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CHAPTER II

THE SECOND LAW AND ITS STRUGGLE

In the last Chapter, we traced the slow emergence of the First Law and examined, in a brief manner, its effect on the method of keeping books, on library location, on library hours, on library furniture and on library staff. The changes brought about by the First Law in all these matters were of a fundamental character. If the final effect of the First Law should be described in one word, that word is *revolution*. Once the outlook was revolutionised, other things followed in course of time.

The Second Law of Library Science comes on the heels of the First Law to carry this revolution a step further. If the First Law replaced the concept 'BOOKS ARE FOR PRESERVATION', the Second Law widens the concept 'BOOKS FOR THE CHOSEN FEW'. If the revolutionary cry of the First Law was 'BOOKS ARE FOR USE', the revolutionary cry of the Second Law is 'BOOKS ARE FOR ALL'. If the approach of the First Law was from the side of books, the approach of the Second Law is from the side of users of books. If the First Law vitalised the library, the Second Law magnifies the library into a nation-wide problem. If the First Law threw open the existing libraries, the Second Law plants

new libraries and brings about the culture of new species of libraries. If there was reluctance to act up to the First Law, there is, in the initial stages, positive opposition to the Second Law. Thus, the revolution brought about by the Second Law is of a more advanced nature and brings humanity nearer the goal.

EVERY PERSON HIS OR HER BOOK !
What a volume of ideas rests in a potential state in these six words of but seven syllables! How exacting will be the task of carrying out these ideas! What a variety of vested interests is arrayed in opposition against any attempt to put these ideas into force! These are points that require careful examination in a study of the Second Law.

It may be convenient to start from the very beginning. What are libraries? Libraries are collections of books built for a special purpose. What is that purpose? 'USE' is the answer supplied by the First Law. What is the use of books? Books give information; they educate. They may also give solace and furnish a harmless means of recreation. Let us first concentrate on their educational value. If books are tools of education, the law 'EVERY PERSON HIS OR HER BOOK' presupposes the concept 'EDUCATION FOR EVERY PERSON'. This lays bare the fundamental issue. The history of the answer to the question, "Is every person entitled to education?" will show how the Second Law too has been

in actual practice seldom borne in mind by library authorities.

THE CLASSES AND THE MASSES

It is customary to begin all academic history from Aristotle. What is Aristotle's answer to this fundamental question? "It is the intention of nature to make bodies of slaves and freemen different from each other. . . . And since this is true with respect to the body, it is still more just to determine in the same manner, when we consider the soul."¹ These plausible premises led Aristotle to the characteristic conclusion that "a slave can have no deliberative faculty."² The result of this rigorous reasoning was that "while Athens and Sparta offered education to freemen, nine-tenths of the population were excluded from the privilege of learning."³ In translating this in terms of books, we find that 'BOOKS FOR THE CHOSEN FEW' was the ruling concept and that the Second Law had no recognition. Even in Rome, which heralded the establishment of municipal and state schools, the privilege of learning rarely crossed the occupational and income lines. The narrowness of the Middle Ages is described by Margaret Hodgen in the following words, "The spirit of exclusion which the land-owning classes asserted towards ambitious villeins bound for the church; the church toward laymen

(1) ARISTOTLE: *Politics*, Book I, Chapter V, p. 13, of Edward Walford's translation.

(2) *Ibid.*, Book I, Chapter XIII, p. 30 of the translation.

(3) HODGEN (Margaret, T.): *Workers' Education*, p. 8.

seeking intellectual independence; the merchants towards outsiders looking to enjoy profits of commercial enterprises, was in turn asserted by all toward the educational aspirations of the poor."¹ We are even told that "vassal fathers were punished for allowing vassal sons to attend school."²

The spirit of exclusion persisted for centuries. Here is a specimen of eighteenth century opinion. "To make the Society happy and People easy under the meanest circumstances, it is requisite that great numbers of them should be Ignorant as well as Poor. . . . The Welfare and Felicity therefore of every State and Kingdom, require that the knowledge of the Working Poor should be confined within the Verge of their occupations and never extended (as to things visible) beyond what relates to their Calling. The more a Shepherd; a Plowman or any other Peasant knows of the World, and the things that are Foreign to his Labour or Employment, the less fit he'll be to go through the Fatigues and Hardships of it with Cheerfulness and Content. Reading, Writing and Arithmetic . . . are very pernicious to the Poor, who are forced to get their Daily Bread by their Daily Labour."³ What a benevolent dispensation! What a show of inevitableness in this eighteenth century reasoning! With such ideas running rampant, one can easily imagine how effectively the concept 'BOOKS FOR THE

(1) HODGAN (Margaret, T.): *Workers' Education*, p. 13.

(2) JACKSON (G. L.): *The Privilege of Education*, p. 39.

(3) MANDEVILLE (Bernard): *The Fable of the Bees*, F. B. Kaye's edition, Vol. I, p. 288.

CHOSEN FEW' would have thwarted the emergence of the rival concept 'BOOKS FOR ONE AND ALL'.

Even the nineteenth century was for long under the spell of this concept of a bipartite division of persons into a small governing class consisting of those who, almost as it were by divine right, occupied the privileged position and the large class of the others who, as it was supposed, by the essential constitution of things belonged to the lower orders, had no right to education and hence had no right to the instruments of education, *viz.*, books. The well-to-do and influential classes—the *freemen* of the nineteenth century—resisted outright on grounds of sheer self-interest even the bare suggestion that the poor should be given the rudiments of education. The story is told of the Marquis of Westminster refusing to give even a farthing for the London Mechanics' Institute because of his apprehension that the education of the workmen would make them rebel. "True," he said, "but *we* must take care of ourselves".¹ The struggle that books had in reaching *every person* is amply illustrated by the experience recorded by Francis Place, a Charing Cross tailor of the early years of the last century. He "had to be more and more careful that none of his ordinary customers should be allowed to go into the library at the back of the shop". "Had these persons been told that I had never read a book, that I was

(1) WALLAS (Graham): *Life of Francis Place*, p. 112.

ignorant of everything but my own business, that I sotted in a public house, they would not have made the least objection to me. I should have been a 'fellow' beneath them, and they would have patronised me; but . . . to accumulate books, and to be supposed to know something of their contents, was putting myself on an equality with themselves, if not indeed assuming superiority; it was an abominable offence in a tailor, if not a crime, which deserved punishment. Had it been known to all my customers that in the few years from 1810-1817, I had accumulated a considerable library, in which I spent all the leisure time I could spare, . . . half of them at least would have left me".¹ We find Green complaining even late in the nineteenth century that "It is one of the inconveniences attaching to the present state of Society in England, that all questions of education are complicated by distinctions of classes".² Even so late as 1918, the *Hansard* discloses that the Education Bill of Mr. H. A. L. Fisher was opposed on the ground that, if the workmen are to be given such a long and elaborate course of education, "How are the horses to be kept at work, the cows to be milked, the sheep to be tended and the folds to be pitched? How is education going to help a man who has to spread manure on a field".³ A veritable incarnation of Barnard de Mandeville!

(1) WALLAS (Graham): *Life of Francis Place*, p. 37.

(2) GREEN (Thomas Hill): *Works*, Ed. by R. L. Nettleship, Vol. III, p. 387.

(3) *Hansard*, Vol. CIV, p. 344.

That the political instinct of those in privileged positions was vehemently opposing the advent of the Second Law of Library Science is pointed out in unmistakable words by all students of Politics. Viscount Bryce says, for example, "That all the despotic governments of sixty years ago, and some of them down to our own day, were either indifferent or hostile to the spread of education among their subjects, because they feared that knowledge and intelligence would create a wish for freedom".¹

The arguments of those that opposed the Ewart Bill—the first Public Library Bill of England—were "that too much knowledge was a dangerous thing and that libraries might become centres of political education".² In his Presidential Address to the Leeds Conference, Dr. Guppy remarked, "It is somewhat perplexing to find that in the middle decades of the last century, many of the most eminent men were debating, with all seriousness, not what was best in literature to put before the people, but whether it would be safe, and wise, and politic to admit the general public to libraries at all. So far from readers being considered competent to handle and examine books, it was a question whether the rough uncultured democracy should be permitted, even with most stringent precautions and regulations to invade

(1) BRYCE (James): *Modern Democracies*, Vol. I, p. 79.

