewey graduated in 1876 he got the idea that we should have an American Library Association. He was then only twenty eight and full of strength and energy. He spared none of his force. The older librarians were rather shy about joining such an association. The librarians with the organizing committee of five, of which Mr. Dewey was the youngest and vigorous worker, met for the first time at the home of Mr. Lloyd P. Smith in October, 1876.

The American Library Association has done a great amount of good, instructive work. The eighteenth annual conference will be held in September at Cleveland, Ohio. The President this year, 1896, is John C. Dana who is librarian of the Public Library at Denver, Colorado.

These associations continue from one to two weeks and

during this time they have addresses, speeches, papers, and discussions upon the different work in the libraries. Between these sessions or parts of the program they have receptions, dinners, and outings. For the summer of 1897 there has been some talk of taking a trip to Europe to study the library methods there. Those who are unable to attend schools, on account of limited time will gain much valuable information at these gatherings. It will aid the older librarians as well as the beginners. In fact it is a school for all who attend the meetings.

We will find training schools at Albany, New York; Armour institute, at Chicago, Illinois; and Pratt institute at Brooklyn, New York. These are schools with a course of two years.

There are various summer

schools. of shorter courses at Madison, Wisconsin, in the Public Library Training class, Los Angeles California, and at the Amherst summer school in Massachusetts. These are schools for the benefit of assistant librarians who can only get away during the summer.

At the Albany school the age of the applicant must be twenty years or more. The tuition is \$100 per year. Many students work a year in the library after they have taken one year of the course then complete the course. This helps them out financially and makes them stronger and more able to do thorough work in the senior year. For 1895-1896 there were twenty-two juniors and nine seniors. That Mr. Dewey has done thorough work is sufficiently proven by the fact that of eight of the most prominent training

schools in the United States, four of them have instructors who are graduates of this school. Another fact worthy of being noted is that the graduates are readily chosen for libraries.

Pratt institute is somewhat like the Armour in that it trains students for many professions. Some of the branches taught are architecture, woodcarving, mechanical drawing, domestic science, kindergarten, fine art, music, and library work. Mrs. I. A. Banklin instructor of the library class at the Pratt institute requires that the application for admittance be sent about two months before the opening of school that she may calculate the fee for each. She charges \$25 for a class regardless of the number which it contains. The library course is supplied with good lectures. The white carnation is the class flower of the library class of 1896. The class

of 1895 was twenty-four in number ten of them took cataloging only.

The Armour institute was founded by Mr. Armour in 1893. It is not in the most beautiful part of the city, the founder desiring to put it where it was most needed and where it would do the most good. The library department is conducted by Miss Katherine L. Sharp who is also the librarian of the institute. She is accomplished and well fitted to fill such a place. She owes her training to Mr. Dewey of Albany, under whom she graduated. The institute limits the number of students in this department to eighteen. Kansans who have an inclination to follow this line of work would perhaps find this institution the most satisfactory. It is one of the best in this country and not so far from our homes.

The summer school at Madison Wisconsin is a six weeks course conducted by Miss Sharp of Armour institute.

The Amherst summer school in Massachusetts is a five weeks course conducted by W. I. Fletcher.

A constant worker in library interest is that of W. I. Fletcher. He was chosen in 1876 by William Poole as an associate editor for Poole's Index. At the time he was in the Watkinson library in Hartford, Connecticut. His executive ability is wonderful. He has energy and zeal. His staying qualities were first observed while working in the Boston Athenaeum library. Mr. Poole has said that without the accurate work of Mr. Fletcher his plans would have been impossible. After the death of William Poole, W. I. Fletcher became chief editor. He is also the librarian at Amherst.

The course at Los Angeles is

six months. A more extended course may be taken after the six month's course is completed if a satisfactory examination is passed. Ladies only are admitted and they must be at least seventeen years old. They must also be actual residents of the city.

There are a few others such schools, but the above are the best ones.

In such work something must be known of the leading newspaper, magazine, and late books. One should be able to pass the examination on geography, composition, and simple problems in mathematics. If a knowledge of languages be required as of French and Latin, the one who is applying should be able to read and translate.

The student who attends the schools will learn something of the arrangement of books on the shelves, accession records, methods of charging, the two principal

classifications of books which are Poole's and Dewey's, the exchange system, cataloguing, recording and acknowledging gifts, the management of public documents and duplicates, clipping devices for scrap books, the handling of pamphlets, and numerous other things.

Perhaps more stress is put on cataloguing than any other one item. It is said to be the king-pin of the library system. Especial care should be taken in cataloguing and classifying when the public is admitted to the shelves.

Mr. Butler's method of cataloguing is considered as authority and is the method taught in the schools.

1 Perhaps a brief sketch of Mr. Poole's life would not be out of place here. William Frederick Poole came as a Christmas gift December 24, 1821 and left this world March 1, 1894. William was a native of Salem, Massachusetts. He wrote on history and bibliogra-

His best known work commenced in 1853 which is Poole's Index to Periodical Literature. He saw the great need of such work and while a student at Yale he was working in the library. Mr. Poole did this indexing to some of the magazines and his manuscript was rapidly wearing out. He then had it printed. It was given the title of "Index to Subjects treated in the Reviews and other Periodicals" and contained one hundred and fifty four pages. This was in 1848. He issued another book in 1853 "Index to Periodical Literature" containing five hundred and twenty one pages.

