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COMPENSATIONS OF LIBRARIANSHIP



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ADELAIDE R. HASSE



Library science

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The Compensations of Librarianship

Even as long ago as 1889 I was a collector. I suppose it must have been an inherited instinct which thus early found expression. Many of my forbears were collectors. My own father's pastime was collecting, first lichens, later algæ. The larger part of his herbarium is now divided between the Botanical Garden of New York City and Harvard University. My father's brother collected a family of sons, four of whom served in France under the Stars and Stripes in the Great European War. My father's father collected his belongings after the revolution of 1848, and, collecting himself, he obeyed his government's orders to leave Germany, and came to the United States. Here he soon collected sufficient support to secure for himself a seat in the Wisconsin State Legislature. Another forbear collected vital statistics and is not unknown as an author in this particular branch of medical science.

Collecting is great fun. Every employer I have had has been a collector. My first employer was a woman, and it was she who gave point and direction to my natural bent towards collecting. She herself was a remarkable collector of experience. Having had but little library experience herself, she was able, by her ability as a collector of the experience of others, to avail herself thereof and, on the strength of it, to build up one of the liveliest, most progressive libraries I have known. All my other employers, three, have been men, and all my employers, with the exception of one of the men, have recognized and encouraged my comparatively inconspicuous gift, but still a gift, for collecting. My few achievements are entirely due to this fostering encouragement.

It was my first employer who aroused my interest in the possibilities of specializing in government documents. She was so sympathetic in her efforts that, almost without being aware of having done so, somehow I had organized the collection of documents, not inconsiderable, in the Los Angeles Public Library, devised a classification for them, and had begun a checklist of them. I had gotten no further with the checklist than to have completed the part covering the publications of the U. S. Department of Agriculture, when, in some way which I now no longer remember, someone in Washington heard of it. One day, away off in Los Angeles, there came a request from Washington, to allow the section of the checklist as far as completed to be pub-

lished by the Department of Agriculture. I believe now that had it not been for my employer, my young head would have been quite turned by this honor. The material was actually published by the U. S. Government as Library Bulletin 9 of the U. S. Department of Agriculture.

Of course by this time it is very much out of date and has long since been superseded. The feature that was valuable to me was the attitude of my employer. Had it not been for her constant interest in seeing that my capacity for assimilation was profitably employed, I should never have ventured on these enterprises. There must be many young people in library work today to whom opportunities such as I was so generously shown how to utilize, are lost, merely because an employer or executive is self-centered, indifferent, otherwise engrossed or just blind. And yet what more valuable asset can an employer or executive choose than a servant hungry for expression in service? I have often wondered if the excessive turnover in library work might not be due to this hunger-seeking sustenance denied by oblivious employers.

I shall always remember and shall never cease to appreciate the help extended me early in my library career. It has kept me open-hearted and wishful of sharing with each of the young people just beginning work what little I may have acquired in the years now gone by.

While still in Los Angeles I was released for six weeks to reorganize the Santa Barbara Public Library. The entire library, then some seven or eight thousand volumes, was accessioned, reclassified, a charging system installed and a catalogue started. I had the help of the entire staff, viz: Mrs. R., the librarian, and a general helper. At about the same time I was asked to assist in reorganizing the Pasadena Public Library.

Before I had been many years in the library in Los Angeles we started the first library training class in the United States. That class has, I believe, continued without interruption, and has now developed into a school. Students of our early training classes are today holding head librarianships in public libraries and in county libraries of California; one was librarian of one of the most responsible federal war libraries; one is a successful professional story-teller and one has developed from reference librarian in the art department to a much sought-after teacher of art history.

At no time during my eight years service in Los Angeles was there a suggestion of friction in my relations with my fellow-workers. Indeed, one of the closest friends I have today was a member of the staff of the library at that time.

About the time that the "List of Publications of the U. S. Department of Agriculture, 1845-1895" (Library Bulletin 9, U. S. Department of Agriculture) was published in 1895, the

Richardson Bill was passed. This is the bill which created the office of the Superintendent of Documents. One day late April or early May of 1895 I received a telegram in Los Angeles offering me the position of librarian of the newly created office. Before the month of May was gone I had reported for duty to the Superintendent of Documents in Washington. The office was still in process of organization. It was housed in one of the upper floors of the old Union Building on G Street, N. W. Mr. F. A. Crandall was Superintendent, Miss Edith Clarke was head cataloguer, Mr. J. H. Hickox was compiler of the Monthly Catalogue, and I was librarian. The cataloguers were busy formulating plans for carrying out the law which authorized the issue of the three tools now so well developed by the Superintendent of Documents, viz., the Document Catalogue, the Document Index and the Monthly Catalogue. Mr. Hickox was responsible for the foundations of the Monthly Catalogue. He was a mine of information about U. S. Government documents, having, since 1891, published the old monthly catalogue as a private venture. Miss Clarke was responsible for the foundations of the Document Catalogue, and Mr. William Burns, an Albany graduate, was responsible for the foundations of the Document Index. Mr. Hickox died not long after the Monthly Catalogue was begun, and Mr. Burns took over this work in addition to compiling the Document Index. My duties as librarian were to care for the current documents after they had been recorded by the cataloguers and to collect all other documents. The Richardson Bill gave to the Superintendent of Documents the authority to remove to his custody from all the departments all the accumulations of documents not in use for the business of the departments. The removal of these accumulations fell to me. I dare say never had a young collector been given such an opportunity to revel in a very orgy of collecting.

