

By WILLIAM H. CARLSON

## Preparation for Progress

IN COMMON WITH all the citizens of the world, we librarians stand, in this year of 1947, at one of the critical mileposts of human destiny. We know that there is a fork in the road we all travel together, that one turn may lead us to chaos, destruction, confusion, and the loss of all the values, accumulated and potential, which the human soul holds dear, values which, indeed, it must have if it is to remain human and not revert to bestiality. We know that another turn may carry us, painfully and slowly perhaps, to a still further realization of the fulfilments, satisfactions, and achievements of which our remarkable race is capable, toward values and performances which will at last justify that title which we have somewhat arrogantly assumed and applied to ourselves, the name of *Homo sapiens*.

The roads that lie before us are not surely discernible, do not in fact exist except in collective imagination, based on historical retrospect. They must really be, for each new generation, of their own maintenance and even of their own contriving. However, most of us will at least agree that there are two fairly well-defined and opposite directions in which we may travel. One of these is marked "narrow nationalism and economic self-sufficiency." This road has been much traveled in times past, with full satisfaction, for considerable periods at least, by the bold, aggressive, and fortunate few. For humanity at large, however, this road has been beset with many pitfalls, much suffering, and repeated periods of turmoil, strife, and mass killings, the most destructive, bitter, and appalling

of which we have so closely behind us that we still look backward with blanched faces and cry, "Never again!" We are all the more apprehensive because many of the books in our libraries lead us to believe that it always does happen again.

The direction markers of another road and choice that lies before us are labeled "One World," a road which most of us, I am sincerely convinced, feel that we must travel if we are to leave to our children and grandchildren a world worth living in, a road that many of us believe must be traveled if indeed we are to have children and grandchildren. Some among us, however, a few sincerely perhaps, adroitly do what they can to keep us from traveling down this last road of promise. The most cunning of these know, or think they know, that there will not be found on it those special prerogatives and satisfactions, mostly material, which they would like to enjoy, and believe they have a right to enjoy, over and above the goods available to mankind generally.

We are now busily engaged in fashioning a chariot in which we may travel down the one-world road, a cumbersome and strange vehicle, with many steering wheels and drivers, a cautious vehicle, oversupplied with brakes and separate ignition switches, a vehicle such as no inventor or engineer, with the easy command of physical materials characteristic of the modern world, would ever fashion. This vehicle, carrying so many of our hopes, and our fears too, we have christened the United Nations. Its shakedown runs have not been propitious, as the various chief drivers have been valiantly

trying to drive in different directions, twisting and turning their respective steering wheels with much groaning and creaking of the component parts, tramping emphatically on the brakes and pulling ignition plugs when progress has not been in the desired direction. At intervals, however, the steering wheels have coincided and we have inched forward a bit. In this we can take comfort and joy, such as the Wright brothers must have felt when their clumsy contrivance rose, for some seconds, a few feet above the earth.

A particular part of this vehicle of destiny in which we librarians have special interest, which we have in fact taken some part in shaping, and which we confidently hope to be able to help steer and refuel, we have called UNESCO. Through it we hope to see citizens in all parts of the world learn the magic of readily and easily interpreting the freely printed page, untainted and undistorted; through it we hope to establish free public libraries all over the world, for children and adults; to rehabilitate those large libraries destroyed or largely destroyed in our bickerings and our destructive tuggings and haulings; to eliminate the present barriers to the free dissemination of facts, ideas, and knowledge; to secure the author internationally in his rights to the product of his brain; to promote the easy exchange and distribution of the world's literature; to establish a clearing house of knowledge, known as a library and bibliographic center; and to do many other good and wondrous things.

### *Responsibilities*

Just what are the responsibilities of those of us who at this important junction point in world history are charged with the responsibility for the assimilation and organization for easy use of the world's accumulated knowledge, now grown and grow-

ing so vast in bulk, and of the world's recorded wisdom, which is still comparatively an infinitesimal trickle? From the long viewpoint, it seems to this writer that the best promise for good use of our intelligence and rich fruition of our efforts is to help streamline and steer our UNESCO chariot, to convey to those at the controls of the parent United Nations vehicle assistance and information that may assist them in steering reasonably together instead of stubbornly straining against each other. In this perhaps only the press, daily and magazine, the radio, the film, and the church, exceed our libraries in opportunity for constructive contribution.

