

JAMAICA LIBRARY ASSOCIATION BULLETIN

C O N T E N T S

Editorial.

Public Libraries in the West Indies
by R. A. Flood, A.L.A., British
Council Books Department.

Special Libraries in Jamaica
by Miss Ethel Marson, Dept. of
Agriculture.

Notes and comments.

The Library Association Entrance
Examination Papers.

No. 2.
November, 1950.

E D I T O R I A L

This issue contains our first contributed article from overseas. Mr. R. A. Flood, A.L.A., is in charge of that section of the British Council's Books Department which is concerned with the West Indies. Earlier this year Mr. Flood undertook 'relief' duty in the Eastern Caribbean Regional Library scheme, and during that time availed himself of the opportunity to pay an all-too brief visit to Jamaica. The Editor felt that a rather unique occasion offered for securing the general impressions of a professional librarian with a semi-external view point, and Mr. Flood's contribution is the pleasing result.

Miss Ethel Marson's informative article on the Special Libraries of Jamaica will doubtless introduce many of us to hitherto unknown bibliographical resources of this country. It is hoped to continue this survey in later issues.

This issue 'goes to press' between two major events in the library calendar of the Parish **of**

St. Ann. On November 16th His Excellency the Acting Governor opened the new building to house the St. Ann Parish Library in St. Ann's Bay. It is hoped that those members of the Jamaica Library Association who were unable to be present on this occasion may find it possible to attend the next country meeting of the Association, to be held there on Saturday 25th. In our next issue we hope to deal at some length with the new library in St. Ann's Bay.

Appended to this our second number of the Bulletin are the papers set last June in the Entrance Examination of the British Library Association. It is felt that interest in these papers may be wide amongst members of the Association and not limited only to those whose later intention it is to undertake professional studies to which the Entrance Examination is a preliminary.

The exasperation often caused by the anonymous writer perhaps explains the opinion of members so strongly voiced at Mandeville that the Editor should shed his anonymity and append his signature hereunder

Wm. F. Chape.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES IN THE WEST INDIES -
SOME IMPRESSIONS.

My duties in the London office of the British Council have been chiefly concerned with the supply of books to two important library schemes -- Jamaica Library Service and the Eastern Caribbean Regional Library. As a result, I have taken a personal as well as a professional interest in the development of the library services in the West Indies. When I had the opportunity this year to work for three months in the Eastern Caribbean Regional Library I was especially pleased because I had longed to see these library schemes in operation and to visit the West Indies and meet the people. Most of the period I spent in Trinidad working in the Regional Library and training students for the Entrance Examination of the Library Association, but I managed to spend a few days in Barbados and Grenada seeing the libraries in these islands and a very interesting and enjoyable four days in Jamaica as the guest of Mr. Chape, the Deputy-Director of Jamaica Library Service. During

the visit I saw something of most of the aspects of library work in Jamaica: the headquarters organisation of Jamaica Library Service, some of the parish libraries, the libraries of the Institute of Jamaica and the Library of the University of the West Indies, and I met a lot of very charming people. In the course of conversation Mr. Chape suggested that the impressions of a Librarian from England who had been fortunate enough to see so much of library development in the West Indies might be of interest to readers of this bulletin, and in this article I hope to present a general picture of the library scene in the British Caribbean.

There are, as I have mentioned, two major library schemes in the Caribbean. You, as members of the Jamaica Library Association, are familiar with the details of library provision in your own island and it would be presumptuous on my part and entirely unnecessary to describe that aspect of the picture in detail. The major part of this article will therefore be devoted to a detailed description of the

library services of the Eastern Caribbean to which will be added my own personal impression of those in Jamaica.