The administrative offices of the Superintendent of Documents were a series of connecting rooms facing the front of the building, the remainder of the immense floor space being taken up with three ranges of double-decker bins. These bins were intended to hold the departmental accumulations. When I arrived in Washington the bins had not yet been constructed. I remember how we stepped off the approximate space which we thought might be allotted to the Geological Survey, the General Land Office and all the rest. Then we chalked off the floor space and in the midst of doing this the Hon. E. C. Benedict, then Public Printer, came in. He was a tall, very imposing man and was much interested in everything about the new office. Presently we were all marching up and down the chalked up floor, spreading our arms to test the width of aisles, the heights

of bins, etc. A few days later two enormous vans, each manned with a crew of husky negroes, were assigned to me with which to transport the accumulated documents from the departments. We were to begin with those of the Interior Department. This was then near by. There was a tradition in departmental Washington that a sort of Captain Kidd treasure in the way of documents was buried somewhere in the Interior Department. That was the old Interior Building. The handsome new structure on F street has been erected since then. Arrangements had been made between the Superintendent of Documents and the proper authority in the old Interior Department for my arrival the next day to remove the documents from the sub-cellar. Thus I sallied forth that bright May morning on my first great collecting adventure. Some of the negroes walked behind me and some followed in the vans. When we all pulled up at the Ninth Street side of the building, we arranged a sort of rehearsal. In the vans we had brought a large quantity of government mail sacks. These were deposited on the sidewalk in a long row on either side of the entrance to the building. Each mail sack was tagged "Geological Survey," "Post Office," "Land Office," etc. Some of the negroes were left outside, the rest followed me in. We went down a long, dark, damp corridor at the end of which the object of our expedition was concealed in a room which was said not to have been opened for sixteen years. We could not open it now. The door opened inwards and it was impossible to squeeze in and so much as wink at the treasure. One of the negroes finally forced his way in and, by shifting some of the contents he was able to clear enough space, I thought, for an entrance for me. But what I saw was a solid wall of books, from floor to ceiling and from side to side of the room—nothing but books. I sent the negro scrambling up the side wall of books to see if there was sufficient space between the ceiling and the upper layer to hold me. As there was no light except that which sifted in from the street entrance we had to provide a lantern. Then I climbed to the top of the treasure, the negroes were directed to line themselves down the corridor, and, by the light of the lantern, I read the title of each document, called it to the first negro, threw him the document and he passed both document and title down the chain to the waiting mail sack. The mouldy documents were discarded at once. Naturally I wore gloves and, to avoid throat affection, a home-made contrivance much like the influenza masks recently put on the market. When a mail-sack was filled it was put in the van and replaced by an empty sack. Thus we soon cleared out the room, and at the same time classified the documents still in condition. When a van-load arrived at the Union Building the contents were deposited in their proper locations and a rough inventory was at once made of

the number of copies of each year of each report in stock. These rough inventories were the beginnings of the present popular Price Lists. In turn we made the rounds of all the various bureaus and departments, and in about six weeks we had reclaimed and classified nearly 300,000 documents. One copy of each edition of each report was retained for the Document Library. I am quite sure that I was really happy during those weeks.

Not all the removals were as strenuous as was that of the Interior Department. Often it was only necessary that I make the original survey and the actual work of removal was delegated. Many pleasant encounters and meetings were my privilege while engaged in carrying out the provisions of the Richardson Bill. Those librarians familiar with some of the earlier catalogues of the Senate Library know the name of Amzi Smith. Washingtonians of those days know Amzi Smith well, but not, perhaps, just from the angle from which librarians would know him. Mr. Smith had been clerk of the Senate Document Room for many, many years, had seen Senators come and go, and had accumulated a rich store of reminiscence. But his great love was fishing. A fisherman appreciates a good listener. So it was that often when sent to the Capitol on document foraging expeditions I hunted up Mr. Smith. There was a window with a deep seat in the ante-room to the Senate Chamber where I would curl up drinking in Amzi Smith's tales of Senators, documents and fishing adventures, while the little pages scampered in and out fetching documents to the gentlemen making history on the other side of the baize doors.

My attentions were not centered wholly on the Senate side of the Capitol. I was fickle. I was collecting experience only as it was associated with U. S. Government documents. The Clerk of the House Document Room, Mr. Joel Grayson, was exceedingly kind to me. Indeed, it was extraordinary, the helpfulness and fellowship everywhere extended the young collector. Mr. Grayson one day told me of a legend of early U. S. documents in an upper room above the House Document Room, but which was now bricked up. Forthwith the collector panted for that treasure, and it was proposed that we "start an investigation." A ladder was procured and, armed with the necessary tools, we climbed up. Mr. Grayson was a very small man, so we worked to make an opening large enough to admit me, and—there was the room, and there were the documents! Some of the documents which we brought down are now in the library of the Superintendent of Documents. In some way I learned of a dark room in the Capitol said to hold a large accumulation of the early unbound documents. By the time the room had been located and permission secured for its exploration, my meanderings had at-

tracted the attention of Capitol employes, but were amiably registered as those of a harmless person whom it was unnecessary to oppose. The dark room was an inner room, its one door being its only opening. Wooden racks had been constructed within and on these were heaps and heaps of the early documents. Holding a candle in one hand I went over them one by one, and came out happy, smooched with dust, honest sweat, candle grease, and documents. I was allowed to have those I selected for the library transported to the office of the Superintendent of Documents. Indeed, they were far better cared for there.

