

**BULLETIN OF THE AMERICAN  
LIBRARY  
ASSOCIATION, VOL. 14;  
JANUARY-NOVEMBER, 1920**

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**BULLETIN**

OF THE

**AMERICAN LIBRARY  
ASSOCIATION**

**VOLUME XIV  
JANUARY-NOVEMBER, 1920**

**AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION  
78 E. WASHINGTON STREET  
CHICAGO  
1920**

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO LIBRARY

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# BULLETIN

OF THE

## AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

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JANUARY, 1920

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## SPECIAL A. L. A. CONFERENCE

Chicago, January 1-3, 1920

The American Library Association, for the first time in its history, convened in a special meeting, which was held at the Hotel La Salle, Chicago, January 1-3, 1920.

As specified in the call of the president, Chalmers Hadley, the matters which came before the meeting were a proposed revision of the Constitution of the Association, and the consideration of an enlarged program of activities.

The proceedings of the third and fourth general sessions, concerned with the enlarged program, are in the following record given precedence to the proceedings of the first, second and fifth sessions, which dealt chiefly with the constitutional revision.

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## THE ENLARGED PROGRAM PROCEEDINGS January 1-3, 1920

### THIRD GENERAL SESSION, (Friday morning, January 2)

President HADLEY presided, and in introducing the business of the meeting stated that consideration would first be given to the matter of the enlarged program for immediate future activities of the Association. He recalled the Asbury Park Conference and the appointment, authorized by the Council, of a Committee on Enlarged Program, to receive and report on questions of post-war library service to be undertaken by the A. J. A. This committee had made a tentative report and later a supplementary one, giving a "Summary of proposed activities," which had been accepted by the Executive Board. In the autumn, when it became known that the Government would take over the welfare activities of the Association for the Army and Navy, a meeting of the Executive Board was called to consider other phases of the work which should not be permitted to lapse, but should be carried on by the Association until also undertaken by the Government. All such work, he stated, had been carried on with the balance of the war service fund raised two years ago; any work, other than such as is provided for in the by-laws, is understood by the committee to be of a temporary nature, and subject to the action of the Association.

President HADLEY then introduced Mr. J. RANDOLPH COOLIDGE, trustee of the Boston Athenæum, who spoke as follows:

"What I think may justify my presence here is to make you feel, if I can, how much the organization of your profession for nation-wide service can be made to mean to the public in general, to your trus-

tees in particular, and to all who can recognize and meet the claim of your Association for financial public support.

"I take great pride in the war service of the American Library Association. That service has revealed us to ourselves as an organization with national and international responsibilities; with the spirit and the means for meeting those responsibilities. In taking up new lines of work, as some of those developed by the war will cease to be necessary, we should realize, as never before, the necessity of impressing the entire American reading public with the stewardship of libraries and librarians in the formation of sound public opinion, through accessibility of reliable information upon all matters of public or private interest.

"I feel that the effort the libraries have made through the war to bring books to soldiers and sailors is an effort that can justly be continued in the directions which the enlarged program points out. I feel that in the multiplicity of the features of the enlarged program we have evidence of the careful, interested thinking of a large number of intelligent people. My thesis is that, if you believe in an enlarged program for the American Library Association yourselves, you can make your trustees and the public believe in it, and if you can show reasons for support, you will get the support. It rests with you to convince yourselves as to these particulars and features of the enlarged program which the American Library Association desires to undertake.

"Through the enlarged program you can meet the immediate needs that remain after war. You can establish general policies of national value, and establish re-



gional services to meet the needs of sections of the country. On all these grounds you can make appeal to those who have stood by you in your effort to bring to success the war service program—who have taken your measure and are disposed to help, if you on your part exhibit the confidence that you must feel in order to bring the program into realization.

"The American Library Association deserves and will have an important endowment, because it will earn it. It will establish itself with large-minded citizens as an agency deserving permanent capital to carry on that enlarged public service which cannot always be carried on by local libraries.