In the past library provision in the West Indies suffered because it was undertaken by local authorities or, in some cases, independent bodies, with insufficient funds at their disposal. The same situation arose in Britain in the early days of the public library movement, and we learned from experience that it is impossible for the smaller local authorities to provide adequate library services. Public libraries were established in the West Indies at a surprisingly early date when one considers that governments and local authorities throughout the world have always been slow to recognise the value of the public library to the community. In fact, the establishment of the first free public library in the West Indies, that in Barbados, preceded by three years the passing of the first Public Library Act of 1850 which provided for the establishment of public libraries in England. However, the various

colonies were still struggling valiantly but with little success to maintain some form of libraries when the Carnegie Corporation, which has done much for libraries, sent Dr. Ernest Savage to report on the libraries of the West Indies and suggest ways in which they might be assisted. As the outcome of his report the Corporation decided to start a demonstration library service in Trinidad to be expanded at some later date to cover the whole Eastern Caribbean. Jamaica was to be the centre for a separate library scheme. As a result of World War II the Corporation found it impossible to carry out their schemes in full and it was at this stage in 1944 that it was decided that one of the best contributions the British Council could make to the cultural welfare of the West Indies was to assist the establishment of adequate public library services. The Council therefore agreed to support both the Eastern Caribbean Scheme and the scheme for Jamaica based on Miss Nora Bateson's report on library services to Jamaica Government.

That is the brief historical background -- so brief as to be incomplete, but sufficient, I hope to explain how the present library organization came into being. In Trinidad there now exist, apart from the Trinidad Public Library which is not, as yet, a public library in the full sense of that term but rather a subscription library supported by public funds, two public library organizations, the Trinidad Central Library and the Eastern Caribbean Regional Library. These two organizations are often confused, although they are entirely separate. The Trinidad Central Library is the equivalent of an English county library, supported entirely from Government funds and providing a free public library service to the whole island, excluding Port of Spain which, it is intended, will be served by the Trinidad Public Library. The service is carried to the people by means of small branch libraries and deposit stations linked by a book van. In the remoter districts a travelling library service meets the needs of the population and in the south of the island

the former Carnegie Free Library in San Fernando is now serving the dual purpose of municipal library for San Fernando and Regional centre for the southern districts. The Eastern Caribbean Regional Library, on the other hand, is a British Council venture and is not so much a library as an agency for assisting library development.

In the Eastern Caribbean library provision is the concern of a number of colonial governments from British Guiana to the Virgin Islands. Most of these governments have now established public library services or extended existing organizations, which formerly only served the chief town, to serve the entire colony. The assistance from the Regional Library has taken the form of technical advice, provision of books, centralized cataloguing and processing of books, the compiling of a union catalogue and the initiation of an interlending service between the various colonies, the provision of a pool stock of specialist books corresponding to the National Central Library in England, the establishment of a cen-

tral bindery to undertake the rebinding of books for all the libraries in the area and the training of librarians.

Methods and routines are similar to those used in Jamaica with one or two interesting differences. The catalogues of most of the libraries and the union catalogue are classified, with author and subject indexes, (the Dewey classification being used throughout the area) whereas Jamaica Library Service use the dictionary form. There is a difference of opinion among librarians in the area as to whether the Brown or Newa charging system is to be preferred. General opinion favours Brown, but during the last training course we had an interesting discussion on the relative merits of the two systems. Several colonies are considering using the travelling library or book van and deposit station to bring library facilities to the rural population. Harrods printed catalogue card service is being used by the Regional Library to reduce the work in the cataloguing department.

A lot of work has yet to be done by the cataloguing department before the union catalogue of the area is complete and until this is accomplished the interlending system cannot function effectively. Nevertheless during the past two years a total of 1,260 loans have been made to libraries and individuals from the Regional Library's pool stock of specialist books.

The two first essentials of a good library service are adequate book stock and trained staff. One of the main features of the Regional Library work has been the training of librarians in the area. To date over thirty students have passed the Entrance Examination of the Library Association and many have gone on to take parts of the Registration Examination. Two have completed the Registration examinations. Two training courses, each of six months duration, are run every year. From January to June the course covers the requirements of the Entrance Examination and from July to December the Registration examination. Each consists of a five months correspondence course followed by a training course in Trinidad at

which students attend lectures and gain practical experience.