Some of my encounters I remember as quite depressing. One day a telephone message came to the Superintendent of Documents from the Capitol that unclaimed congressional quotas of documents were about to be sent to the paper mill and, if the Superintendent wanted the chance to go over them, to send some one up at once. I was sent. Among these documents, which had been thrown in a big pile in an open area way, were some unused perfectly fresh copies of the Bureau of Ethnology report, American Historical Association, Smithsonian Institution and other similar costly and valuable reports. They were of a session so recent that I knew other copies were at that very moment being run off the presses at the Government Printing Office! The wastefulness, official indifference and general inefficiency advertised by this condition annoyed me. It was no one person's fault, but like the now commonly deplored absence of a budget system, was one of those inherited conditions, which, in time, are always adjusted. In some way, Mr. Richardson, of Tennessee, the author of the Richardson Bill, was appealed to, and we devised a plan which would give to each Member and Senator, instead of the actual document, an order for a document for distribution among his constituents. We calculated that constituents would regard an order for a book signed by a Member or Senator, allowing the constituents to exercise personal choice, quite as highly as the unsolicited presentation of a book in the acquiring of which the constituent had exercised no choice. I still think the psychology is true. Mr. Richardson was very much taken with the idea, but it never came to anything beyond being more or less talked about.

My expeditions to the departments were quite as felicitous as were those to the Capitol. Dr. David Gill was then dean of American ichthyologists, and was very interested, as indeed were all the scientists with whom I came in contact, in the library enterprise of the Superintendent of Documents. That part of Dr. Gill's official quarters which I remember was a huge room, in fascinating disarray. Once, while seated on a pile of papers in the middle of this room, Dr. Gill gave a lecture to an audience of one on Jordan's Fishes of North America, which had just made its appearance as one of the Miscellaneous Publications of the

Smithsonian Institution. I met also at this time Powell, the geologist; Charles Abiathar White, the paleontologist, a most beaming old gentleman; Samuel Langley, and many others. Through my father's work in botany I met some of the young men connected with botanical researches in the Department of Agriculture.

It can readily be understood that all these experiences gave me quite another feeling about documents than one acquired in the school or catalogue room.

One of the advantageous digressions of my two years in Washington was the catalogue I made of the library of the Supreme Council of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite. The Council House was then in Third Street, N. W., and contained, besides an exceptional library of Masonic and allied literature, the business offices and the council chamber. For some months I went there each day when my duties in the office of the Superintendent of Documents were over and worked well into the evening. The absolute change in the subject-matter afforded the necessary recreation, broadened my horizon and added greatly to my stock of information. The library was rich in fine bindings, rare editions and in books on unusual subjects. Having completed the catalogue, besides making liberal compensation, the authorities presented me with a bronze medal, which had never until then, been given by them to a woman. It bears on one side the 33° insignia of the Scottish Rite and on the other a portrait of Gen. Albert Pike, the founder of the order.

The library of the Superintendent of Documents occupied at that time perhaps ten or twelve iron book stacks. I had fairly well developed the classification for the documents when, one day, Dr. Billings, Director of the New York Public Library, paid us a visit. Dr. Billings examined the library, but especially the classification, which he went over quite carefully. This is the same classification adopted for the checklist and now in use, in an expanded form, by the Superintendent of Documents. I had devised it originally, and was then working it out with the idea of providing a notation for any collection of United States documents which was to be kept intact as a unit. A very short time after Dr. Billings' visit to us, I received an offer from him to come to the New York Public Library, there to build up what Dr. Billings wished to be a great document collection.

I came away from the office of the Superintendent of Documents without at any time having had any friction with any fellow worker, and many of the cordial relations formed at that time extend to the present day.

Dr. Billings had international ideas of the possibilities of such a collection. It is a distinct loss to New York City at least, that his foresighted, wide-visioned policy with regard to an ultimate

document collection was allowed to lapse. The difficulties present now, and which will continue to be obstacles in the future, in the way of securing some of this material, elusive under normal circumstances, are almost insuperable. Indeed in the last few years some of the special libraries in New York City have already outstripped the New York Public Library in certain kinds of foreign documents.

By travel, by association, by personal achievement, by breadth of vision and great gentle manliness, Dr. Billings was an ideal person to direct the destinies of an educational public service institution. He stood for something. A hard worker himself, he was extremely critical of the capacity for work in others, and his tendency was towards minimum appreciation in this regard. Had you, however, proven yourself to the contrary, then he was most generous, helpful and encouraging. During the summer months Dr. Billings usually went abroad. Before each such trip I was instructed to prepare for his use lists of lacunæ in the files of the public documents of the library. Dr. Billings was a gifted collector. He had a constructive policy in collecting, a true instinct and a fine sense of proportion. Always after his return from Europe there would come to the library through the autumn through the winter, box after box of documents. Gloat is the word that most nearly expresses my feelings when the contents finally reached me and I saw lacunæ disappearing or new representatives started. I shall always be grateful for the joy of those days. Documents or pearls, the emotions of the collector are the same.

Dr. Billings was an inveterate reader of second-hand catalogues and I soon learned how to explore this far too much neglected class of publication. A large number, especially of European catalogues, come to the library. There was a time when an effort was being made by Dr. Billings to complete the library's collection of American constitutional conventions. Some of their proceedings, even of comparatively recent years, are quite uncommon and command high prices. A very nearly perfect file had been built up, but one, a Missouri convention, eluded us, until we found it inconspicuously listed in a continental catalogue at a very low figure. I remember how we chuckled over it when it finally arrived with a bill amounting to \$1.25. Collectors, too, make catalogue acquaintances. With one of these I became quite familiar, viz., the Hon. John Bowring, a British diplomat primarily. He must have been a person of omnivorous capacity with a highly developed mental acquisitiveness, promiscuously sympathetic, a wide traveler, as so many Englishmen are, and a facile linguist. I do not know how much Herbert Spencer was given to the reprehensible, but, in some cases, war-

ranted practice of making marginal notes in books. A volume of Sidgwick's *Ethics* picked up from a second-hand catalogue for my personal library is replete with pencilled comments in Spencer's handwriting and bears his library stamp. I have also a copy of Muel which I used in developing the catalogue of French documents for the New York Public Library, and which once belonged to Jules Simon, with his signature and notes, also from a second-hand catalogue.