A thousand copies were soon gone. He found that this work would interfere with his library duties and therefore thought it would be best to do no more such work, but there was an endless call for such books. The Doctor again took up the work in 1876 with the aid of W. I. Fletcher, Justin Winsor, Charles

A. Cutter, and others of the American Library Association. There is now an edition published each year. He planned a classification of books which is used in many libraries, but Dewey's system is more popular. At the time of his death he was librarian at the Newberry Library at Chicago. Mr. Fletcher has said that it is a blessing of a lifetime to have known him well, and to feel his sweet disposition. His energy was not scattered. He worked hard and faithful for the libraries. No one will ever be able to say just how much good he has done but his name will ever shine as a bright star. Although he has never taught a class he has perhaps trained and aided as many as some of the training schools.

The duties of the librarian are many. fold Besides the numerous things mentioned above he owes the country as well as the library

his best work. He must be so earnest and enthusiastic over his duties that others will be inspired to higher and nobler deeds. An indefinite number of men as Watt, Edison, and Newton have started the germ of their great work in some library. In large libraries, division of labor is very profitable and is practiced. In the smaller and private libraries, the number of employed persons are not many but the kind of work is about as it is in the large libraries only there is not so great an amount.

Mention might be made of the hand writing of librarians. It should be very plain each letter should be easily recognized when taken alone.

It is quite necessary that one who guides the public mind should be trained. The fully trained librarian is in great demand. It is to be hoped that in the near future the the librarians will be so well trained that they will be

indispensable to the library in which they work.

It is greatly to be regretted that the salaries of these noble workers are so low. It is stated that the assistants usually receive from \$300 to \$900 per annum and the librarians, but little more. The salaries of the librarians seldom reach \$1300 while in other professions scores of instances may be found where the income is many times this figure though the ability of the person is frequently less. Perhaps this is accounted for in that the public believes it is an easy place the librarian has; but alas! what a mistake. He who thinks that all a librarian has to do, is to hand out a book occasionally should correct such an erroneous idea. Libraries are kept open usually from eight to ten hours a day.

It is thought that the librarian has so much time to read.

There is no time to read from the moment he unlocks in the morning until time to leave in the evening. "In the midst of the great ocean of books it is water, water, everywhere and not a drop to drink."

The librarian must have tact. He must be accurate and orderly. Executive ability is as important in this profession as any other. He must be acquainted with all the new popular books, be able to judge which of the bindings is best adopted to the library and the reading matter which the books contain. He must know how to manage human nature. He is dealing with the public and must satisfy the wants of the little school urchins as well as the young ladies and gentlemen and those who have grown old and feeble. All respectable persons who cross the threshold of the library must be made welcome whether

they have just come from under the graceful folds of the purple curtains of royal homes or from some poor hovel. He must always be ready to answer an uncounted number of miscellaneous questions. Some one asks who wrote such and such a book; another inquires who wrote such and such quotations and where they may be found while on the other side of him will be some one ready to call for a book on the satellites; still another wants the history of Queen Victoria or "A tale of the Tubs." there stands the political economy student waiting for the "Single Tax Debate" or perhaps the works of Henry George or Ricardo. A clear quick mind is absolutely indispensable. Such questions must be answered a hundred or more times a day. The librarian must be able to find what is called for, if he is not capable of doing this it becomes a case of the blind leading

the blind".

Probably the all round education is needed more in the work which a librarian has to do than in any other business. It is not necessary to go to a gilt edge university, but it is well to have a good college education with all the additional reading one can get. All the items of knowledge will at sometime be useful. One is more capable of filling the place if they have had a college education and a great deal of good reading. They have a broader view of things and are more cultured. Then to be successful in the library a speck of the sciences must be known in addition to the English and American literature and a history of the different countries. May the coming generation look back to this period as the beginning of trained librarians. Although the schools for trained librarians are yet young they will grow and

the work which the librarian has to do will soon be taught as an exact science. The librarian should not be egoistic, he is working for his country as truly as a soldier who fights for it. If he earnestly works for his country he will be improved. The librarian is an educator. He has a wonderful influence over the kind of literature which is read. The public asks many times for suggestions as to what to read. The librarian that is fully capable of filling his place will be able to mention several good books, after finding out the style of reading that is wanted or would best suit the reader.

There are many more ladies than gentlemen in this profession and the percent is fast increasing. One reason that there have not been more women for librarians is that they have had no opportunity to learn business ways. Their work has been as assistant

librarians who carry a very small portion of the responsibility when compared to the librarian.

A great man has said "Today the community that has not a good public library within reach is without one of the first necessities of civilized life." It is in the library that we receive our greatest education. In this fact lies the great advantage of being a librarian. There are excellent advantages for personal growth. The growth is in all directions. For a young girl who desires to study some profession, taking all the advantages and disadvantages of this work, I believe it to be the most fascinating and agreeable of any that a lady could choose. The prospects are better than they have been in the past both in respect to more openings greater pay.

May the library clubs and the library associations unite the

librarians in their work during
their life labors, and after death
may all worthies lie in some
"Sleepy Hollow" and near the poets
corner.