(2) *Library Association Record (New Series)*, Vol. IV, p. 199.

the sacred precincts of the Library". When a library school was inaugurated at Moscow in 1913, the following question was asked in the National Duma by the leader of the extreme right: "How can the government tolerate library courses, which would pave the way for a revolution".²

Thus the Second Law had to face not merely an inherited instinct as was the case with the First Law but it had to face a very strong opposition based on political and economic instincts. However misleading these instincts might have been, there is hardly any ground to doubt their *bona fide* nature. In fact, as it may be easily seen, they were mere derivatives of a more fundamental instinct, *viz.*, the instinct of self-preservation. But, society had not been lacking in far-seeing souls that could perceive the mistaken nature of such opposition. There were indeed men who would draw just the opposite inference from that very instinct of self-preservation.

The location of factories near sources of power caused a redistribution of population and the towns were inundated with a flood of people unaccustomed to civic responsibilities. The crowding together of tens of thousands of the illiterate poor was creating a host of unspeakable nuisance. For a time the black-coated gentry were able to maintain a safe distance from centres of dirt, disease and petty

(1) *Library Association Record (New Series)*, Vol. IV, p. 194.

(2) *Bulletin of the American Library Association*, Vol. XX, pp. 261-2.

criminality. But they could not remain aloof for ever. Poverty rudely encroached in course of time. It brought disease and unsavoury sights to the doors of the vicarage and the manor. In their eagerness to defend themselves the gentle folk hurried to their most trusted advisers. The first of these, the economists, recommended a judicious dose of education. Adam Smith, for example, recommended that "The public can impose upon almost the whole body of the people the necessity of acquiring the most essential parts of education, by obliging every man to undergo an examination or probation in them, before he can obtain the freedom in any corporation, or be allowed to set up any trade either in a village or town Corporate".¹ He took advantage of this predicament of the well-to-do and even pleaded as follows: "The education of the Common people requires, perhaps, in a civilised and commercial society, the attention of the public, more than that of people of some rank and fortune . . . The public can facilitate this acquisition by establishing in every parish or district a little school, where children may be taught . . . Though the state was to derive no advantage from the instruction of the inferior ranks of people, it would still deserve its attention that they should not be altogether uninstructed. The state, however, derives no inconsiderable advantage from their instruction. The more they are instructed, the

(1) SMITH (Adam): *An Enquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*, ed. by Joseph Shield Nicholson, pp. 328-329.

less liable they are to the delusions of enthusiasm and superstition, which, among ignorant nations, frequently occasion the most dreadful disorders. An instructed and intelligent people, besides, are always more decent and orderly than an ignorant and stupid one. They feel themselves each individually, more respectable and more likely to obtain the respect of their superiors, and they are, therefore, more disposed to respect their superiors. They are more disposed to examine and more capable of seeing through, the interested complaints of faction and sedition; and they are, on that account, less apt to be misled into any wanton or unnecessary opposition to "the measures of Government".¹

Although, generally speaking, the words of Adam Smith fell upon deaf ears, there were some who could appreciate the soundness of his reasoning. In fact, it induced Mr. Whitbread to introduce a Bill in Parliament in 1807 for universal education, though, it goes without saying, it was rejected by an overwhelming majority. In spite of the ridicule of die-hards, the "*Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge*" did much to spread education among the masses, under the inspiring leadership of Lord Brougham. The *Penny Cyclopædia*, the *Penny Magazine*, the *Gallery of Portraits* and the *Pictorial Bible* are the surviving monuments of the missionary zeal which championed the cause of 'BOOKS FOR ALL', in the thirties of the last

(1) *Ibid.*, pp. 328-330.

century. While the majority of the magnates and officials of the early Victorian era desired that the young peasant should till the same fields, with the same tools in the same seasons as his father before him, enlightened souls like Matthew Arnold were impatient with the tardy recognition shown to the newly emerging concept 'EDUCATION FOR ALL'. As Her Majesty's Inspector of Schools, he lamented, in 1853, that "The children of the lowest, poorest classes of the country, of what are called the masses, are not, to speak generally, educated; the children who are educated belong to a different class from these, and consequently of the education of the masses, I, in the course of my official duty, see, strictly speaking, little or nothing".¹ The first twenty pages of Graham Balfour's *Educational Systems of Great Britain and Ireland* give a brief but vivid picture of the ingenuity and tenacity with which a handful of far-seeing patriotic statesmen secured the educational enactments of 1870, 1880 and 1891, which successively made 'EDUCATION FOR ALL' first permissive, then compulsory and finally free.² Once 'EDUCATION FOR ALL' had been established, it required but a decade or two for our Second Law 'BOOKS FOR ALL', to enter the field and quietly bring about the realisation of

(1) SHARPLESS (Isac): *English Education*, p. 10.

(2) *Law Reports, Statutes*: 33 and 34 Victoria, Chapter 75, Section 74; 43 and 44 Victoria, Chapter 23, Section 2; and 54 and 55 Victoria, Chapter 56, Section 2.

Huxley's dream,¹ of 'a ladder of learning' from the gutter to the Universities.

How literally the Second Law has realised this dream of Huxley may be seen from the account given in *Adult Education and the Library*,² about the progress of a fisher-boy along the paths of learning. He was born in Norway. In his fourteenth year, he was withdrawn from the school. His father said, "You are not worth educating" and the lad was sent to the eternal task of fishing in the desolate coast of the North of Norway. But the Norwegian Government maintained at this outpost of the world a good library, though small, and had its books periodically changed and replenished. By burying his head and heart in its books, this lad, pronounced to be *not worth educating*, educated himself more than he himself realised. He, then, went to the New World, began his Preparatory School in his twenty-third year, took his degree in his twenty-eighth year and settled down as a professor in his own college. This career of Professor Rolvaag of St. Olaf's College is by no means unique. We, in Madras, remember the story of the marvellous achievement of books, read in the light of street lamps, in raising a boy born in obscurity to the bench of the High Court. This sway of the Second Law has resulted in reclaiming for the benefit of the world many such promising

(1) *Life and Letters of Thomas Henry Huxley*, Vol. III, p. 7.

(2) *Adult Education and the Library*, Vol. III, pp. 12-13.

men from the very depths of society. A generation or two ago, her rival, 'BOOKS FOR THE CHOSEN FEW' would have sworn by their prenatal social status and forced them to drag on and die, without ever reaching their full stature.

"Here is a woman who earns her own living as a chef in a hotel . . . She noticed one day that her eldest daughter frowned impatiently when the mother made a mistake in grammar. The mother decided that she would not lose one bit of her daughter's respect on that account. She asked the readers' adviser to recommend books which would help her to avoid the most common errors of grammar and pronunciation. She wanted a progressive course on good English suited to her special needs. Later she asked for books which would keep her informed on present-day happenings and so on and so on".¹

There is again the case of a policeman who asked for books which would help him to discover why crimes are committed. "What's the use of arresting people if you can't help them?" he asked.² He devoured books in Sociology and Psychology. If he had lived before the advent of the Law 'EVERY PERSON HIS OR HER BOOK', what chance would he have had either to study books in Sociology and Psychology or to discharge his official duties in a manner, not only satisfactory

(1) *Adult Education and the Library*, Vol. III, p. 20.

(2) *Adult Education and the Library*, Vol. III, p. 22.

to his conscience but also beneficial to society. How useful and popular *our* police will become if they are made to read like their New World contemporary books in Sociology and Psychology in addition to the sections of the Police Manual!