During the time when I was working on the "Materials for a Bibliography of the Thirteen Original States," I met Dr. Billings one evening in the vestibule of the Lenox Library on the way to a staff meeting. The eyes of the worker quickly detected the roll of notes under my arm, and pointing to it, he said simply: "You are happy, aren't you?" And I was, for I was enjoying freely one of the compensations of librarianship.

In the autumn of 1902, I went to London with the intention of locating there, if possible, a copy of the supposedly lost "Bradford Journal." After searching for a fortnight and almost despairing of succeeding in my purpose, I came upon a copy in the Public Record Office some time in October. The moment of discovery was immense. My agitation was so great it was with difficulty that I could concentrate sufficiently to make the necessary notes. This journal is the first book to have been printed in New York, and was supposed to have been confiscated more than 200 years ago. To have found a copy fixed a new date in the history of printing in New York. Having accomplished my purpose, I sailed for home the next day. The first thing I did was to take the notes of my find, not without some misgivings, to Mr. Wilberforce Eames, then librarian of the Lenox Library, and then and now the greatest American bibliographer. My find might prove not to be genuine. But when I saw in Mr. Eames' face the frank pleasure which a true craftsman takes in the work of a colleague, and heard his simple remark: "Well, you've got it," I was happy.

I wish all the young people in the library world, oftentimes discouraged by conditions which stultify real professional development, could experience some of that feeling of opportunity which Dr. Billings so richly dispensed. The realization that your employer believes you are going to make good is a wonderful impetus. The art of the employer is indeed a rare one. Dr. Billings was more than an employer. He was a co-worker, and anything but niggardly in assigning work either for himself or his fellow-workmen. He was uncompromising in his disparagement of everything that savored of make-believe. Shortly after moving into the new building, Dr. Billings requested that each division chief make a brief report on his or her division at a staff meeting. Ten minutes, I believe, was assigned to each. There were

then scholars on the staff of the library. One of them is still there. These gentlemen had come prepared to make formal statements. Unfortunately Dr. Billings called first on a newcomer, a former teacher, possessed of a remarkable flow of words. Simple courtesy would have dictated less than ordinary brevity, but, having once begun, it was apparently difficult for the speaker to stop. Dr. Billings began to watch the clock, then he grew stern, and finally, I believe, the physician's curiosity was aroused, for he kept his cold blue eye steadily on the talker. When at last the flow of words abated, Dr. Billings arose and in icy tones said to us: "Ladies and gentlemen, the hour is late. We will adjourn." That rapier-like thrust which Dr. Billings manipulated so expertly once hit me. The staff had been called together in his outer office in the old Astor Library building to receive some final instructions preparatory to moving into the new building. Each division chief was responsible for the shelving of the books of his Division in that building. We had all been busy for some time estimating locations. As some 50,000 documents were boxed up in the cellar of the Astor building, owing to lack of shelf space, it was difficult for me to make satisfactory estimates. I knew that some of these boxed-up documents were very thick, some very thin, and that some were considerably over size, but how many or which they were I had no means of knowing. Dr. Billings stopped me half through my explanation of this difficulty with: "Miss Hasse, if it had been easy I would not have asked you to do it." I recognized the reprimand of a soldier and the implication that if I would stop talking and begin thinking the difficulty would solve itself.

The collection of documents had grown, by that time, from one of about 10,000, when I came to it, to one of close on 300,000 volumes. There is no doubt that, had Dr. Billings' policy in regard to it been continued eventually it would have been one of the great collections of the world. With Dr. Billings' lamented passing away a vast change came over the atmosphere of the library. Dr. Billings' numerous contacts with the world of letters and of science brought many distinguished visitors from overseas to the library. It was his custom to take these visitors over the library himself and to present members of his staff to the strangers. I well remember the day that Dr. Billings escorted a foreigner to my room, and bringing him to my desk, quite informally, saying: "Miss Hasse, I know you would like to meet M. Bertillon." This extremely gracious democracy both of the Director and of the Trustees vanished with Dr. Billings' passing away. The Hon. Mr. Cadwalader rarely came to the library without coming to my room before leaving and, latterly, on several occasions he brought with him S. Weir Mitchell. The rare friendship which bound together Dr. Billings, Mr. Cadwalader and Weir Mitchell, was

one of long standing. Mr. Cadwalader knew that I had been collecting material about Alexander Vattemare, an early promoter of American libraries. One day he presented me with a faded envelope on which was written in ink dimmed by time: "From A. Vattemare to Miss ——," and which contained a lock of Vattemare's hair. Mr. Cadwalader had found the envelope in a volume at a second-hand book stall in Philadelphia and had purchased it to add to my collection of Vattemareana. On two other occasions I was deeply touched by Mr. Cadwalader's attention to me. One was the wording of his introduction to my "Index to the Documents of the United States relating to Foreign Affairs," and published by the Carnegie Institution of Washington. The other was when he personally invited me to be one of the party from the library to attend the funeral services of Dr. Billings in Washington. As we slowly followed the flag-draped caisson over that long road to beautiful Arlington, I was aware that I had lost a friend. Vaguely I apprehended that, henceforth, beside my unalterable devotion to the library, the same evil shadow which once so shamefully fell on the A. L. A., would have to be contended with.

On Easter Day, 1919, I again visited Arlington. It was difficult to realize that in the short period of six years since Dr. Billings' death, the work of sixteen years of unremitting effort under Dr. Billings' direction, had been effectually scrapped. It was difficult to realize that the Hon. Elihu Root, a man of wide experience, and who must have known of Dr. Billings' intentions for the document collection, should have allowed himself to be made an agent in the scrapping of it.