The temptation is strong to jump into or cluster about UNESCO at once and hopefully try steering and accelerating with a vengeance. Calm reflection, however, convinces us that, if we are to do any good with and through UNESCO, and with and through the United Nations, or even in our more immediate affairs, we must first of all be united and strong ourselves, that in bibliographical and bookish affairs too we must have one world, that we librarians of all classes and specialties no less than those who sit in the mighty seats of the United Nations must steer together, and that in order to steer successfully it is necessary for us to be agreed among ourselves on the directions we need to go and want to go, and at what pace.

We in the Association of College and Reference Libraries would be standing at this conference at an especially important point in our affairs, even if the times generally were not "big with tydings." This is so because we have during the present year made, in accordance with democratic processes, a most important decision. I am most happy to have this opportunity, as an elected officer of the association, to express gratification over the choice our members

have made to work out our program as an integral and coordinated part of our parent American Library Association. I am glad, sincerely glad and happy, that we have not fallen prey to the divisiveness that has been an outstanding characteristic of the learned world of the twentieth century, that we have not fallen prey to the belief that only those interested in our narrow specialties can understand and be interested in them and that we have no common interests with those librarians not working in our specific field. Statesmanship and common sense in our library groups, a statesmanship which we may reasonably expect to increase generally, is reflected in this statement of Herman H. Henkle as president of the Special Libraries Association, one of our most highly specialized organizations. I quote with approval and pleasure:

There is one profession of librarianship, not many professions. We are too few in number, even were our forces united and coordinated, to dissipate our energies in the conscious cultivation of our differences. Rather should we face the realities of the problem we must solve, that of working toward common ends.

It is a curious anomaly that for almost fifty years the college and reference librarians have been a loosely organized, largely ineffective, and somewhat dissatisfied group within the A.L.A., attracting only minor interest and limited support from college and university librarians generally. During all this period, however, the contributions of college and university librarians individually to librarianship, in the college field and generally, both nationally and internationally, have been signally outstanding. Librarianship as a profession is far stronger and libraries are more effective instruments of scholarship and learning because of the work of such men as E. C. Richardson, in the field of the location of books and promotion of union catalogs;

James Thayer Gerould, in the planning and organization of union lists of serials and of newspapers; William Warner Bishop, in the international field; Louis Round Wilson, in the field of library administration and education for librarianship—all men drawn from our ranks. Many other college and reference librarians, past and present, could be quickly added to this brief list of men notable for their outstanding achievements and contributions.

#### *Tribute to Charles H. Brown*

It is appropriate and fitting that this issue of *College and Research Libraries* carry as a supplement, a *festschrift* volume in honor of a college librarian, Charles Harvey Brown, for more than three decades a dynamic and moving force in library matters, college and general. Brown, more than anyone else, held the old College and Reference Section together and infused it with what strength and vitality it had. It was he, too, who had a leading part in streamlining the A.L.A. and setting up the Association of College and Reference Libraries as an integral part of it. To him we are more indebted, also, than many of us know, for keeping us on an even keel and away from rash and precipitate action during the dissatisfaction and travail of this past year of decision. To the library he has administered, too, the librarians of the separate land-grant colleges have been able to point as an example of what a library of that kind could and should be. The honor the Association of College and Reference Libraries now pays him through the special issue of *College and Research Libraries* is richly deserved. We hope that it will warm his heart and enrich the satisfactions of his retirement.