The prophetic nature of the words of Adam Smith has been demonstrated to the very letter by the services rendered by the Second Law of Library Science to the public of the city of Grand Rapids in the State of Michigan. The water-supply of the city could not keep up with the growth of the city, . . . As a result a large part of the citizens depended on wells for much of their drinking water, because they would not drink the unfiltered river water. The typhoid-fever rate was very high—several hundred cases a year—with a correspondingly high death rate . . . The city Government and the business interests of the city finally secured the appointment of a Special Commission of high-grade business and professional men to study the whole situation and to report a plan to be submitted to a vote of the citizens. After long and careful study they recommended the adoption of the plan to take the water from the river and to filter it by the rapid sand or mechanical filtration process . . . Eight or ten days before the election, full or half-page newspaper broadsides were distributed to every house in the city claiming that filtration was a failure, by publishing facsimile reproductions from newspapers and technical magazines, etc., of items with reference to typhoid fever in certain cities, and

then followed by the statement that the said cities had filtered water. In short, the whole purpose of these broadsides was to discredit the report of the Special Commission in order to have it defeated. New broadsides appeared about every other day and were always distributed to every house in the city. They came out over the name of "a young unemployed Engineer". The library immediately checked up a number of the reference to other cities in the annual reports and municipal documents in its collection . . . on the trail of the young engineer's published broadsides and made the knowledge it found available to the newspapers, with the librarian signing the published statements of the facts the library found. Here is a sample of what we found. Reading, Pennsylvania and Albany, New York, both had filtered water supplies serving other parts. The typhoid epidemics were in the sections of those cities served by the unfiltered supplies. The broadside advertisements were correct in stating that Reading and Albany both had typhoid epidemics and both had filtered water, but, nevertheless, these statements were both damnable lies in the impressions they conveyed. Thus, "the library was the first . . . to rally the forces to save the day for pure water. Pure water won at the polls and Grand Rapids, except for sporadic cases brought in from outside, has as a result eliminated typhoid fever from the city . . . I have always believed that the library would have been

derelict in its duty had it failed to give to the public the knowledge it had on such a vital matter".¹

Instances of this nature can be multiplied *ad nauseam*. But as it is not our purpose to record here the achievements of 'BOOKS FOR ALL' suffice it to say that, to-day, the Second Law of Library Science has triumphantly planted its democratic flag in many a land having blown to pieces the black-coated barrier of exclusiveness and snobbery. During the last century, Europe and America, Japan and Russia, were as impervious to its appeals and as impregnable to its attacks as India was. But, to-day, Europe and America, Japan and Russia have capitulated to it, while India is still defiantly holding her own. Who is responsible for this strange phenomenon? Who has been helping India to stick to her guns in this battle against 'BOOKS FOR ALL', while she has been establishing a world record in losing battles in other spheres?

Whatever might be the complex of contributory causes, her "English-educated" sons cannot escape their share of the blame. Macaulay and Wood imported English education into India with the best of motives. They evolved their famous 'filtration theory' with the highest of hopes. They could not have reasonably foreseen that the filter would develop human jealousy and selfish exclusiveness. Certainly, they never, for a moment,

(1) *Essays Offered to Herbert Putnam, on his Thirtieth Anniversary as Librarian of Congress*, pp. 374-376.

dreamt that the filter will work in the contrary way and get itself coated with another super-filter that will grant a place in the sun only to those English-educated Indians, who could get their English-education on English soil. Yes. This tragic triumph of India in her fight against the intrusion of the Second Law of Library Science, nay, even of its precursor 'EDUCATION FOR ALL', is not a little due to the almost criminal apathy and neglect of duty on the part of her better placed "English-educated" sons. They have developed an abnormal short-sight which disables them from seeing beyond their nose, at any rate beyond their privileged circle. They glibly speak of India, and her millions, when they mean only the two per cent. of her millions who can lisp in English. Remind them how you will that Macaulay intended that they should, actively and ungrudgingly, spread their knowledge among the masses. No, they will rather prefer to take their lesson from Bernard de Mandeville. Honourable exceptions there are and all honour to them. But the majority act as an impervious clog in the filter.

Our only hope lies in the supreme resourcefulness of the Second Law. History has shown that it is an adept in the art of strategy. If Macaulay's filter has proved a snare, ere long it will divert its course and keep clear of this clog in the 'filter'. The Second Law will not take a defeat. It must win ultimately. With the world opinion backing it, it may win even at no distant

date. If they are shrewd business men, the 'English-educated' Indians should greet it with an olive branch and volunteer their services in its holy war on lingering ignorance. Then only, they will gain any respect in the eyes of the world and then only can they survive amidst the forces that will be set free on the day the Second Law plants its flag on Indian soil and puts the BOOKS in the hands of ALL, even as it has done on their soils.

THE MEN AND THE WOMEN

The antithesis has not been merely between the classes and the masses. As we trace the prejudices of ages in the light of the Second Law of Library Science, we come across several others. It is not merely the income line that has, for long, divided humanity into those that are entitled to the use of books and those that are not. Sex, for example, was another factor that restricted the enforcement of the Law, 'BOOKS FOR ALL'. In our own country, the Second Law has not yet fully succeeded in overcoming such sex disabilities.

No doubt, the conditions have begun to change. Signs of the onslaught of the Second Law are not wanting. The surging wave of 'BOOKS FOR ALL' may, ere long, wash away even the hardened bank of the feminine conservatism of the Indian Home. But that should not close one's eyes to the tenacious fight that is being fought to-day, in several homes against the encroachment of the 'pernicious habit' of reading among ladies. Nor

should one delude oneself with the fond, but blinding boast that our country had, in days past, kept the road wide open for her women to emulate the stronger sex in the pursuit of learning. It does not help us now to be told that women could and did read as well as men from the Vedic days onwards down to the day when an alien tongue drove a cultural wedge into the till-then homogeneous home. It is only half the truth to say that the use of a foreign medium for current thought has sequestered Indian women from the world current that has enabled her sisters in many a clime to keep abreast of their brethren. The glorious record of women like Maitreyi, Panchali, Lilavati and Auvaia and the still-surviving memory of the learned ladies that formed the fitting life-companions of the intellectual giants of places like Tiruvisalur, should not blind us to our present plight, when for every Maitreyi we have thousands of Katyayinis, when the bulk of our sisters are straggling a century behind, unlettered, untutored, and unprovided with books. But, if it can be a source of consolation and encouragement, it may be mentioned that the concepts 'EDUCATION FOR ALL' and 'BOOKS FOR ALL' definitely crossed the sex-barrier only within the last half-century or so in most of the countries.

From the days of the primitive man, the majority of women have generally occupied a sheltered place and have not had, therefore, a higher cultural or professional training such as would enable them

to deal with large affairs. In earliest as well as recent civilisations, the limits to which feminine accomplishments might extend have generally been definitely fixed by custom and those who dared to exceed them have run the risk of being thought 'unwomanly'. In Athens, it seems, it was an accepted dogma that no respectable girl should be educated. The Athenian wife for example, "lived a virtual prisoner within four walls . . . They could not in their own persons inherit property, but were regarded as an appanage of the estate . . . Their education was trivial".¹ The social ostracism practised to prevent ladies from getting their share of education and books is indicated by the following statement about the education of women in Greece: "Literary education and intellectual pursuits belonged to those who were without the home circle, the *hetaerae*".² In the writings of St. Paul there appeared similar restrictions which seemed to set women off as an inferior, dependent class. After referring to the sixteenth verse of the third chapter of Genesis regarding the status of women, he wrote, "And if they will learn anything, let them ask their husbands at home".³

For a long time it was even commonly believed that women were not capable of education. Here

(1) WRIGHT (F. A.): *Greek Social Life*, pp. 6-13.

(2) MONROE (Paul): *Source Book of the History of Education*, p. 34.

(3) I Corinthians, 35.

is Chesterfield writing to his son "Women, then, are only children of a larger growth; they have an entertaining tattle, and sometimes wit; but for solid reasoning, good sense, I never in my life knew one that had it, . . . A man of sense . . . neither consults them about, nor trusts them with, serious matters".¹ Again Rousseau says of women that she is 'an imperfect man', that in many respects she is only 'a grown-up child'.² He adds, "The search for abstract and speculative truths, principles, and scientific axioms, whatever tends to generalise ideas, does not fall within the compass of women; . . . as to works of genius, they are out of their reach, nor have they sufficient accuracy and attention to succeed in the exact sciences".³ Rousseau would willingly repeat Moliere's words:—

It is not seemly, and for many reasons,

That a woman should study and know so many things.

Rousseau's conception of the capacity of women is only what was too common in France and other countries in the eighteenth century.

The nineteenth century tried to excel the eighteenth by inventing anatomical explanations for the woman's incapacity to benefit by books and

(1) CHESTERFIELD (Lord): *Letters*, letter LXXVI, pp. 141-142 of Vol. I of John Bradshaw's edition.

(2) COMPAYRE (Gabriel): *Jean Jacques Rousseau*, p. 85.