Dr. Billings' successor is a collector of mystery. The sacred presence is never seen among the workers. One never hears of it at public functions. Indeed, barring its almost automatic, "No funds. I can not run this library on nearly two million dollars a year," now become notoriously familiar, one never hears of it at all. One month before his death, Dr. Billings said to me: "Don't work too hard. Take care of yourself. There is something I want you to do." He died before I knew what it was he had planned to have me do, nor have I ever had, since that day, a single constructive direction. So that, strictly speaking, although having been paid a salary by the New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundations, for six years, I had been without employment. Had it not been for the young people with whom I worked and the constant interest of the public in our joint service, these six years would have been the most arid of my whole career. The total lack of inspiration, the sordid discrimination, the vicious clique system were all abhorrent to me, and offended my deep affection for this particular library, and my ideal for any library. As time passed I found

myself restricted more and more to the most perfunctory daily routine, indeed, for the last year of my association with an institution which I shall never cease to love, I was quite ostracised from any activities of the library.

The inferior quality of the work which I saw done embittered me, and many times more than exasperated me, and has made it very difficult for me to accept literally the contention that library work is a "highly specialized" occupation. And yet more and ever more money was being spent, often wantonly wasted. Here I was in a great metropolis, a servant of a richly equipped library, living in the most stirring hour of the world's history, here I was, aching to serve, but literally compelled to twiddle my thumbs. Indeed, had I depended on my employer's co-operation, I might quite as well have remained at home from week's end to week's end. The length to which this effort at ostracism was carried would have evoked only cynical amusement had it not affected the library's service. When pseudo-administration reached that point it was nothing less than contemptible.

Many childish persecutions were practiced. The following is perhaps the most pitifully childish of all. Each year before the Director makes up his annual report it is the custom of the Reference Librarian to call upon the heads of divisions in the Reference Department for written statements of the year's work. In his report for 1917 he referred by name to the work of every Division of the Reference Department, studiously excepting my division, viz., the Economics Division. The following is a copy of the statement I had sent in for the report:

"During the year ended December 31, 1917, 22,542 persons registered in the Economics Division, and 175,717 volumes were consulted. The use of the Division for scholarly research is constantly increasing. The efforts made by the staff of the Division to give service that will bring results are beginning to tell in the character of the demands made upon us. Considerable co-operation, both personal and by letter, was given during the year to government research agencies. Our facilities for giving quick service still leave much to be desired. Better facilities would entail the acquisition of a considerable number of manuals, etc. To a degree and at no outlay of funds the staff of the Division has covered this weakness of ready reference books by a collection of market letters and a clipping file now numbering 75,000 pieces. This collection is used constantly by all classes of readers from school children to men in high finance. A typical case of the utility of the clipping collection occurred only a few days ago. Over the wire came a call from an engineering concern for the capacity of American shipyards

particularly of those on the Pacific coast. From the clipping file we were able to give the enquirer the capacity of every American shipyard for each year from 1915 to December 31, 1917.

The Division has in preparation for publication two reference lists, viz., one on the cost of living and one on foreign trade. Information lists were prepared one on Chilean nitrate production and distribution and one on capitalization of sugar refineries throughout the world. In addition there were the usual lists sent out in response to mail enquiry.

An inauguration in divisional activities during the year has been the division staff meetings. These are now held regularly every third Saturday morning at ten o'clock. Although but three meetings have been held, they already promise to create within the Division a spirit of unity and participation and 'belonging' which is the very basis of corporate success." January 8, 1918.

In the Director's effort to humiliate me, he was merely inconsiderate towards my associates and towards the Trustees. The former had worked quite as hard as any employees on the staff and deserved as well as any to have their work recognized. The Trustees had paid for service in the Economics Division and it was due to them to let them know what that division had attempted to do. It had become common property that I was *persona non grata* in the library, and it was now merely a question of how long I could hold out. Under these almost unbearable conditions the little division carried on its work with the utmost conscientiousness. But, day by day, my conviction grew that the library was being prostituted in the interests of a few. I loved that library and the bitterness engendered by that conviction is ineradicable.

A feint at severing my relations with the New York Public Library was attempted in 1916. My whole library experience had by this time become focussed in perfecting the document catalogue and the document collection of the Library. I realized that the moment was impending when my knowledge of documents would be of service to the readers of my division. I gave freely of my knowledge and I have ample reason to know that my efforts were appreciated by my readers. In the library world I had become identified with documents, and my relation to my work was such that I would have gone on to the end developing the document work of the New York Public Library even though deprived of the slightest co-operation on the part of my present employer. One day in January, 1916, without previous conference with me on his part, without notification, without the slightest semblance of reasonable excuse my employer sent me a

memorandum that the Executive Committee of the Trustees had ordered the document catalogue transferred to the Cataloging Division. And it was transferred. Day by day I saw the result of sixteen years of work and study subjected to mutilation by inexperienced hands. There was no appeal. The thing was done, done shamefully. The sinister motive was transparent. A demonstration on my part which would warrant dismissal was anticipated. The Trustees were told administrative reasons required centralization. Now, after three years in the hands of inexperienced persons, the chief reference librarian is trying to find what he terms an "impartial expert from the outside," to straighten things out. My poor catalogue! My poor readers! And blind Trustees!

Unthinking vandalism and administrative sabotage had been committed, actuated by personal motives of the pettiest sort.

When this feint had miscarried, a subtle underground policy of persecution was begun. At first I was peremptorily ordered to continue to give document service. No explanation that I attempted made it clear that, with the best will in the world, this was impossible under the circumstances. My attitude was characterized as one of insubordination. One colleague after another was encouraged to entertain open hostility. My German name was traded in. Utilizing this stigma with a gossamer-like delicacy, the state of the public mind was depended on to do the rest.