Although the Regional Library provides assistance in these different forms to the various libraries it is the responsibility of the separate governments to provide public library services and to finance them. I was pleased, therefore, to have the opportunity of seeing what was being done outside Trinidad in two colonies, Barbados and Grenada. Barbados has one of the best libraries in the area. The library in Bridgetown is an attractive building, the book stock is good and the staff intelligent, enthusiastic and well trained. I was particularly impressed by the children's library. Every effort has been made to make the room attractive to children, special displays are a constant feature and story hours are given every week. There is one branch library at Speightstown, a particularly charming one room branch with a pleasant lecture hall. The total issues of books from the Barbados libraries for the year 1949 were over a quarter of a million, a sign

that good use is being made of the facilities offered. The library service of Grenada is on a more modest scale but it provides a good example of what can be done in a small island with limited Government funds if the Librarian and her committee are enthusiastic. The central library in St. George occupies the second storey of a warehouse near the Carenage, and the service is carried to other parts of the island by means of small deposit stations open one or two days a week and carrying small stocks of books which are changed from time to time from the central library. Again I was particularly impressed by the use that children made of the library. The total issues of books from the Grenada library are 5,000 per month or 60,000 per annum. It is significant that of the 5,000 books issued per month 3,000 were for children.

Such is the outline of library activities in the Eastern Caribbean, but I should like to add a note on my impressions of Jamaica. Unfortunately I only managed to spend four days in the island but

Mr. Chape was determined that not a minute of that period should be wasted and provided me with a strenuous but enjoyable itinerary of visits. As in the rest of the West Indies I found in Jamaica enthusiasm, progress and accomplishment. At the risk of resembling the Cockney shop girl who describes everything as 'nice' may I use the word 'attractive', the most suitable adjective, to describe the parish libraries. They were all pleasant buildings staffed by charming people. Yet again it was the use that children made of the libraries that was so noticeable. At one parish library the librarian was invisible when we called - we found her and her desk hidden by a horde of youngsters.

The outstanding impression of the library movement that I gained throughout the West Indies was of the spirit of the workers in that movement. Library committees, librarians, library assistants, all seemed to have an overwhelming enthusiasm for their task and a sense of urgency, the desire to accomplish much in as short a time as possible. It

was evident in the willingness of staff to work extra hours, in the hard work that students put into their studies and in the ideas for the future that library committees and librarians were anxious to put into effect.

Much has been done but much remains still to be done before there are adequate library services throughout the West Indies. However, the spirit which pervades the library movement can accomplish this and it may be that in the near future there will be not only library services in every colony but a Library Association of the West Indies and an interlending system which embraces such units as the University Library, the Library of the Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture in Trinidad and the excellent West India Library of the Institute of Jamaica. More and more people of the West Indies are realising the value of their public libraries and more will be demanded of them in the future, and cooperation between libraries is the best way to obtain the most effective service and to utilise to the

full the library resources of the area.

This article has been concerned with professional matters but I would like to add a personal note by recording my deep gratitude for the warm welcome and the friendliness I met everywhere in the West Indies.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

Mention in Mr. Flood's article of examination successes in Trinidad prompted us to offer our congratulations to Miss Audrey Gunter of the Department of Agriculture on her success in the Entrance Examination of the British Library Association held last June. Miss Gunter was one of the students who attended the Library Staff Training Course held at the University College of the West Indies last January, and continued private study from that time.

Mr. W. F. Chape was also successful in Part II of the Final Examination, Library Administration.

SPECIAL LIBRARIES IN JAMAICA

The Special Libraries which exist at present in Jamaica have been formed chiefly in connection with Government and semi-Government Departments and Institutions. The oldest of these libraries are the Law Library of the Supreme Court, the Science Library of the Agricultural Department, the West India Reference Library and the Science Museum Library of the Institute of Jamaica.