(3) ROUSSEAU (Jean Jacques): *Emile*, Tr. by Payne, p. 281.

learning. Here is a piece of serious scientific demonstration which dates from 1866.—"A man has will and understanding, and a cerebellum and a cerebrum by which they act; and so has a woman. In this they are alike. But in man the understanding predominates, and in woman the will; and here they are different. If this be so, we may, of course, expect to find a larger development of the cerebrum, or upper brain, in man, and a larger development of the cerebellum, or lower brain, in woman; and this is so. A man's head is higher, and fuller in front, than a woman's; while a woman's head is broader and larger behind than a man's."¹ Another contemporary of this anatomical psychologist cannot see any virtue in wasting such elaborate reasoning to establish such an obvious thing. "The great argument", he would say, "against the existence of this equality of intellect in women is, that it does not exist. If that proof does not satisfy a female philosopher, we have no better to give".²

If girls' schools existed, "they aimed at 'breeding', deportment and the accomplishments, not at learning".³ In his *Essay on Projects*, Daniel Defoe gives a pathetic description of the customary education of girls in the following words: "One would wonder indeed how it should happen that women are conversible at all, since they are only

(1) ARTHUR (T. S.): *Advice to Young Ladies*, pp. 152-153.

(2) *Saturday Review*, 1860, quoted by Thomas Woody.

(3) MONROE (Paul): *A Cyclopaedia of Education*, Vol. V., p. 801.

beholding to natural parts for all their knowledge. Their youth is spent to teach them to stitch and sew or make bawbles; they are taught to read indeed and perhaps to write their names or so; and that is the height of a woman's education".¹ If any lady acquired learning, the attitude towards such learned ladies was one of contempt and ridicule. We have it recorded that Dr. Johnson once laid down the dictum that "man is, in general, better pleased when he has a good dinner on his table, than when his wife talks Greek". His contemptuous parallelism between a woman preaching and a dog walking on his hind legs is also well known. We have the story of an American bachelor who explained his single state saying,

"One did command to me a wife both fair
and young
That had French, Spanish and Italian
tongue.
I thanked him kindly and told him I loved
none such,
For I thought one tongue for a wife too
much,
What! love ye not the learned? Yes, as
my life,
A learned scholar, but not a learned wife."²

(1) *The Cambridge History of English Literature*, Vol. IX, p. 404.

(2) WHARTON (Anne): *Colonial Days and Dames*, pp. 195-196.

The effects of such disparagement of women's powers, the lack of incentives to learning and the ridicule, that was offered to the few who would learn, had a disastrous effect in shaping the opinion of the women themselves with regard to their right to education and books. They would fain continue for ever on the established folkways of traditional ideas. Many an Indian of to-day may hear within the walls of his home an unmistakable echo of the emphatic words "Book larnin' don't do no good to a woman" uttered by an American lady about a couple of generations ago.¹ Indeed the obstinate feminine conservatism which keeps the Second Law at bay and wallows with self-complacency in a book-less, education-less state reminds one of the victims of Comus, who are

" changed
Into some brutish form of wolf, or bear,
Or ounce or tiger, hog, or bearded goat,
.
And they, so perfect in their misery,
Not once perceive their foul disfigurement,
But boast themselves more comely than
before."²

However dogged custom has been, during the slow passage of many centuries, to keep 'EDUCATION' and its companion the Second Law of Library Science on one side of the sex-line, it is

(1) WOODY (Thomas): *A History of Women's Education in the United States*, Vol. I, p. 132.

(2) MILTON (John): *Comus*, 69-75.

certain that in this age of social unrest, when practically every custom and institution of every society is exposed to the unsparing scrutiny of critical minds, women and women's right to education and books have been thrust into the forefront of discussion. The whole vexed question of the woman's 'sphere' and of her education viewed in the light of that 'sphere' has engaged the minds of men for more than a generation and is, at present, nearly settled in the only right manner admissible. It is now admitted that even University education is desirable for at least a great number of women. That education will unfit woman to be wife and mother, that the physical strain will be too great, or that she is intellectually incapable of mastering higher branches of learning, were serious arguments a generation or two ago and unquestionably acted as impediments, but are now only slumbering memories in the social mind of a busy world and come to the centre of consciousness only in some sequestered nooks, still undisturbed by the effects of the Great War. The antediluvian view, which would utterly restrict the woman, making her at best a tolerably intelligent and obedient slave, is already vanishing. The worst view that may now be tolerated is that which would give her a measure of freedom by taking a half-step forward towards her education, arguing that, by this cultivated-mother influence, the life of society may be improved at the very fountain-head. But the most radical view, that

is fast gaining ground, would propose absolute equality of opportunity in education and in political, social and economic life, maintaining that a woman need not, unless she herself so desires, pay her obligation to society, biologically, any more than man, but should be equipped so as to be equally free to choose a literary, scientific or industrial career.

So far we have seen only the first phase of the war on the sex barrier. The Second Law of Library Science had no part in this phase of the war. It was all left to its precursor 'EDUCATION FOR ALL'. But the campaign against sex-distinctions involved more battles than that against class distinctions. Even after the sex-barrier was broken through by its companion, the Second Law was not able to march in freely. For, until the latest radical view began to appear on the scene, people argued "Yes. Education is necessary for a woman and she is capable of it. But woman's education to prepare her for her allotted sphere—the home—can be obtained through apprenticeship to her mother, in the home. There is no need for any formal schooling or book-learning, which would lead her away from the hearth".

The little learning I have gained

Is all from simple nature drained,¹

was a correct description of the state of affairs in the latter half of the last century, a state which

(1) WOODY (Thomas): *A History of Women's Education in the United States*, Vol. I, p. 129.

was not favourable for the success of 'BOOKS FOR WOMEN'.

Fortunately, however, even before the radical view asserted itself and blew up the sex-barrier, it came to be realised that such a natural process of education is not practicable in the crowded life of to-day, that formal education and book-learning are necessary even for cooking, nursing, and the care of children. The increasing incapacity of the home to hold the monopoly of the education of its daughters and the changing conception of education did much to prepare the public mind to receive the gospel 'EVERY WOMAN TOO HER BOOK'. Even assuming that the sphere of the woman was the home, it came to be realised that *home-making* is at once an art and a science. It is a progressive art and a developing science. It has a serious organic contact with the Fine Arts on the one side and the severest sciences on the other. It would include, for example, care of children, nursing, first aid, foods and nutrition, of course, cooking, marketing, laundering, millinery, sewing, budget-making and thrift, kitchen-gardening and horticulture, home hygiene, home sanitation, home decoration, the making of simple repairs, home courtesies and obligations of family and family life.¹ While such is the complex of elements involved in the profession of *home-making*, women

(1) *School and Society*, Vol. XXXII, p. 279. 'Home Economics in the Curriculum.'

ought to be constantly trained for these duties as men are trained for their trades and professions.

There is much in the plea, "When the other sex are to be instructed in law, medicine or divinity, they are favoured with numerous institutions richly endowed, with teachers of the highest talents and acquirements and with expensive libraries . . . Woman's profession embraces the care and nursing of the body in the critical periods of infancy and sickness, the training of the human mind in the most impressible period, childhood, the instruction and control of servants, and most of the government and economics of the family estate. These duties of women are as sacred and important as any ordained to man; and yet no such advantages for preparation have been accorded to her".¹ While such a reproach was justifiable till about three or four decades ago, every effort is now being made in all forward countries to have that reproach removed by a proper orientation of the initial education at school and by a profuse supply of books for that education to be continued to the end of one's life. 'EVERY WOMAN HER BOOK' is the guiding motto of the libraries of to-day. They now take care to see that their books reach behind the *pardah*. They endeavour, for example, "to get all mothers, whose names appear in the official records of birth when a new baby

(1) BEECHER (Catherine) and STOWE (Harriet): *Principles of Domestic Science*, pp. 13-14; quoted in Woody's *History of Women's Education in the United States*.

comes into the home, into contact with the Library's book-service on the care of children"¹ Such a discriminating distribution of books in restricted fields of knowledge marks the second stage.

It is however in the third phase of the war that the sex-barrier was completely overthrown in the march of the concept 'BOOKS FOR ALL'. This phase is taking shape only in the present century. It began with a critical investigation into the inherited tradition about the 'woman's sphere' and about the 'woman's inferiority' in matters intellectual. The first to lay the axe to the root of the pseudo-scientific opinion of the nineteenth century was Karl Pearson. In his paper of 1897 entitled "*Variation in man and woman*",² he clearly demonstrated that there was, in fact, no indication of greater male variability, when actual anatomical measurements of actual human beings are treated with mathematical insight. After a rigorous statistical examination of varied anatomical data, he concluded his long paper in his characteristic carping manner with the words "I . . . assert that the present results show that the greater variability often claimed for men remains as yet a quite unproven principle . . . The "sequacity" exhibited by the multitude of semi-scientific writers on evolution is possibly a sign of the very small capacity for intellectual

(1) *Essays Offered to Herbert Putnam . . . on His Thirtieth Anniversary as Librarian of Congress*, p. 368.