"I have in mind the American Institute of Architects, of which I am a member, and which changed from being a general body to a delegate body representing the architectural profession of the country generally. Since this change it has been able to speak with authority as to the wishes of the profession and it has been heard. It has become self-conscious as a national body, and has established a standard of compensation for architects which is generally accepted now as a proper standard, and involves a recognition of the larger service the architects of today give. A body much smaller in number than the American Library Association, it has succeeded in establishing a national policy of competition and standard of compensation, because it meets and is represented by delegates, which means usually the select among the profession.

"The American Library Association has the opportunity, first to define its purposes to itself, then to adopt those purposes with conviction—the kind of conviction which achieved the war work campaign. In all this there is essential a sufficient conception of the individual responsibility of every librarian of the country.

"Do not evaluate your public below its worth. Prepare to show that the American public must meet responsibilities again, that the period of reconstruction immedi-

ately before us is a period of enlarged vision, enlarged sympathies and enlarged generosity, that the library stands for the stimulation of every public-spirited effort, discriminating against no class or sect, uniting the civic forces of the community in peace as in war. Then the question of the enlarged program becomes one of general agreement as to its main features, not of public criticism of some of them; and of confidence in the mind of organizations that can realize the money needed to put the program, in whole or in part, immediately into operation.

"I have been conscious since I have come here of great skepticism as to the possibility of raising the money. The money is there, we have the ability and organizing spirit to reach it. We have men who are accustomed to win the ear of their communities for any public cause. Let us trust our power of organization. Let us adopt the program heartily, if at all. If we have conviction in ourselves, we can communicate it. We can, in the phrase of the day, 'Sell the idea.' I am perfectly sure if you believe in your program as I believe in it, you can demonstrate it to your communities and find the means to carry it out."

Miss MARY L. TRICOMB of Hagerstown, Md., then made an eloquent plea for unity and coöperation. She described briefly, as one of the original members, the organization of the American Library Association by a small group of pioneers, and the first period of activity when method and ideals were forming. This was followed by a period of 'marking time.' Then came the Louisville meeting, with its patriotic call to service and loyal response of all members, which brought the Association with such high credit through the biggest experience of its existence. She urged that now, when the Association, like the rest of the country, is suffering the reaction from war, it should not stop but proceed, knowing that faith in itself is justified, and that the enlarged program offered by the committee embodies the things which

can be carried on by the Association. It is impossible, she concluded, as individuals or as an organization to go back now to the old sphere. We should accept this program in a spirit of harmony and conciliation, and make ourselves an all-American Library Association.

Mr. CARL H. MILAM, director of the enlarged program, being asked to discuss the program in general, spoke as follows:

"The Executive Board, in its consideration of the items of the proposed program, began with the war service continuation. The War and Navy departments have taken over certain work inaugurated by the Association, but other parts of the library war service the Government has not yet been able to take over. Such work, therefore, the committee must continue to perform with the money remaining from the war service fund given originally for this purpose. This work includes library service to the merchant marine; coast guard and lighthouse service; the public health service hospitals; work for blinded soldiers; service to industrial plants for war work industries, begun at the request of the Government and now being gradually lessened but not terminated entirely; and the service which has been maintained for ex-service men in general during the past six months.

"These items of continuation service appear in the enlarged program because for the present it is impossible for the Governmental departments, through lack of appropriation, to carry them on. There is need of such flexibility in the program as will prevent the necessity of dropping this work and so losing what has already been done, if the Government should not be ready to take it up promptly.

"When the blinded soldiers began to be taught the new Braille, it was found there were less than twelve books for them to read. Subscriptions were obtained, largely from authors themselves, and now Mrs. Gertrude T. Rider reports over forty titles as printed or in process of printing. The appeal for this special service proved in-

stant and impelling; Mrs. Rider has collected from \$3,000 to \$5,000 on her own initiative. Apart from this war service, it is proposed that the Association should bear the initial cost of putting books into Braille—about \$500 each—thus making the books available to libraries at cost.

