

Remarks made by Rep. John E. Fogarty at Drexel Institute of Technology on 5/17/60 on occasion of his receiving the Distinguished Achievement Award from the Graduate School of Library Science and the Library Alumni Association.

LIBRARIES, EDUCATION AND SOCIETY

Today I saw for the first time the impressive new quarters of the *library school here at Drexel. I am sure they bring to you a deep sense of pride and gratification--much as your Distinguished Achievement Award, and this opportunity to meet with you have given me. It is a fine thing to feel that one's efforts have played some part in strengthening the American heritage.

A library school--or legislation to aid libraries--can do just that: it can enrich society and strengthen the Nation. It does this mainly through the enduring contribution of libraries to education.

America's strength was once felt to lie predominantly in her agricultural and geographic advantages. Since the turn of the century, industry and natural resources have been paramount. Both, of course, remain essential to our country's strength and her leadership among free peoples. But the close of World War II brought sharply into focus another basic resource--education; and recent years have commanded its critical appraisal. It is now clear to many that agriculture and industry, however prolific, cannot insure supremacy or even survival without a stronger fiber of education in the social fabric.

The modern concept of education is a broad one. Besides the schools at all levels, many institutions and media are recognized as educational--partly because of their mounting interest in the role. There are more and more educational uses of films and recordings, radio and television, magazines and newspapers, pamphlets and books. There is an upward trend in the publication of all factual matter. I believe these changes reflect generally a felt need of people for a broader view of the world about them.

One institution with a growing educational mission is the library. It is axiomatic, of course, that libraries should serve scholarship; but I refer to a more active part in the educational process. Increasingly the progressive library is concerned with information--with collecting, lending and promoting current reading matter, films, recordings, and other educational materials. Thus the library aligns itself with institutions and forces that are shaping our national destiny.

It is my conviction that this is the way in which libraries of all types can best serve the community in our dynamic times. Libraries are more than storehouses; their broader function is to teach.

For many years I have given my best thought to certain needs and aspirations of our people. This has been basic to my responsibilities as a Representative to Congress from the Second District of Rhode Island, and as Chairman of the Subcommittee in the House of Representatives which is concerned with appropriations to the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. I

* The Graduate School of Library Science (3rd oldest in the United States and among the first five in enrollment) and the Drexel Library are housed together in the Library Center, opened in the Fall of 1959, and the latest addition to the physical plant in the current expansion program.

am pleased to say that many libraries and library groups are closely allied with the Department in several of its programs. They collaborate in activities of the Office of Education and the National Library of Medicine. They share particularly the interests of the Public Health Service in aging, juvenile delinquency, and blindness.

As an interested layman, I should like to express briefly some views on the library's role in these tremendous problems.

One of the great paradoxes of the modern world is the problem of our aging population--the medical and social needs that have risen as a result of our longer life span, which is largely attributable to advances in medicine and public health. Since 1900, people over fifty have increased in our population from 13 percent to more than 22 percent. By 1970, nearly 25 percent of the American people will be over 50, and 10 percent will be over 65. This implies a continued increase in those burdens that weigh so heavily upon the aged--health problems, occupational difficulties, lowered income, unsatisfactory living conditions, loneliness.

In attempting to come to grips with such a problem one naturally turns to institutions and individuals that might be expected to help. A group that has outlined its objectives with regard to the aged is the National Library Association. It has spelled out in congressional testimony* how the public library renders direct services to the elderly; supplies middle-age groups with literature on retirement plans, housing and income; coordinates interested civic groups and educational programs; and assists personnel who work with the aging through books, films and exhibits.

These seem to me excellent, practical objectives that might well be extended to all libraries. In addition, I should like to see library schools expand the training of librarians to work with the elderly. Some studies should be undertaken to settle the question whether cultural and educational interests can actually retard mental decline, and to learn how libraries can help bring out and utilize the older person's best attributes. It would be a great credit to library science, and quite fitting, if some library group were to lead the way toward salvaging the elder population's vast resource of experience and skills.