(2) PEARSON (Karl): *The Chances of Death and Other Studies in Evolution*, Vol. I, pp. 256-377.

variation possessed by the literary male".¹ The evidence collected by Karl Pearson was extended and corroborated by the further statistical data published by Montague and Hollingworth in the *American Journal of Sociology* in October, 1914.

This anatomical investigation was followed by the psychological demonstration of the absolute absence of sex difference in mental variability by the elaborate mental tests carried out by Trabue, Courtis, Terman and Pyle. Again, there was the time-honoured traditional opinion that the functional periodicity has an unfavourable effect on woman's mental capacity. Havelock Ellis, for example, makes the sweeping remark that the monthly physiological cycle "influences throughout the month the whole of a woman's physical and psychic organism".² Dr. Hollingworth's experimental investigation of 1914 into this allegation disclosed, on the contrary, that the data, gathered by her, undermined rather than supported such opinions.³

After experimental psychology thus established that the division of labour between the sexes, which had existed throughout historic times, was not the result of psychological differences at all, and that women are as competent intellectually as

(1) PEARSON (Karl): *The Chances of Death and Other Studies in Evolution*, Vol. I, pp. 276-377.

(2) ELLIS (Havelock): *Men and Women*, p. 284.

(3) HOLLINGWORTH (Leta Statter): *Functional Periodicity*, being No. 60 of *Teachers' College Studies* of the Columbia University.

men to undertake any and all human vocations, it came to be realised that "the education of women, especially in the higher stages, will make available to the country a wealth of capacity that is, now, largely wasted through lack of opportunity"¹ and it even came to be argued that an educated woman, a woman when given 'HER BOOKS' "is a far better and surer guarantee of the education of the coming generation than a literate man".² Then came the opportunity for the Second Law to break through the sex-barrier and triumphantly proclaim, "Education should develop women's tastes and aptitudes precisely as men's. The rights of women to choose their books should be precisely the same as those of men. The books that I distribute should be different, not on the ground that the one is a man and the other a woman; but, they should be different only on the ground that each is an individual".

Thus, the Second Law of Library Science is now no longer satisfied with offering to women books on *Home-making* or with books of orthodox devotion; on the other hand it insists that all books have a perfect right to enter any home for the benefit of all the members of the home irrespective of sex.

(1) INDIAN STATUTORY COMMISSION: *Interim Report* . . . Review of the growth of Education in British India by the auxiliary committee (known as the Hartog Committee) appointed by the Commission, p. 151.

(2) *Ibid.*, p. 151.

THE CITY-FOLK AND THE COUNTRY-FOLK

A third antithesis that had to be overcome by the concept 'BOOKS FOR ALL' was that between the city-folk and the country-folk. The municipal toll-gate seems to have held up the Second Law even longer than the income-line or the sex-barrier. We have seen that the income-line was nearly crossed in most countries about half-a-century ago. We have also noticed that the sealing of the sex-barrier was begun at least a generation back. But the cry 'BOOKS FOR ALL' was able to get beyond the city-walls only in our days. To be more precise, the right of the country-folk to books came to be respected in most of the countries only after the Great War. Although the first systematic travelling library service was inaugurated by Maryland and Ohio as early as 1905 it is only in the last decade or so that serious effort is made by most of the nations to supply the inhabitants of the scattered country-side with the books they want.

That the country-folk lack the opportunity for learning and culture is clear from the contempt that is suppressed in the English word 'Rustic' and the Tamil word '*Nattuppurattan*'.¹ It is also indicated by the common connotation of the Sanskrit epithet '*Grāmya*'.² In his *Hellenica*, Xenophon naively suggests by implication that

(1) Literally means a villager.

(2) *Gramā* means a village while *Grāmya* means vulgar.

habitual residence in villages would be enough to deprive one of some of the* commonest rights and privileges. He says, "They did not, however, dispossess them of the presidency of the shrine of Olympian Zeus, even though it did not belong to the Eleanos in ancient times, for they thought that *the rival claimants were country people*"¹ (italics mine). Such a differential view has been persisting all through the centuries. Hannah More, for example, "would not 'banish ignorance' from the villages; vice she would have ousted if she could, but knowledge, except of their duties and their 'place' she would have advised her . . . villagers to leave to their betters"² in the urban areas.

The fact is that, even at a very early stage, the increasing complexities and the grave menaces attendant on the civic problems of a crowded city made out a strong plea for 'EDUCATION FOR ALL' and 'BOOKS FOR ALL' in the case of the city-folk. That inexorable mistress, Necessity, however, did not, for long, put a similar pressure in regard to the country-folk. While the consequences of ignorance and lack of books are immediate in an urban area, they are latent and become visible only very late in rural areas.

Nevertheless, the farmers of the village form a most important class in a country. Tilling the land is one of man's fundamental and original occupations. Adam was a gardener and Abraham,

(1) XENOPHON: *Hellenica*, Book III, Section II, Sub-section (30); page 215 of Vol. I of the *Loeb Classical Library*.

(2) ASHBY (M. K.): *The Country School*, p. 29.

a shepherd. Agriculture feeds the world. It calls for progressive skill and the national need of an alert, adaptable peasantry can be met only by extending the use of books to the country-side. Even in an industrial country like England, where only 20 per cent live in villages and the cities form the chief centres of production, it is felt that the future of the nation would be jeopardised if the handful of people who live in the country-side are not given THEIR BOOKS. How much more serious and vital should be the rural library problem in our land, where, even confining ourselves to British India, only 12.9 per cent of the population of 247 millions live in towns . . . there are only 29 cities with a population of 100,000 or over . . . and 2,100 towns with a population between 5,000 and 100,000, while the number of villages is not far short of half a million?¹ Further, the Indian towns and cities are not comparable in their function to the industrial towns and cities of England. As Mr. V. Ramaswamy Ayyar, the learned president of the Indian Mathematical Society, humorously remarked in a recent Retreat of the International Fellowship, the function of most of the Indian towns is like that of the receiver of an air pump. Very little of their stir and bustle is due to productive activities. They are largely engaged in sucking the wealth that is

(1) INDIAN STATUTORY COMMISSION: *Interim Report*, Review of the growth of Education in British India by the auxiliary Committee appointed by the Commission (commonly known as the Hartog Report), p. 87.

produced in the villages and discharging it beyond the seas. It is in view of this, that the Linlithgow Commission recorded, "It is upon the homes and fields of her cultivators that the strength of the country and the foundations of her prosperity must ultimately rest".¹

But, in the present state of international competition and struggle, the agricultural and other rural industries are proving to be more and more futile and less and less worthwhile, if carried on in the old time-honoured methods of production and marketing. The chief needs of these rural industries are the daily stimulus of new ideas and the constant provision of instruction in such ideas. New methods in farming are being invented from year to year, and new markets have to be found from time to time. Inter-communications that are being established in ways hitherto undreamt of have to be understood and machinery and labour-saving devices are in urgent need of adoption.

Till recently families lived on the land and produced by hand nearly all that they ate or wore. The oxen and the wooden plough were about all the labour-saving devices at hand. People made their own butter, candles and clothing, evaporated their own salt, and ground their corn in primitive hand-operated mills. Business was carried on chiefly by barter. But, in the short period of one generation, epoch-making inventions in agricul-

(1) ROYAL COMMISSION ON AGRICULTURE IN INDIA: Report, p. 67.

tural machinery and methods have been perfected and are being introduced elsewhere. At such a flux, the 'SCHOOL OF BOOKS' must constantly supplement the school of practical experience.