There is food for reflection in the curious fact that college and reference librarians, so early and so quick to sense the distinctive

separateness of their problems and work and so well-endowed with strong and dynamic leaders, have continued for so long to be relatively weak and disorganized as a group. It is strange too that our long-sought autonomy, when finally achieved under the reorganization of the A.L.A., was grasped with a languid hand. This has undoubtedly been due, in part at least, to the fact that our best people have been drawn steadily into larger and more general fields of action. It seems evident to me that, on the whole, this has been good and that college and university librarianship has profited more by the activities of our leaders in the field of librarianship at large than if these activities had been sharply restricted to affairs, problems, and needs falling specifically in the college, university, and reference field.

Some may wish to rise to dispute this assertion. For myself, however, I shall hope that our membership will continue to make distinctive contributions to librarianship in the large. The worst thing that could happen to us, in my opinion, would be a narrow and restricting specialism and a conscious cultivation of the ways in which we differ from other librarians. I cannot agree with a recent assertion that the problems of college librarianship are so sharply different from those of public librarianship as to demand almost opposite answers. I am convinced that if college librarians and public librarians had been meeting separately and independently in their own tight little groups ever since 1876, that neither librarianship as a profession nor our college libraries and public libraries as entities would be as strong and as flourishing as they are today. A careful analysis of our history makes it clear that the basic and fundamental problems of librarianship are shared by all types and kinds of libraries and that each group gives strength to the

whole. Certainly it is important for us, and highly important, vigorously to attack our special problems and needs together, but we still need to retain our interest, a well-defined, sympathetic, and informed interest, in the activities and work of librarians in other fields, as well as in many other areas and fields in the learned world generally that vitally concern all who in any way practice the profession of librarianship.

### *Problems and Needs*

Of problems and needs there are many. For one thing we all stand together, librarians in all fields, before the promises, portents, and difficulties of the times. Most of us, I think, are confused, not too certain about the answers to the fundamentals of the economic or political policies required by our increasingly complex world. One thing we are certain of, however, and that is that all of us, in all kinds and types of libraries, are in a profession and in positions that can make a real contribution to a good life for men everywhere, if we can but surely know what should be done. To find the answers, we need to stand together, each helping to distil from our combined abilities and judgment a sound program of joint action.

Important among the problems which the Association of College and Reference Libraries might at this moment single out for special attention, as already indicated, is what we should do about, for, and through UNESCO in behalf of the many international problems which fall directly in the province and field of scholarly and research libraries. The spreading to higher institutional libraries everywhere of the gigantic task of encompassing and organizing the learned literature of the world through the Farmington Plan (in which incidentally college and university and reference libraries generally have so far had little de-

terminative voice); the ever-pressing and ever-present problems of cataloging, abstracting, indexing, filing, storage of books, regional, national, and international bibliographic centers and clearing houses; ways and means of getting our writings published; cooperative book storage; micro-reduction of the world's literature, so seemingly simple in the large but raising so many difficult questions in prospective application; further application of machines and photographic procedures in library procedures and practices; the relationship of our association to other learned societies and groups—these and many other problems demand and will have our attention, individual and group.

Which of these and other problems should our association select for special emphasis this year? Because our history is what it is, because the events of this past year have been what they have been, because our long quest for a paid secretary at Headquarters has finally come to fruition, because we need group strengthening, integration, and purpose if we are satisfactorily to meet the sharp challenge of the times, I have chosen for the year of my presidency to emphasize and promote, in every way I know how (and without in any sense forgetting the many problems detailed above), the instruments through which we work: first, ourselves, our personnel in the college and university field, present and prospective, and second, the strengthening, sharpening, and improvement of our association, the agency in which we merge and combine our intelligence and our efforts.

### *Top Priority Concerns*

I do this in the belief that the most important thing in any profession is the people who practice it and the new people it attracts. If I am right, then our first, major, and continuing concern needs to be with people, those now in our ranks and

those who will join us—their education, integrity, zeal, public spirit (and this all good librarians must have), and devotion to duty. Recruiting, professional education for librarianship, and in-service training and growth, therefore, become our top priority concerns. What we do about these three things will determine what we become and how effectively we meet our responsibilities, in our various libraries and individually, just as surely as what was done about these things in years past largely determines what we are and do now. Through a strong association whatever we do will be, or at least can be done, better than through the weak association we have been and still are.

