FIVE YEARS OF LIBRARY RESEARCH

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Points out the need for research in library science. Reviews in this context, the Report of the Council of Library Resources for the five year period ending 30 June 1961*. Mentions the various research programmes of the Council in the field of bibliographical access, cataloguing, classification, physical access, and technology. Pleads for continuance of research.

1 LIBRARY RESEARCH

Modern society has accepted the library as a social institution capable of helping the betterment of society through the use of recorded thought. The library has been charged with the responsibility of providing its readers with all the relevant records of the macro and the micro thought produced by mankind up to the time of inquiry. The way in which records of man's thoughts have been arriving in the form of books, periodicals and documents of various sizes, including microforms, and the way in which the library has to serve the inquirer, have complicated the problems of library service. In fact, the problems arise out of the attempt to conform to the Five Laws of Library Science. Research in the methods of finding solutions to the problems thus arising has become essential. In 1956, the benevolent American organisation, Ford Foundation, donated a sum of five million dollars, "to be expended over a five year period for the purpose of aiding in the solution of the problems of libraries generally and of research libraries in particular". This five year period is now over and it is an opportune moment for reviewing the achievements of the organisation set up for the purpose namely, the Council of Library Resources (= CLR). The Fifth Annual report (1962) for the year ending 30 June 1961 marks the occasion for it. Appendix A of the report lists in a classified form 155 project titles and the publications related to them. Projects amounting to 59%, have been completed and the others are still in progress.

2 BIBLIOGRAPHICAL ACCESS

The group of projects on bibliographical access is elucidated as those dealing with "the arrangements whereby the existence of a book or any recorded source of information is made known".

21 Cataloguing

211 Principles

The publications have been the outcome of eighteen grants for standardising cataloguing rules as given below:

1 Three on Persian cataloguing;
2 Two on German cataloguing; and
3 Five on international cataloguing code.

The revision of ALA code is still in progress.

212 Production

The CLR had also conducted an experiment on "Cataloguing at source" or what Ranganathan has called "pre-natal classification and cataloguing" in his address at the Library of Congress in August 1948 [1]. Reports of the findings of this experiment at the Library of Congress evoked considerable interest and elicited alternative suggestions.

The Projects for the production or revision of catalogues which received help from CLR include:

1 The Union list of serials in libraries of the United States and Canada;
2 National union catalogue of manuscript collection;
3 Guide to photocopies of historical materials; and
4 International inventory of musical resources.

22 Classification

Research in classification does not appear to have received as much attention of the CLR as the other disciplines of library science. A pilot study of the use of classified book collections is in progress. Another problem taken up is listed as "shelf classification of law works". It might be that research in classification proper would follow once the results of the pilot study on classified book collections is evaluated.

3 PHYSICAL ACCESS

The Second law says, "Every Reader his Book". For satisfying this law, the CLR has supported several projects including:

1 Cooperative acquisition;
2 Photocopying; and
3 Storing.

4 TECHNOLOGY

The CLR has not stopped its activities just with what may be strictly called library technique. It has gone further to improve the materials that go to make up the library, including equipment and nonconventional forms of document. Thus it has supported projects for the improvement of:

1 Book paper;
2 Card stock;
3 Binding;
4 Photocopying camera;
5 Stencil for catalogue cards;
6 Use of machine;
7 Special typewriter for catalogue cards;
8 Automation in the preparation of documentation list as demonstrated by the Index medicus; and
9 Television.

A project involving automation for literature search in law has been initiated.

5 CONTINUANCE OF RESEARCH

The five year's work of CLR has amply justified the continuance of library research and the Ford Foundation has promptly announced a further grant of eight million dollars to enable the organisation to continue its work.

Our suggestion for a future project of CLR is "Separation of areas of mechanical work from brain work in classification".

BIBLIOGRAPHY