By this time I had become quite aware that my work was accounted less than a house of cards, and that in my present environment I was perforce a stranger. What to do? Many were the sleepless nights I sat out, swayed between doubt of an administrator who could be so basely persuaded as my employer seemed to be, and between my fervent wish to stay with the document work. Contending daily with this hideous undercurrent, my efforts within the Economics Division were such that the public grew more and more appreciative. The bitterness and utter loneliness in my heart never for one moment interfered with my present service nor entirely killed the hope of future co-operation. Every instance of public recognition of the work of the Economics Division was resented by my colleagues and was characteristically misinterpreted by my employer.

For practically three years preceding October, 1918, every bit of work done in the Economics Division of the library was done entirely on the initiative of the staff of that division. It was an exceptionally devoted and enthusiastic staff. There was almost no turnover in that division. With headquarters evincing never the slightest interest in our work, and almost without professional contact with other Divisions, we were truly thrown on our own resources. Fortunately these were sufficient. Every member of the Economics Division staff was interested, and, by ad-

hering strictly to the Franklinian precept "Mind Your Business" we were able to co-operate cordially at least with the public.

One of the early groups working on The Inquiry was assigned to a special study in the library. The subject of study of the group concerned the economic and political history of certain of the belligerent powers. As chief of the Economics Division of the library I was never officially informed of the presence of the group, and learned of it only by accident. The leader of the group had been told to apply for service at the Information Desk! In a futile attempt to secure some much needed document through the Information Desk, the director of the group one day sent to me personally for assistance. Thereafter we dealt directly with the group as long as it remained in the library. This, however, was not long, for soon the American Geographical Society opened its hospitable doors and almost all the work of The Inquiry in New York City was thenceforth done there, the Director of the Society being one of the party of experts accompanying the American Peace Commission.

One of the compensations of these trying months was the long walks in beautiful Westchester County, which I took with some of my young co-workers, who were as keenly irritated as I was by the stupid attitude obtaining in the library. During these walks we dreamed wonderful dreams of what a real library might accomplish in New York City. The only disappointment in that was the very grayness of the actuality of the next day.

During the summer of 1918 I had been working out a plan for an index of economic material locked up in the library's rich store of periodicals and proceedings. It was designed to make available for the readers of the Economic Division that basic information the lack of which had handicapped us so seriously. I had very nearly perfected a scheme whereby this could be done without additional assistants and it was almost in condition to be submitted to the Director when the following correspondence took place:

October 7, 1918.

MISS A. R. HASSE,
Economics Division,
New York Public Library.

My Dear Miss Hasse:

At a regular meeting of the Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees, held on October 4, 1918, I was instructed to notify you that your services as Chief of the Economics Division are no longer desired, and to give you an opportunity to tender your resignation at once. In view of your long connection with the Library I am authorized to deal with you in the matter of salary after today as generously as your attitude may warrant.

Very truly yours,
E. H. ANDERSON,
Director.

October 7, 1918.

DR. E. H. ANDERSON,
Director New York Public Library.

Dear Sir:

I have your notification of the 7th inst.

While the words are perfectly clear, I am at a loss to understand what occasioned them. May I not ask, on the ground of my long connection with the Library, to which you refer, that the cause which prompted you to decide upon this action be given me?

Very truly yours,

ADELAIDE R. HASSE,
Chief, Economics Div.

October 8, 1918.

Dr. C. C. Williamson has been reappointed Chief of the Economics Division, and until he is able to assume his duties Mr. Metcalf will supervise the administration of the Division and Miss Eunice H. Miller will be in charge of the reference work.

E. H. ANDERSON.

The preceding paragraph is a copy of a notice posted on the Bulletin Board in the Economics Division before my arrival on the morning of October 8th.

October 8, 1918.

MISS ADELAIDE R. HASSE,
Tuckahoe, Westchester Co., N. Y.

My Dear Miss Hasse:

Your letter of the 7th inst. was delivered to me by hand late this afternoon. You ask the cause which prompted me "to decide upon this action." If you will reread my letter you will see that I notified you of a decision of the Executive Committee. I am not authorized to give the reasons for their decision. There can be no doubt that you know those reasons better than anyone else, and that they are sufficient.

Very truly yours,

E. H. ANDERSON,
Director.

October 12, 1918.

DR. EDWIN H. ANDERSON,
Director New York Public Library.

My Dear Mr. Anderson:

Your letter of the 8th inst. is received. Each day since then I have made an effort to see you, but, unfortunately, have failed.

I understand your letter, except this sentence, viz: "There can be no doubt that you know those reasons better than anyone else, and that they are sufficient."

May I not assure you that I am utterly at a loss as to what it is to which you refer. The sentence which I quote would seem to imply that the reasons in the hands of the Executive Committee, and presumably upon which the Committee acted, are reasons the disclosure of which I might wish to avoid. My dear Mr. Anderson, I am an old servant of the Library. I am really deeply attached to it. May I not ask, having a sincere consciousness of loyalty to the Library as a public service institution, that you waive any promptings of chivalry, which, possibly, may have caused you not to wish to pain me.

There is nothing that would so grieve me as that, after more than twenty-one years' service I should be found to be the one on the staff of the Library so devoid of any sense of allegiance to the Library, as even to wish to appear to be reluctant to have my record as servant of the Library bared to the closest inspection.

I very much wish and most respectfully request that I be informed of the exact imputations or charges, if they are such, pending against me, and that I be granted a hearing or some opportunity to meet such imputations or charges.

Very truly yours,

ADELAIDE R. HASSE.

October 14th, 1918.

THE HON. ELIHU ROOT,
New York City.

Dear Sir:

May I not ask your attention to the enclosed correspondence?

At the time of this writing, I have not had a reply from the Director to my letter of the 12th instant. I will repeat to you what I have said to the Director, that I am wholly at a loss as to what it is to which he refers in his letter of the 8th instant. I am so utterly nonplussed and feel most keenly that a disclosure of anything which the Executive Committee may have had brought before it—no matter how infamous the situation in which such disclosure might place me—would be a relief as against the implied discredit inhering in the situation as it rests today. I very much wish and most respectfully request that a hearing before the Executive Committee be granted me.