To make these assertions something more than pious expressions of opinion and glittering platitudes, to bring us progress toward the strong association we need, I intend to suggest to the Board of Directors of A.C.R.L. that we set up at once four special committees, not of the American Library Association, but independent committees of the Association of College and Reference Libraries, as follows:

1. A committee on membership in the Association of College and Reference Libraries
2. A committee on recruiting the type of librarian needed in the college, university, and reference fields
3. A committee to consider the educational preparation and qualifications needed by college, university and reference librarians, to promote development of these qualifications through in-service training, and to work closely with the library schools to assist them in transmitting to their students the needed qualifications
4. A committee to consider the financial needs of our association and to suggest a program for their realization.

The first of these committees I think of as a large committee, with members in every state and perhaps several in the larger states, all under the direction of one national

chairman assisted by a central steering committee. This membership committee I would charge with the responsibility of contacting every practising college and university librarian in America, extending an invitation to membership in our association. It is my hope and belief that such a committee, aggressively and intelligently directed, could double, or very nearly double, our present membership of some 2400. I should not, of course, expect all this to happen in a single year, but I should and do expect very significant progress. We will not of course expect either that every professional member of a college and university library staff will be a member of our association, but certainly we can expect every staff member to carry membership in some professional library organization. For a few college librarians, we realize that membership in a division by type-function may be desirable. The great majority of our college librarians, however, should be in our folds. I, therefore, now publicly declare open season on all professional college librarians who are not now members of A.C.R.L.

### *Recruiting*

The committee on recruiting can be a standard size group of some five or six members. Its task will be so complex and difficult that little more than a beginning can be made in one year. It will need to persuade prospective librarians, and some practising librarians, that librarianship is one of the more honorable and useful professions and that, while its practitioners can never look forward to great wealth in a material sense, they are able to live in comfort, that they generally lead constructive, happy, and useful lives, and that they enjoy some prestige and regard in society.

Few of us are satisfied with ourselves as

individuals or with ourselves in the aggregate. This is evident from the sharp and frequently caustic criticism to which we subject ourselves, criticism which has played some part no doubt in the popular type-conception of what kind of a person a librarian is. We should, of course, always be self-critical in a constructive sense but, rather than exposing ourselves to self-flagellation before the bar of public opinion, in and out of our profession, as we have sometimes been wont to do, I suggest that we proceed to our tasks with such spirit and vigor that we do not have time to be attracted by or much concerned over portraits of the librarian as a gray, mousey, timid creature, withdrawn from the world and living vicariously (and safely) by books. There will probably always be some among us, not too many, I believe, who will justify such a caricature, but, rather than rising in shrill protest over sweetiepies and sourpusses and over unfavorable and distorted fictional or film presentations of the librarian as a person or type, I suggest that we smile tolerantly and go busily on not being that kind of a librarian and, as time and opportunity permits, demonstrating what the librarian and librarianship in the best sense, or at least in a good sense, can be. If we do this extensively, I predict that high caliber recruits, men and women, can be much more readily attracted to our ranks.

A recruiting committee might well give serious thought and study to what important characteristics we should seek to attract in our new recruits. It is my firm conviction that it is not academic background and qualifications, within reason, that matter most; not brilliance or glamor or good looks, important as these may be; not even, and this thought I voice in six-point lower case, the time-hallowed love of books. The all-important thing, and this must be true for all the professions, is a capacity for

growth. How we are to determine this I do not know, certainly not through any neat and automatic formula. We all know, however, that the graduates of laboratories and schools in various fields go on to success, fame, and signal achievements in much greater proportion than the graduates of other equally well-equipped and staffed laboratories and schools. In these matters some professors, athletic coaches, and, yes, library school teachers and library administrators, too, definitely have a "green thumb," the knack of encouraging unusual success. Whether this is through ability to attract only good people in the first place or whether it comes from an ability to encourage and stimulate subordinates to make the most of their abilities, to go further than they had thought they could go, and do more than they had any idea they could do, I do not know, but I strongly suspect that it is in large part the latter. Whatever the secret of this catalytic gift, let us hope that it will be increasingly found among all of us in the college and university library field who have the privilege and opportunity of directing the work of young people. To the extent that it is found, will our various in-service programs be successful and our juniors grow and develop into readiness for positions of leadership and responsibility.