The Supreme Court Library dates back to 1879 when by Law 24 of 1879 - The Judicature Law, 1879 - the various courts of the Island were consolidated to constitute one Supreme Court of Judicature known as "The Supreme Court". It was provided in the Law that all books, documents and papers of the various courts whose powers were transferred to the Supreme Court shall belong to the Supreme Court.

The Law Library is mainly a Reference Library and is under the management of a Library Committee composed of the Judges of the Supreme Court, the Attorney General, and a practising Solicitor nominated

by the members of the Committee. The Registrar of the Supreme Court is the Librarian. Government Judicial Officers are entitled ex officio to the use of the Library. Members of the Bar and Solicitors, other than the ex officio members, may use the Library on payment of an annual subscription of two guineas. In addition, any person whatever may, on payment of the above subscription, by special permission of the Committee, become entitled to the use of the Library. The Library contains about 5,000 volumes including bound periodicals. A printed alphabetical catalogue of the books in the Library is available.

The Agricultural Department's Library was started in 1880. In this year the Botanic Gardens and Plantations were constituted a 'Department' under the Directorship of Mr. Daniel Morris, M.A., F.G.S. (afterwards Sir Daniel Morris, K.C.M.G.) and the new organization was known as the Department of Public Gardens and Plantations. At first the books in the library were confined to those dealing with local

and general botany and tropical agriculture, but as the functions of the Department widened and it became a Department of Agriculture and then a Department of Science and Agriculture so the scope of the Library expanded to become a Science Library with the emphasis on the agricultural sciences. The Library is maintained principally as a Reference Library for the Officers of the Department but may be consulted by anyone during official hours. A Reading Room is provided for such persons using the Library.

The Central Library at Hope contains over 6,000 volumes and a large number of periodical publications and occasional literature obtained largely on an exchange basis from agricultural and scientific institutions in various countries. In addition, small Divisional Libraries are maintained at the offices of the technical officers and at the principal agricultural stations in the Island.

The Institute of Jamaica was founded in 1879, during the Governorship of Sir Anthony Musgrave, one of its objects being to maintain a library, reading room, and museum. A collection of books and publica-

tions dealing with Jamaica and other West Indian territories early became a special feature of the library and under the zealous direction of Mr. Frank Cundall who was appointed Librarian of the Institute in December 1890 this collection became a most comprehensive and valuable library of literature on the West Indies, Central America, and West Africa with which Jamaica had close connections during the 19th century. The Library now has 14,479 books and pamphlets; 2,556 bound volumes of Jamaica periodicals and newspapers; 1,910 original manuscripts and 800 maps and plans. This fine collection is of the greatest interest to visitors and students from abroad as well as to all Jamaicans who want to know about their Island's history.

Another Special Library which forms a branch of the Institute of Jamaica is the Museum Library which contains a fairly large collection of scientific books and periodicals. This Library was organized in 1942 when with the completion of the Museum Building more adequate accommodation was

provided for this section of the Institute. Through the efforts of Mr. Bernard Lewis, B.A., who was appointed Curator of the Museum in 1939, the library was developed from a small collection of scientific literature transferred from the General Library of the Institute, and has been considerably helped by gifts of publications from the British Council and from scientific institutions abroad, notably the Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. Useful additions have also been obtained from various sources in exchange for the publications issued by the Museum.

The Science Museum Library is also principally a Reference Library which may be consulted during official hours but members of the Institute of Jamaica may borrow many of the books.

In more recent years Special Libraries have been maintained by the Jamaica Agricultural Society, the Forest Department and the Jamaica Social Welfare Commission (formerly Jamaica Welfare Ltd.).

With the establishment of the Jamaica Library Service more interest is being taken in the organization of Special Libraries and with the assistance of the Library Service Special Libraries are now being developed in the Education Department, the Secretariat and the Lands Department.