Very truly yours,

ADELAIDE R. HASSE.

Mr. Root is Chairman of the Executive Committee and made no reply to the preceding letter.

MISS ADELAIDE R. HASSE,
Tuckahoe, Westchester Co., N. Y.

My Dear Miss Hasse:

I have submitted your letter of October 12 to the Executive Committee and am authorized by them to state that "no imputations or charges are pending" against you, but that for some time past the Committee have had under observation your performance of the duties of your position, and they have reached the conclusion that the way in which you have performed these duties and your failure to cooperate cordially with other divisions of the Library service have been such as to impair the efficiency of that service and interfere with its public usefulness, that the best interests of the Library required them to dispense with your further services.

As you are unwilling to avail yourself of the opportunity to resign which has been offered you, your employment by the New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundations, is now terminated by the Executive Committee with salary to the 31st of December next, for which a check will be sent you.

Very truly yours,

E. H. ANDERSON,
Secretary, Executive Committee.

THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES,
New York Public Library,
476 Fifth Avenue,
New York City.

Dear Sirs:

In October, 1918, after twenty-one years of service, the undersigned was dismissed from the New York Public Library without notice, without charges and without a hearing. Every effort to secure from the Director, from the Board and from the Executive Committee a reply to a request for a hearing or for a statement of charges, was ignored. Through the courtesy of a letter from Governor Smith an interview was finally obtained with the Honorable Morgan J. O'Brien, a member of the Executive Committee of the New York Public Library.

In this interview Judge O'Brien admitted there were no charges against me, also that the Board had a high opinion of my work. The action of the Executive Committee, Judge O'Brien said, was taken on the strength of letters submitted by the Director and signed by certain members of the staff which led the Committee to believe that I had failed to cooperate cordially with my fellow workers. Judge O'Brien suggested that I render to the Board a counter-statement. I am prepared to make this statement to your Honorable Board, and trust you will give it the same consideration accorded to the material put before the Board by the Director, and upon which my dismissal was authorized.

I wish to make it clear that I am not protesting against the Honorable Board's right of dismissal nor against the exercise of that right. In view of the conditions, however, which I know to exist in the Reference Department, I must, in self-respect, protest against the Honorable Board giving as reason for my dismissal failure on my part to cooperate cordially. Cordial cooperation with those conditions is not compatible with loyalty either to the Library or to the public, and to accept compensation therefor would be tantamount to taking money from the Honorable Board under false pretenses.

As chief of your Documents Division, I succeeded, with Dr. Billings' cordial cooperation and intelligent direction, in building up for the Library a collection of documents second to none. As chief of your Economics Division it is my fervent ambition to make that Division the strongest, most potent medium of economic information in the city. In the absence of any cooperation, indeed, in the face of every opposition, obstruction and discouragement, I kept on, hoping that some day the present Director might lend me his support. As late as May 20, 1918, I wrote him:

"For twenty years I worked to build up for the New York Public Library an exceptional document collection. To a certain extent I succeeded. I am anxious to build up the unusual economic collection of the Library * * * I should so very much appreciate your support and cooperation in making the Economics Division of the N. Y. P. L. the best, the strongest in the country."

May I not ask whether this letter was put before your Honorable Board?

The present Director has been moved by personal antagonism deliberately to create conditions which would make it difficult for me to render that service which the public has a right to expect. Conflicting relations with other Divisions were provoked by the Director in order that he might exact from his informers in those Divisions evidence of my unwillingness to cooperate.

The Director has instituted in the Library a degrading spy system. It is the chief functionary in this system who has spread the dastardly rumor that I had been guilty of treasonable and seditious conduct. No sooner had your Honorable Board authorized my dismissal, without charges and without a hearing, than the Government of the United States sent for me

to carry out some extremely responsible research work of a confidential nature.

Gentlemen, what I have here set down I have been able to do only because of my sincere affection for the New York Public Library, because of my devotion to the memory of its late Director, Dr. J. S. Billings, and my gratitude for the ever gracious interest of your late President, the Hon. John L. Cadwalader. A proceeding such as was imposed on your Honorable Board in October, 1918, could never have taken place in the lifetime of these gentlemen.

Very respectfully,
ADELAIDE R. HASSE.

Tuckahoe, N. Y., May 21, 1919.

June 13, 1919.

MISS ADELAIDE R. HASSE,
Tuckahoe, N. Y.

Dear Madam:

I am instructed by the Board of Trustees of The New York Public Library to acknowledge your letter dated May 21st, 1919, addressed to the Board of Trustees and sent by you to a number of the Trustees of the Library individually and by them forwarded to the Board.

The Board of Trustees instruct me to say that on the 23rd of December, 1918, Mr. George Gordon Battle wrote to the members of the Board in your behalf, enclosing a statement by you. Mr. Battle's letter and your statement were fully considered by the Board of Trustees, together with the records of the Library, including the numerous communications in writing from and to you before the termination of your employment remaining in the records. Mr. Battle was informed of the conclusion of the Trustees not to grant any further or other hearing.

Respectfully yours,
(Signed) C. H. RUSSELL,
Secretary.

For some reason quite inexplicable to me, except that it is a characteristic procedure, the administration took pains to surround its little outbreaks of spleen with much mystery. I have heard that some twenty members of the Reference Staff signed a petition for my removal! I can believe that those individuals would do such a thing, but that an administrator and a body of Trustees would lend themselves to act peremptorily on such material against one of the oldest servants in the library, without at least observing the most perfunctory courtesy towards that servant, that is a matter which I can not understand.