One contribution that a recruiting committee, or some other committee, could make to an understanding of our personnel problems would be a series of studies, studies of the professional responsibilities of the librarian, the availability of professionally prepared people in proportion to the demands, and the changing economic status of librarians. The need of librarians trained in various subject fields, too, could be investigated with profit. On studies such as these we could perhaps base our quest for the strong competent young people we need

and must have if we are satisfactorily to meet the challenge of the times.

#### *Education for Librarianship*

The proposed committee on education for librarianship I do not think of as duplicating the work of the Professional Training Round Table or the Board of Education for Librarianship. Rather will its work complement that of these two groups, by special consideration and attention to the kind of formal preparation needed by college and reference librarians and particularly to the consideration and development of in-service training programs through which practising librarians can steadily increase their value to their respective libraries and their eligibility for advancement. This committee should, and will need to, work closely with the new Division of Library Education, a division which, I hope, will have the cooperation and sympathetic support of all college librarians. It seems to me that this would be a continuing committee, as would be the one on recruiting, since the activities of both are concerned with the very bedrock on which our work and our hopes for progress rest.

The fourth committee, on finances, will have the knottiest and in some ways the most difficult assignment of any of the four. It is quite evident that no continuing program of significance can be undertaken on the 20 per cent of our dues now fed back to our association by our parent organization. While all of us, I am certain, deeply appreciate the funds that have been made available to us for this year by the A.L.A. out of principal, all of us must surely be uneasy over the fact that we are, in effect, living on seed corn. We must all know, too, that financing of this kind cannot long go on.

While I would not undertake to solve the problems of this committee, it seems

pretty certain that its considerations will sooner or later, and perhaps it would be better sooner than later, include the matter of the percentage division of the dues our association, through its individual members and institutionally, pays into the A.L.A. We know that the present and proposed program of the A.L.A., as a whole, requires far more money than it now has in prospect. But we also know that A.C.R.L. can do nothing much of importance unless it can look forward to stable, regularly recurring financial support above our present dispensation from principal, and particularly after there will be no such dispensation. This is one area of our relationship with our parent organization that will require statesmanship, goodwill, and an appreciation of mutual problems on the part of both organizations. I believe and hope that we have the leadership and the intelligence in both groups to solve this problem on a permanently sat-

isfactory basis to all concerned.

### *First Years Important*

All of us must surely approach the work of the forthcoming years with a sense of unusual opportunity. What we do in these first years, with and through our new executive secretary at Headquarters, with and through the increased strength in numbers and in financial support, and through the increased professional spirit and zeal which I am confident that we can find among ourselves, may determine the pattern of our development and the effectiveness of our work for a long period of years. The next very few years will determine whether we are to shape and sharpen, whether we can shape and sharpen our association into an instrument equal to the times. We must succeed. With the help, support, and active work of every college, university, and reference librarian we will succeed.

## Changes in Curricula at California

In both the first-year and second-year programs of the School of Librarianship on the Berkeley campus of the University of California increased attention will be given in the future to tailoring the student's courses to previous background and to his special field of interest. Greater opportunity will be given the student to elect courses in other departments of the university.

The first-year program has been somewhat revised, and a new course on the development of media of communication from the growth of language to the latest devices will be required in the first semester, and another new course, reading and reading interests, has been instituted as a second-semester elective.

New courses in the master's degree curriculum include a basic offering in the principles and practice of library administration, the library in the community, content analysis, and advanced classification.

Prospective first-year students who have taken some work in Type I or Type II schools and have a high scholastic record will, in some cases, be given credit in the university's school for up to four units of such work. A similar provision already applies for second-year students.