-O-O-O-O-O-O-O-

THE LIBRARY ASSOCIATION ENTRANCE EXAMINATION

June 14th, 1950.

First Paper, Organisation and Method.

Time allowed $1\frac{1}{2}$ hrs.

Note.- THREE questions are to be attempted. All questions carry equal marks.

1. Comment on the statement: "The reputation, good or bad, of a library is made by the assistant at the charging desk or other place where books are issued to readers".
2. Describe the form of application used by those who desire to become borrowers or readers in your own library or in a library known to you. Can you suggest any ways in which the form might be improved?

3. Describe the means used to record whereabouts of books which are on loan to readers, and to secure their punctual return.
4. A public library is owned by the ratepayers. What does this mean?
5. State briefly in tabulated form the processes you would adopt to ensure that new books reach the readers at the earliest possible time after receipt at the library.

Second Paper, Classification and Cataloguing.
1½ hrs.

Note. THREE questions are to be attempted, not less than one in each Section.

Section A - Classification.

1. Describe briefly the shelf arrangement used:
(a) in the library in which you work; or
(b) in a library known to you.
2. Is it true that classification brings together everything on a subject in one place in the library? Give reasons.
3. Every book in a classed library has a class mark on the spine to determine its place on the shelves. What other purposes do class marks serve in library work?

Section B - Cataloguing.

4. A dictionary catalogue is said to be easier to use than a classed one. Describe, with reasons for your choice, which of these two forms of catalogue you prefer.

5. Show, with examples, what is meant by "specific subject entry" and contrast it with other forms of subject entry in catalogues.
6. Why is so much attention paid to the importance of the author entry in cataloguing?

Third Paper, Reference Material. $1\frac{1}{2}$ hrs.

Note. THREE questions are to be attempted, not less than one in each Section. All questions carry equal marks.

Section A.

1. In what manner do the following supplement each other? The Library Association's Subject index to periodicals and H.W.Wilson's Readers' guide to periodical literature?
2. Contrast the Encyclopaedia Britannica and Chambers's encyclopaedia.
3. The Oxford English dictionary and Webster's New international dictionary both contain features not included in most dictionaries. Mention some, and contrast their treatment in the two works.

Section B.

4. Where would you look for (a) an account of Beethoven's Choral symphony; (b) a full definition of the word "architecture"; (c) the sayings "sour grapes" and "white lies"; and (d) titles of books on atomic energy published in Britain in September and October, 1949?

5. What single-volume works would afford information on the population of the largest cities; the time of sunrise on June 15th, 1950; the reigning monarchs of the world; the name of the Archbishop of York; and the principal exports of each of the Balkan states?
6. Where would you look for (a) the address of a prominent business man in a town having no directory; (b) the play and act in which Portia defeats Shylock; (c) the recreations of your local M.P.; and (d) details of recent articles on American library practice?

Fourth Paper, Essay.
1½ hrs.

Note. "The essay is intended to discover the ability of candidates to express themselves clearly, concisely and grammatically" -- extract from syllabus. The essay is to be of approximately 500 words devoted to one of the following subjects:

1. A description of the "town in which I live".
2. The possible effects of television on reading.
3. The unbroken popularity of Defoe's Robinson Crusoe.
4. "love me, love my dog" : animal friends.
5. The season of the year I like best.
6. A visit to ONE of the following: (a) a Cathedral; (b) a Castle; (c) a Railway Station; (d) an Aerodrome; (e) Warship.
7. The pleasures of music.

8. Delight in poetry.
9. The lot of those "who have no time to stand and stare".
10. Polonius' advice to Laertes in Hamlet:
"Costly thy habit as thy purse can buy,
But not express'd in fancy; rich, not gaudy;
For the apparel oft proclaims the man".
11. "White lies."
12. A visit to a youth club.