Improvements in marketing have also contributed much to the need for a progressive peasantry and to the need for the frequent feeding of the peasantry on books and magazines. No longer have small loads of produce to be taken over a muddy road to be sold or exchanged. Good metalled road and the motor-truck and a net-work of railroad and the parcel express have greatly changed the methods of transport. The steamship and the motor-boat gather up the products and quickly deliver them in the world's great markets. The betels of Kumbakonam have now to find a market in Madras and far-off Benares. The plantains of Erode have to be marketed throughout the province, and so too the fruits of the orchards and vineyards of Coorg. The cotton of Tinnevely and the paddy of Tanjore have to search for markets overseas. Farm-products can no longer be bartered in the village. They have to be judiciously sold in exchange for *hundies*. These conditions will not be temporary or transient. They have come to stay and, year by year, they will become more and more pronounced. From now on, we may look upon farming as being a capitalised industry, calling for knowledge and executive ability and attracting men of capital and brains. The man of small energy or capacity and

the man lacking in growing scientific knowledge will find it increasingly difficult to avoid being pushed to the wall. We can no longer depend upon a peasantry perpetually steeped in ignorance and confined to traditional ways. If the country is to keep abreast of the world, the peasantry must be constantly lifted from their ruts and be enlightened with the most up-to-date scientific and economic facts and ideas. How will this be possible except through books and periodicals? *Can* we any longer afford to delay giving the COUNTRY-FOLK THEIR BOOKS?

Nor is it left to the city-folk to deny their rural brethren the pleasures of books and the other amenities of life. For, in the words of the recent Royal Commission on agriculture, "Upon the ancient structure of village life, certain influences are at work which must sooner or later profoundly modify its characteristic self-sufficiency and which, in some parts of the country, have already begun to produce their effects". "The development of communications and the consequent quickening and cheapening of travelling facilities are bringing the villages into closer touch with urban areas . . . contact with towns introduces new ideas and desire for better conditions of living". The farmer's life is, in fact, mentally changing. The old isolation and the narrow provincialism are rapidly ending. He and his wife will, no longer, be markedly "of the country". They, and particularly their children, dress much better than

formerly. The movements of the family are no longer limited by the locomotive power of its bullock. The inter-urban bus will take them to town almost any hour and a trip to town, which lately consumed the better part of a day, is now only a matter of an hour or so. It is easy to go in the evening after the day's work is done. The cinema and the theatre, once unknown, now offer their attractions. City connections—financial, social and political—are established. The children attend the High School in the neighbouring town or city, copy town ways and form new friendships there. The social horizon is thus greatly enlarged. Marriages are accordingly made at much greater distances than formerly and with new social classes.

This rapid and intensive intermingling of the city-folk and the country-folk would lead the latter to demand for themselves all the facilities that the former enjoy. Farm-workers and farmers would begin to argue "We pay *our* toll to the exchequer as much as the city. Then, why this differential treatment? Why should the city-folk alone have their City-Libraries and all the amenities that centre round them? Why should not the State provide us with similar library and other facilities? We too have brains. We too want to improve our knowledge of the world. We too want to be up-to-date in our methods of work. We too want 'OUR BOOKS' ". Modern democracy has invested such awakened peasants with the power to

'DEMAND THEIR BOOKS', if they are not voluntarily forthcoming, and to make their demand heard. Such, in fact, was the genesis of the first systematic travelling library.

"In Washington County, Maryland, there lived many people who had few books to read, for whom buying books was too costly a procedure, but who were hungry for good literature. Some of these people come to Miss Mary L. Titcomb of the Hagerstown free library and *asked that books be sent to them* (italics mine) . . . This gave Miss Titcomb the idea that a wagon fitted with bookshelves and laden with a wide assortment of books, going over the mountain roads to the homes, would be a splendid way of giving the people a chance to read . . . This was in 1905. In 1910 the horse and wagon gave way to the automobile. Now nearly 300 counties have followed the example of Hagerstown, Maryland."¹ Nay, the counties of several other parts of the world are also beginning to follow that example. It is the initial *demand* of the country-folk of Maryland that started the idea.

The wise administrators of the Carnegie United Kingdom Trust have shown how to create in villagers a demand for books, in case they are oblivious either of the benefit of the use of books or of their right to demand them. We have it on

(1) FELTON (Ralph, A.) and MARJORIE (Beal): *The Library of the Open Road*, being Bulletin No. 188 of *Cornell Extension Bulletin*, pp. 14-15.

the authority of no less a person than Sir William Robertson, the first Vice-President of the Trust. In describing the genesis of the Rural Libraries of Great Britain, he said: "We baited our hook very generously. We said 'We will not only undertake to provide the Capital outlay, but also undertake to provide maintenance for five years', so that the local authority—always in terror of rates—need have no fears on the ground of having to increase the rates. We had to lure them on; as we were convinced that by the time the five years had expired a real, abiding appetite for reading would have been—not created, because it was latent, it was there,—but discovered; so that if the local authorities at the expiry of that period were reactionary and wanted to go back on the scheme, they would not be allowed to do so by the people. We went from county to county . . . We did not wait to be approached by them, we were the initiators of the scheme, and we took the initial step of inviting them to consider such an offer"¹. Such a deliberate, calculated campaign for less than a decade² was enough to carry 'BOOKS FOR ALL' beyond the city-walls and to spread it triumphantly into all but three of the counties of England. As a result, the demand of the English country-folk for 'THEIR BOOKS' became so insistent that Parliament had to provide by the Amending Act

(1) *The Proceedings of the Carnegie Rural Library Conference held on November 2nd and 3rd, 1920*, p. 12.

(2) The first County-library Scheme of England was inaugurated in Staffordshire in 1916.

of 1919¹ for a Rural Library Scheme on a county basis and to appoint a Public Libraries Committee in 1924 "to enquire into the adequacy of the library provision" and to explore, among other things, "the means of extending and completing such provision, throughout England and Wales".²

The recent reforms have invested the Indian ryots also with a similar power to demand THEIR BOOKS and to ask for a nation-wide Rural Library Scheme, with all the latest amenities that go with it. It may not be long before they realise the possession of this power and exercise it. That day can be hastened by inducements such as their contemporaries in Britain received from the Carnegie United Kingdom Trust. Even if there is no such prospect for the ryots of India, systematic and continued propaganda by bodies like the Madras Library Association can do much to carry the message of the Second Law to the countryside and to open the eyes of the villagers to the use of books and to their right to have them.

But, even from a narrower and strictly selfish point of view, the city-folk would be well advised to concede to the demands of the Second Law to give the COUNTRY-FOLK TOO THEIR BOOKS. It is to their interest to help in the reduction of the ever-increasing drift of the popu-

(1) *Law Reports, 'Statutes,'* 9 and 10 George V, Chapter 93, Section 1.

(2) PUBLIC LIBRARIES COMMITTEE: *Report on Public Libraries in England and Wales*, p. 8.

lation from the village to the city. Various causes excite such a drift; but there are some whose effects can be minimised by a judicious capitulation to the Second Law of Library Science.

Take, for example, one such cause, clearly set forth by the Linlithgow Commission. The village fellows of an educated boy "regarded him as possessing a qualification in virtue of which, he could, almost for the asking, obtain employment of a kind which was beyond their reach . . . This has contributed to the drift of educated boys from the village to the town, which still continues though the conditions which gave rise to it are rapidly changing. The supply of educated men for ordinary routine work under Government and in business-houses nearly exceeds the demand . . . In so far as it is accentuated by the drift of educated boys from the villages to the towns, there to swell the ranks of the educated unemployed, it can, in our view, only be remedied by the spread of education in rural areas *in combination with an improvement in the amenities of village life*. It is hopeless to endeavour to put the clock back by restricting education to a minimum"¹ (italics mine).

This tendency to drift spreads easily from the boy to the parent. A large majority of farmers have at least two to four months of leisure during summer. These summer months induce a vacation

(1) *Royal Commission on Agriculture in India: Report*, p. 539.

habit. Accordingly, the farmer spends a few summers with his son or daughter "in town" or in some distant city, leaving his lands in the care of a hired agent. The attractions of the city entice him and his family, to such an extent, that he rents his lands to tenants, often closing down his village-house entirely, and the whole family moves to town to enjoy its social and educational advantages. The next step—he goes home, sells out and comes back to settle permanently in the city with no more thought about the village and farm. One of the most important social questions, now facing those interested in rural welfare, is how to prevent this purposeless drift.

Even if an educated boy has got the strength of mind to go back to the village, the dreary conditions prevailing there, the absolute lack of means of intellectual recreation and of guidance in his daily pursuits leads to one of two results. Either he comes in time to neglect and finally lose sight of his serious interests, fall into a morbid state of mind and becomes a lifelong victim to cards or he runs back to town dreading the dullness of village life.