The library's place in our culture is nuclear: it offers literature, information and recreation to many groups, the young as well as the old. I feel that its values to youth have barely been tapped. In many young people, there is a spirit that rebels against education--or rather, against being taught. This finds a terrible and ruinous expression in the juvenile delinquent, whose rebellion may lead to total loss of educational contact. And yet the delinquent or pre-delinquent does not necessarily resist learning. His indifference or hostility may embrace only the formal aspects of education--the classroom and its implication of discipline and conformity. The same individual may sometimes be reached through an appeal to his curiosity, his need to excel, or his natural love for reading, music or some related pursuit. Every era has its Bohemian movement, which is essentially rebellious and yet intellectual or artistic.

* Senate Committee on Labor and Public Welfare, August 4, 1959.

The difficulty, of course, is to capture and hold interest. The library has strong competition, and I can offer no formula. I only know that the mind of youth is capable of intense application in response to the right appeal. With no coercion whatever, youth can master difficult sports, jazz music, automotive mechanics, radio engineering. And we have all seen young people come to public libraries in underprivileged metropolitan sections, drawn by up-to-date material on invention, the space age, sports and recreation, career opportunities, and interesting lives. I have seen this in districts where crime and violence beckon constantly to every child. In light of these things, I am confident that ways can be found to enhance the appeal and effectiveness of libraries in helping the prospective citizen.

You may be interested in certain resolutions passed at the recent White House Conference on Children and Youth, which included nearly 100 librarians among the delegates.

One resolution called for adequately supported studies to determine the effects of reading books, magazines and newspapers upon young people. Another recommended that much more extensive use be made of films and other instructional material in both formal and informal education. Several resolutions were aimed at augmenting the opportunities for training and participation in dramatics, theater arts, and film production.

With direct reference to libraries, it was resolved that action should be taken to extend the availability of public library service to every citizen; that libraries be established in schools, colleges and universities, with a view to helping them achieve higher standards; and that reading, training in the selection of literature, and recruitment of personnel trained in reading guidance be vigorously promoted.

One of the forums resolved that young people should be encouraged to study the great ethical, moral and religious truths, and to use these to formulate codes of conduct for their guidance toward good citizenship.

I believe we shall soon see legislation and other efforts to implement these recommendations at local, state and Federal levels. Meanwhile, library workers will be able to draw on the resolutions in seeking interest and aid.

Another medical and social area in which libraries are making a valuable contribution is blindness. Despite public and private efforts over many years, the number of blind persons in this country is about 350,000 and is steadily increasing. The Public Health Service's National Institute of Neurological Diseases and Blindness is attacking the problem from the medical standpoint. On the social side, I believe there is need for a good study on problems related to blindness and the needs of the blind. One objective would be to help create a national atmosphere more favorable to the blind person and his role in society. This would call for studies of existing conditions, including the problem of providing books and recordings. The best library services now available for the blind should be augmented and extended.

Some of you may not know that the Library of Congress's program to provide books for the blind is currently operating under an appropriation of \$1.6 million, which is a little more than ever before. To date, the Library has provided about 5600 titles in Braille and Moon type and 4000 talking books. Approximately 70,000 of the Library's machines are now in use.

As I have indicated, many grave medical and social problems call strongly on libraries among other key groups. Assistance to libraries themselves has been made available through the Library Services Act. In fiscal year 1960 allotments are based on the maximum authorized appropriation, \$7.5 million. In this session of Congress, I have introduced a bill to extend the Act for another five years beginning July 1.

This Office of Education program has helped to bring library services to 30 million people in rural America. It has provided trained personnel, 200 bookmobiles, and five million books and other materials. Fifty-two states and territories are now participating. Since the beginning of the program in 1957, the matching requirements have stimulated local governments to increase their library appropriations by 45 percent. One of the most encouraging results is the development of an effective system of libraries, with strong centers, cooperative processing, and so forth. And throughout the Nation, there is a growing awareness of the meaning of libraries in education.

In my own state of Rhode Island, progress under the Act has been typical. A special unit, Public Library Services in Rural Areas, was set up in the office of the Secretary of State to administer the program. A director, assistant director, clerical staff, and a bookmobile were added and new quarters obtained. A book grant was made to rural libraries, with provisions for emphasis on reference materials. Books are ordered and processed by the state agency. A series of workshops has been held at headquarters, and state consultant and bookmobile services have steadily grown.