The Trustees knowing only what is told them about the inner workings of the Reference Department could easily be persuaded. And there is no person more astute at persuasion of that sort than the present Director of the New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundations. That is generally recognized. A former employee now serving in France, once said to me: "Never get mixed up in an argument with him. You can't find a smoother person in making you appear to be in the wrong without committing himself." So, by whispered words, by lifting

of eyebrows, by a deftly turned phrase, men and women who had worked side by side with me for years, before even the present administration was thought of, were given the impression that, "oh, well, its too bad (shrug). Yes, poor thing—but its just one of those cases, you know" (shrug).

At a meeting of the chief librarians of the Circulation Department on October 11, 1918, the Great Library Detective, who when last seen was wearing a Stetson hat, no doubt acting under instructions adroitly "shot an arrow into the air." It was taken up and passed on. One chief librarian returning to her staff announced that instead of being dismissed, I had been removed from the library by a federal officer! Not long after this the accomplished assistant of the Brooklyn Public Library, who is a warm personal friend of the incumbent of the directorate of the New York Public Library, informed the guests at a library tea in Brooklyn that I had been interned! Of course these were by far the easiest and the most effective means by which at once to assassinate me professionally as well as to justify having kicked me out of the library. This unspeakable work is still going on.

Doctor, now Colonel, John H. Finley has, ever since his Princeton days, when through the library, I was able to be of some service to him, been very encouraging to me. When he first went to Albany, as Commissioner of Education, I wrote him a note of felicitation. His reply was as follows:

August first, 1913.

MY DEAR MISS HASSE:

I am most grateful for your letter of congratulations. The field does seem a boundless one. I am filled with enthusiasm as I look out upon it. It is only when I look back at myself that I have any question. But such a confident word as yours is of real help. I have learned to put faith in what you say.

Cordially and gratefully,

JOHN H. FINLEY.

When Colonel Finley returned to this country from Palestine in the late autumn of 1918 I wrote him of the little upheaval in my affairs. In due time came the following note:

December 30, 1918.

DEAR MISS HASSE:

I have wanted to write you and have not known what to say. The only explanation I can get (though I have not gone to those who are responsible for your dismissal) is an intimation of some want of loyalty, or perhaps I would better say of pro-German sympathy. I can not believe that it is want of appreciation of your splendid work, of which I had some knowledge years ago and which was so intelligent that I am sure it must have continued helpful. I am off again for the other side so that I can not look further into the matter or do more than send you a good wish for the new year.

Sincerely yours,

JOHN H. FINLEY.

Colonel Finley had in the meantime, I am told, consulted the Director of the New York State Library, Dr. James I. Wyre, Jr. As I had myself seen Dr. Wyre in the New York Public Library in December, 1918, and as he is known to have close relations with the present Director of that Library, it may reasonably be assumed that Col. Finley's information came from Dr. Wyre and that it was given to him by some one in the New York Public Library interested in seeing that just that kind of information was being disseminated.

But more amazing than these, under the circumstances, clumsy methods, is an incident which occurred shortly after my supposed professional demise. I had been going back to my former place of employment each day to collect my personal belongings. One afternoon, while thus engaged, I was accosted by Mrs. P., on a personal matter. Mrs. P. was a reader just as I was then, and we had friends in common. She had said but a few words to me, when Dr. W., my successor, sidling up, said to Mrs. P.: "Excuse me, but readers are not allowed to speak to Miss Hasse." We both gasped at the democracy of it, and Mrs. P. protested, but was told in my hearing: "This is a special case. If you wish to know the reasons, I will tell you." Taking Mrs. P. aside this person spoke to her for some time in an undertone. When Mrs. P. was spoken to about it later, she said quite curtly, something to the effect of perfering not to be drawn into anything like that!

Late one day in early December, while in the library, a long distance telephone call came there for me from Washington, inviting me to report to the Government at once for research assignment. I left on the midnight train and began work the next morning. It will be remembered that Simon Newcomb in his *Reminiscences* always speaks of his scientific associations, after emerging from trying earlier experience, as the "world of sweetness and of light." Those words kept coming back to me as I worked in Washington and for the first time in six years I felt clean inside. Presently the result of my work was printed as a manuscript by the Department of State with the word "Confidential" across the title page, and copies were despatched to the American Peace Commission in Paris. When the first copy was put into my hands, those hands which had served the New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundations untiringly for the best years of my life, and which now my late employer was taking such vast and devious means to demobilize, I realized in full the meaning of that trite phrase "the irony of fate."

Even before I was released from this work I was again sent for by another government office to undertake a piece of work which at first seemed to me quite overwhelming, but a glorious opportunity to serve the Government and to work. I like to work. I like to have work into which I can throw myself with

zest, to which I can give myself. Some people work for money, some for the boss, but the joy of work for work's sake is almost as holy and quite as absorbing as is the creative impulse.

I trust that no one who has read thus far will have gotten the impression that I am at all sceptical about our work. I shall feel obliged hereafter to refrain from calling it a profession, as long as it countenances attempted professional assassination. Most sincerely do I believe that it is work of immense and of, as yet, quite unrealized possibilities. It is work peculiarly suited to women. It is work which will command much greater money value when once its leaders have a real and sympathetic understanding of the needs of scholarship, of science, of business and of industry, and are able to meet those needs. The time is not long to wait, and there is much eager young life awaiting the new situation. By no means let us lose faith in the future of our work. That future depends on all the young people just beginning to dig in. Oh, young people, be courageous! Never forget that it is the spirit with which you endow your work that makes it useful or futile. Let us all always work towards the end that the compensations of librarianship may at least be honorable, and that the true spirit of workmanship may be kept alive among us. It alone is the holy flame which will keep librarianship free from corrosion and from deteriorating into a tolerated by-product.