Apart from disastrous economic consequences, such a drift to the city unnecessarily adds to the congestion in the cities, increases the cost of living of the city-folk and renders the maintenance of Public Health more difficult and more costly. The fact is, the country needs a new rural class and new conditions in the rural parts to keep them to their

rural duties and functions. This necessitates inevitably books in the villages—books of all kinds—so that the long engagementless summer may be endurable and so that the inquiring mind may find food ready to hand without wandering to the towns to seek for it. Once the Rural Library Scheme is started, it can be—in other countries it has been—made to extend its sphere far beyond books. It will send to villages cinema-reels and lantern slides, both for recreation and for information. It will help in the organisation of musical concerts, lectures, dramas and exhibitions of all kinds. It will endeavour to function up to every new opportunity for service reasonably within its field. Further, as a centre for the community life, the Rural Library has certain advantages over other rural institutions. It is common property for all and has a democracy about it which the temple and the *mutt* do not, as a rule, have.

In fact, if the Law 'BOOKS FOR ALL' be allowed to cross the city-walls, it will attempt to invest the village with all the possible amenities and intellectual opportunities that have been, till now, found only in urban areas. In this way a progressive Rural Library Scheme will become a powerful agency in minimising the undesirable drift from the village to the city.

Although it is our intention to reserve all technical details to a later volume of this series, the supreme importance of the Rural Library Scheme for India will justify a short digression

into the problem of the organisation of village libraries. While a Taluk may ultimately prove to be the most convenient unit area for the scheme of rural libraries, at present it may be more expedient to start on a District basis. Although the area of a district may prove to be too large, the resources of a District Board as well as its capacity for sustained work and direction are much greater than those of a Taluk Board.

The inauguration and the initial shaping of a District Library Service will depend largely on the resourcefulness and enthusiasm of the First District Librarian. The unique educational activities of one of our West Coast districts, I have reasons to attribute largely to the appointment of a resourceful full-timed Educational Officer, who is given not only full freedom but also ungrudging facilities. Similarly, if any new scheme like a District Library Scheme is to prove a success, the first requisite is the selection and appointment of a well-trained, resourceful, enthusiastic librarian as the Library Organiser of the District. No District Authority should commit the blunder of initiating its scheme without this essential preliminary. If it does, it will be only attempting to prove that the scheme won't work.

If the appointment of the District Librarian should be the first step of the District Board, the first thing that the librarian himself should do is to get first-hand knowledge of the people whom he has to serve. It would be unwise and fatal to start with

standardised notions about the requirements of the villagers. Experience in other countries has shown that villages apparently identical in type actually need different standards of books. The County-librarian of Nottinghamshire gives telling examples of this in her paper on "How to start a County Library Scheme",¹ which, by the way, is a very lucid exposition of the initial difficulties of a District Library Organiser. Her first precept is "First know your people and to do this it is essential to visit each centre before opening it".

The second step for the District Organiser is to enlist the aid of the District Educational Officer, the Deputy Inspectors of Schools, the Tahsildars, the Presidents of the Village Panchayats, the Co-operative Societies and the others interested in Rural Reconstruction Work. With their aid and by personal investigation, he should select the most suitable person as the local librarian for each centre. The village teacher, or the village munsif or the village accountant—whoever is most popular in the village—should be selected for the task. By example and precept, the chosen representative should be helped to work up the necessary enthusiasm. This inspiring of the local librarians is an all-important part of organisation. For this task we want an organiser, above all things keenly enthusiastic himself—a personality

(1) *Proceedings of the Second County Library Conference held on November 4th to 6th, 1924, pp. 12-15.*

of more than ordinary tact, patience and capacity for hard work. It often happens that there is a deadly faction in the village. It is advisable, in such cases, to have one local representative for each faction.

The next step is to advertise the library idea intensively throughout the area. The vernacular newspapers of the district should be asked to announce the facilities offered by the District Library as prominently and as frequently as possible. Attractive handbills should be widely distributed in as many ways as possible. First-class posters, with charming colours and catching legends, should be distributed profusely. A picture of the lovely poster, designed by the Carnegie United Kingdom Trust for use by the County-libraries of Great Britain, is given in the accompanying plate. It represents "a torch of learning on enamelled iron, 17 inches by 13, with a red cartouche bearing in white lettering the words, COUNTY LIBRARY"¹ Local festivals and fairs should be visited and an intensive campaign of propaganda should be launched on such occasions with the co-operation of zealous honorary workers. Look at this account of an American Fair. "All over an American Fair were found notices 'Come and hear our travel book-talk in the library stall at 3-0 P.M., this afternoon'. And a considerable

(1) CARNEGIE UNITED KINGDOM TRUST: *Fifteenth Annual Report*, p. 33.

number did come."¹ It requires enormous work to carry the gospel of the Second Law into every village and hamlet and to drill the national importance of the work of the District Library into the minds of the country-folk.

Last but not least, a variety of well-built, well-written, well-illustrated books should be promptly and regularly served. Both recreative and informational books should be sent. Some of the informational books should have a bearing on local industries and interests. The experience of the local-librarian of a village in Cambridgeshire is worth quoting. "Books bearing on local industries—agriculture and horticulture—are eagerly looked for, and in this connection I would refer to a method we have occasionally to adopt. We frequently get a book which we know will be useful to certain persons who have never made use of the library. In such a case we send the book to the probable reader with a message suggesting he would glance at it and, if he is interested, keep it for a week or two. In this way we have circulated several technical books which would otherwise never have been read. The difficulty in one such case was to get the book back again; the borrower had found it so useful in his daily work that he could not do without it. I have no doubt in my own mind that this gentleman is richer by many pounds already

(1) CARNEGIE UNITED KINGDOM TRUST: *Some Impressions of the Public Library System of the United States of America*, p. 84.

as a result of what he has learnt about fruit-packing, *etc.*, from a book I sent him at a venture. But we have made another friend and created another reader. I am beginning to believe that many farmers and gardeners do not realise that there are books in existence which deal exclusively with their interests and difficulties and it is our job to correct this notion".¹

The circulation of lantern slides should be made part of the work of the District Library. In some districts, I have seen several lanterns, distributed by the District Board, simply rusting for want of slides. Not infrequently parts are broken and the gas jet is clogged with rust. In one place the lens was so hopelessly coated with oily dirt that, even after half-an-hour's cleaning, it could not be restored to its usual transparency. With no lack of co-ordination whatever, several lanterns are to be found in one and the same centre—one with the health-inspector, one with the school-inspector and another with the local school—but none in order and none with slides. The District Library can eliminate this wasteful duplication and, what is more important, circulate slides periodically. It may send round also gramophone records and picture collections. There are great possibilities again for educational work through travelling cinematograph shows, which may exhibit pictures to awaken interest in other countries, in

(2) *Proceedings of the Second County Library Conference held on 4th to 6th November, 1924*, p. 61.

nature, in manufactures, in industries, in marketing methods and in civic hygiene. It is good to enlist sympathy by first showing films based on the Ramayana, Mahabharata, Sakuntala and so on and alternate them with more utilitarian and informational films. In the initial stages, when the printed word can only be heard when read to by others and cannot be read by themselves by the vast body of illiterates, this side of a District Library Service will be not only essential but will also be a good incentive to make the villagers long for and submit to the rapid liquidation of their illiteracy, which, again should be one of the transitory features of the activities of our District Libraries for some little time.

It may be convenient to have the central repository of the District Library at the headquarters of the District. It should be designed to facilitate the work as much as possible. A stack-room, a packing-room and an office-room will suffice. At the beginning, one or two convenient and consecutive rooms in the ground-floor of the District Board Office may be sufficient. The staff must grow with the scheme. But, from the very beginning, there must be a minimum of one reliable assistant to do the routine work, which would otherwise occupy too much of the time which the librarian should spend on organisation. As the librarian will have to be constantly in the interior of the District, the assistant should be competent to be in charge on such occasions.

The transport will vary with the local conditions of the district. A district like Tanjore can exchange boxes of books quite easily with the aid of its net-work of railways and bus-lines. In a district like Kurnool the aid of bullock-carts and carriers may have to be invoked. But it may not happen for any District Librarian "to travel two days on a mule taking another mule to carry the books like one of our fellow librarians across the water", as pictured by Col. Mitchell.¹ An ideal method of transport is that of the library-van. It may be fitted with shelves to carry about a thousand volumes, from which the villagers and the village-librarians may make their selection on returning the volumes which have been read. The librarian may himself drive or accompany the van in its rambles through the district. It will also advertise the District Library Scheme in a very effective way. This is an economical form of transport and will eliminate the travelling charges of the librarian. The van may visit each centre once in three months. The local centres at which the exchange is to be effected may be any convenient places such as schools, temples, *mutts*, post offices, stores or homes. The accompanying figures show some of the exchange stations of American villages. The book-van-day is a *gala* day in these villages. The moment the librarian drives the van in, a swarm of men, women and children surround the van and

(1) *Proceedings of the Fifteenth Conference of the Library Association*, p. 79.

in a moment most of its books are pulled out of the shelves.