Another law that has much significance for libraries is the National Defense Education Act of 1958. This is primarily designed to strengthen, improve and expand education in the United States at all levels. Libraries are specified as basic to the educational process. I should like to call attention to the fact that projects developed under the Act may include books and other materials, and that these are not yet available in adequate quantity and quality. Library materials to aid both teachers and students are needed for a balanced program.

Of the ten Titles in the Act, Title III offers the most direct opportunities for libraries. This authorizes \$70 million a year until July 1962 for improved science, mathematics and modern foreign-language instruction in public schools. Federal funds are available for laboratory and other special equipment. By the language of the Act, special equipment includes printed materials (except textbooks) and audio-visual materials and equipment. Minor remodeling and special equipment needed by the library because of its necessary expansion may be included, under projects approved by the state educational agency and the U.S. Office of Education.

Other Titles also pertain to libraries and librarians--Title II, for example, which provides loans up to \$5000 for college students. Persons training to become librarians are eligible, and 50 percent of the loan will be cancelled for those who serve as school or teacher librarians for five years. Another example is Title IV, which provides graduate fellowships aimed particularly at the preparation of teachers for colleges and universities.

I urge all of you to review the provisions of the National Defense Education Act (Public Law 85-864) and to be sure your students are familiar with the aspects pertaining to libraries. The ALA or the U.S. Office of Education will gladly supply details.

While speaking of Federal aid to libraries, I will make a point that may seem to the older hands here a little obvious. I refer to the fact that a library in the modern sense, adequately stocked and staffed to pull its own weight in an educational program, requires strong support from many quarters--particularly in the form of funds. A school of library science would do well to train its advanced students in the practice of fund raising. You must have support at local, state and national levels. To this end, librarians should take steps to increase public awareness of the library--to make it felt as a part of the community. It is largely through trustees and friends of libraries that the trend toward a more educational role must be advanced.

Such a role is necessarily diversified, and I have mentioned only some aspects. I have merely alluded to the library's part in cultural enrichment. Society depends upon the library for many things, not the least of which is its capacity to deepen appreciation and stimulate interest in the arts and sciences, in our principles and traditions, and in the peoples of other lands. This is an intangible role, but nonetheless a real one. It evokes a vital spirit in every American--the spirit to see our country progress and lead.

In this complex troubled world, the sciences loom in importance. Our prestige among nations depends largely upon our scientific preeminence. No amount of military preparedness could compensate for a lag in scientific knowledge or manpower. Nor can we ignore the value of the health sciences in a military and economic sense, for the cost of disease is the greatest burden any country can bear in war or peace. All this has direct bearing in the library field. You must continue, and I hope expand, your efforts to interest more people in the various sciences--in their support, their progress, and their application. Again the library is a powerful force for motivating, guiding and teaching.

It is a responsibility of libraries to help keep alive the spirit of culture and learning. I know of no better way than to cherish and promote the freedom to read. As a nation we are not given to slogans or glib phrases for expressing our deeper values. It is not easy to tell in a word or two what America stands for. Yet we can say that our country and its Constitution are flatly opposed to censorship--that anyone can go to a public library and read any book fit to print, whether or not the ideas it expresses are generally accepted. This is specific enough, and should be widely proclaimed as a basic fact. It is the librarians who make such freedom possible by seeing that all sides of a social issue are presented, trusting in the American way to speak for itself. Freedom to read is fundamental to true democracy.

I have rambled a good deal, but I believe I can sum up the main theme. The library in modern society is particularly important as an educational institution. To enhance its social value, it must strengthen its educational role. This may be effected through the teaching of librarians, studies in the use of the library as an education instrument, promotion of science, and aid to special groups such as the young at critical ages and the elderly. Progress along these lines will require friends, funds, and a strong voice in the community. Finally, libraries of all types, in preserving the freedom to read, in the broadest sense, both serve and exemplify the American ideal.