"Interest is being shown, by industrial concerns and business houses, in technical libraries, to an extent not heretofore thought possible. The American Library Association, if assuming responsibility for the development of libraries, should assume some responsibility here.

"By 'library extension' is meant the promotion of general libraries. Dr. Claxton asked recently why the Bureau of Education and the American Library Association and other organizations interested in civic and educational development could not unite in one big campaign in 1920 for promotion of interest in county and rural libraries, with the object of bringing to the forty-two state legislature meeting in January, 1921, pressure in favor of legislation for such libraries. It is said by a man connected with one of the large endowments in New York City that such a program for the development of rural libraries for the 60,000,000 people now without them would, in his belief, find interest and financial support among the directors of his foundation.

"The Paris library is going on whether we do anything about it or not. American business men, English-speaking people, have become interested—thrilled—with the idea of continuing the Paris library, not only as a library for English-speaking people, but as European headquarters for the interchange of ideas between American and European countries. They have spent money carrying on the idea. One man, not a librarian, has been so appealed to by the idea that he has given to it 50,000 francs from the proceeds of his son's—Alan Seeger's—books.

"It is proposed that whatever the Association does should be capitalized for the benefit of all the libraries in the country,

in order that more and better people will enter the profession, that library appropriations will be increased, that people generally will become interested in the library as a thing that really counts for something.

"We do not propose that the American Library Association shall render any considerable amount of direct library service. We do propose that it shall conduct propaganda for the promotion and development of libraries along all lines, and that continuous effort be made to have each phase, as far as possible, taken over and maintained by the Government or other appropriate agency at the earliest opportunity.

"The features of the program which have been brought to your attention, have, when brought to the attention of men and women outside our profession, roused great interest practically everywhere. If we assume as our responsibility what nobody else has assumed—the promotion of library service for the 60,000,000 people in the United States who are without it—we will find plenty of people willing to stand behind us with money. It is not the sort of thing that will make folks go out on the streets parading and singing songs, but it is the sort of thing that has caused people to give their money to education and civic projects. There are many things which should be done by the American Library Association. The details are unimportant, but let us adopt an enlarged program and put ourselves in a position to accept money if people are willing to give it."

Dr. FRANK P. HILL, chairman of the Committee on Enlarged Program, was then called upon, and said:

"The Committee on Enlarged Program has to this point done nothing which was not authorized by the Council or the Executive Board; furthermore neither committee nor Executive Board has committed the Association to any expenditure of money beyond the means of the Association today. We do not propose an intensive drive for money. If approved, it is

hoped to begin efforts at once to raise money, and to carry them through the middle of May. The committee has planned a publicity bureau, or department of information and education, and has engaged, up to the time of this meeting, a publicity director, Mr. J. Ray Johnson, and a campaign manager, Mr. Milbourne Clark. We have in mind three methods of raising money: by large subscriptions; by gifts from endowment funds or foundations; and by general subscriptions obtained by communities in any way they wish.

"The proposed plan of organization is: First, an advisory or finance committee of interested men and women, able to contribute their time and money; second, seven or eight regional directors, preferably librarians, for as many sections of the country; third, state directors (also librarians), chosen by the regional directors. The committee believes that under this plan two million dollars can be raised without any great difficulty."

Mr. J. RAY JOHNSON, publicity director, followed Dr. HILL, and in explaining his plan for the campaign, said:

"I have devised a plan of publicity possible to be sustained over a period of six months. First, I start with the division of newspapers. There is no question that there are many daily newspapers large and small, over the country, which will print material about libraries and the library idea which has human interest. I plan to send to every morning paper of prominence in the U. S. one short story a week, and to every afternoon paper, and to the editor of women's pages, after first having written every editor a letter telling what this campaign is all about, what the Association is trying to do, and asking support. This will be the only national effort. For the rest, the work must be done in a purely local way. To every state, city and county librarian and active publicity agent service letters will be sent out from our headquarters containing suggestions as to how to obtain publicity, what to do,