At the beginning, the District Librarian must be prepared to meet, in the villages, with an atmosphere, absolutely hostile and suspicious. The reasons for the initial suspicion can, however, be easily traced. The poor-paid village teacher, on whom the actual work would probably descend, may be already doing more than a fair share of honorary work and he may not welcome any additional work. The village munsif may have been a munsif for several years. He may have developed deep-rooted scorn for such modern innovations and hence lack that youth and enthusiasm which are essential for rural reconstruction to-day. A third factor, more difficult of persuasion, may be the large land-owner of the village, who views with suspicion and distrust all attempts at increased educational facilities which may enable the ryots of the country-side to think for themselves. All these elements of hostility—the teacher overburdened with unpaid work, the munsif who has lost the fire of youth, and the obscurantist *Mirasidar*—will strain the tact and the enthusiasm of the District Organiser to the utmost. Yet with patience and understanding of local conditions, these obstacles should not prove insurmountable.

Once these first prejudices are overcome and the ice is broken, the progress will be smooth and automatic. At any rate, that has been the experience elsewhere. Here are some reported cases,

demonstrating the tremendous reading-potentialities of villagers which only await the necessary facilities to burst forth into a kinetic form. The librarian of the County of Surrey reports "One comes across a young housemaid who enjoys Katherine Mansfield's *The Garden Party* more than any book she has ever read, because, she "likes the way she writes". Or it may be a bus-conductress with as pretty a taste in Literature as any English Honours student I ever coached. Then there are boys who have just left school at that adolescent age when combined lack of employment and cessation of formal education make such a scar across our social fabric. In one of my branches I am told of several youths—a telegraph boy, a railway porter, a delivery boy and a grocer's assistant—who every time the library is open make straight for the shelf containing the books on natural history, hobbies, mechanics and science".¹ The village-librarian of Sohan, Cambridgeshire, reports, "There is a certain demand for books on domestic subjects by young married women who are anxious to improve on older methods".² The same librarian, speaking about the juveniles of her village, remarks, "Their tastes are more catholic and they generally examine the non-fiction side of the library, and are learning to browse among books. Books on inventions, hobbies, and natural

(1) *Proceedings of the Third County Library Conference, held on 18th to 23rd November, 1924, p. 89.*

(2) *Proceedings of the Second County Library Conference held on 4th to 6th November, 1924, p. 59.*

history fascinate them and for this reason one would have these books more profusely illustrated".¹ Within two years of its existence the county-library of Cambridgeshire has disclosed varied reading interests. The librarian of Cottenham, another village of the same county records, "There is the shoemaker who refuses everything but history and historical novels, who cannot believe that people exist in Wake's own Country who have not read Kingsley's *Hereward*; and the fruit-grower who insists on books on astronomy".² Another county-librarian makes mention of a gardener devouring every book on Egypt which the village-librarian could procure for him and of a railway guard reading Sven Hedin's books of travel.

The cheer that the travelling library is bringing to the denizens of dreary villages is illustrated by a note³ received by the County-librarian of Kent from a villager "who lives eight and a half miles from a town and had been supplied with books to help her in her study of French literature", the note ending with "ever so grateful to you for help in constructing a happy little world for me". Again we are told "The parish of Esclusham Below

(1) *Proceedings of the Second County Library Conference held on 4th to 6th November, 1924, p. 59.*

(2) *Proceedings of the Second County Library Conference held on 4th to 6th November, 1924, p. 61.*

(3) *Proceedings of the Second County Library Conference held on 4th to 6th November, 1924, p. 66.*

in the Denbigshire which has a population of about 1,900 scattered over several mining hamlets, which has converted 263 of them into constant readers, issues about 7,000 volumes a year; and the local librarian cheerfully reports, "The Parish Council Members are jubilant over the progress made and will go to any length to ensure its future success".¹

We cannot end this section more appropriately than by quoting the fervent wish for the progress of the Second Law of Library Science into the midst of peasants, uttered by the Dean of the New York State College of Agriculture. "It should scarcely be necessary to say that the educational system within a county is not complete until there exists one or more good libraries serving the entire population. For most rural counties, the county-library seems to be the answer. Until farm children and adults alike have convenient and regular access to book-collections suited to their varied tastes and needs, our national happiness and progress will fall short of their possibilities. The time is here when there should be a nation-wide movement to establish and bring into active use the library facilities accessible to all farm-homes."²

(1) *Proceedings of the Third County Library Conference held on 18th to 19th November, 1926*, p. 11.

(2) PELTON (Ralph A.) and BEAL (Marjorie): *The Library of the Open Road*, being No. 188 of the *Cornell Extension Bulletin*, pp. 34-35.

THE NORMAL AND THE ABNORMAL

The next antithesis to be considered—the Normal and the Abnormal—is of a more complex nature. There are abnormalities of all kinds. There is the temporarily abnormal sick in the hospital. There is the removable abnormality of illiteracy. We have the reclaimable abnormal in the prisoner behind the bars, while the blind and the deaf and dumb form the classes that are commonly described as abnormal. The *all* in 'BOOKS FOR ALL' embraces every one of them. The Second Law knows no exception. It can have no rest until it has arranged for the supply to EVERY ONE, NORMAL OR ABNORMAL, HIS OR HER BOOK.

A ROUND TABLE

The Patient.—Ah! this endless confinement to bed! Those endless eternal—blank—white walls! How I wish I could run away!

The Psychologist.—Soft, my friend, soft. Don't work yourself up into that mood. It will do you harm.

Our friend has just come to discuss with us the ways and means to remove that tedium.

The Second Law.—Cheer up, Sir, I have brought with me a trolley full of books. You will soon see it wheeled from ward to ward and bed to bed.

The Patient.—I can't stand the rattle of the trolley.

The Psychologist.—(Aside to Second Law.) Poor old fellow! Worn out nerves! The slightest scratch upsets him.

The Second Law.—Don't be afraid. My trolley is noiseless, being specially built for hospital use. A blind man cannot know that it is moving.

The Blind Man.—Oh!—You don't know how sharp our ears are.

The Second Law.—Even so, I am certain, you can't hear it.

The Patient.—So thoughtful of you. I am sorry for my temper. What books have you brought for us?

The Second Law.—Beautiful picture books, charming Art-journals, entertaining novels, inspiring poetry, a few hymns, *Tit-bits* and—

The Patient.—Ye—es. Your choice is wide enough. But, you have left *me* out.

The Second Law.—How?

The Patient.—You see, I have been a Professor all my life. I care for no reading which is not heavy.

The Second Law.—I would have no objection to give you what you want, but remember one danger. Suppose your ill-

ness takes a bad turn—God forbid—then the Doctor will throw all the blame on the stiff books I supplied, and, who knows, perhaps even cancel my visitor's pass!

The Psychologist.—You needn't have that fear any longer. Perhaps you don't know that I am here full-timed. Send all kinds of books. I shall take care to give EACH PATIENT HIS BOOK—I mean, what he can enjoy without detriment to his health. At any rate, I shall assume the responsibility and see that the Doctor does not throw the blame on you.

The Second Law.—I am ever so grateful. What can I send you, Professor?

The Patient.—Some *Croce* in Italian, if you please,

It is so kind of you to think of us, unfortunates.

I am tired; I can't sit up any longer. May I, with your permission, retire!

The Psychologist.—Yes, certainly.

Attender! the wheeled chair.

The Second Law.—Professor, pass my message on from bed to bed. When my librarian goes round with the book-trolley, each

patient can tell him his requirement. Now that the Psychologist is here, I can send down anything they ask for.

The Patient.—Thank you, God bless you. Good-bye, for the present.

The Mother of the Dumb.—Fancy the old man's wish to grind his Italian even in bed.

The Illiterate.—What is that Groce, Madam?

The Blind Man.—Oh! You don't know that! It is Croce, not Groce. Croce is one of the greatest living philosophers. He is an Italian, and naturally he writes in Italian.

The Psychologist.—I am also in charge of the local jail,—I mean, as a Psychologist, I have also to attend on the prisoners.

The Second Law.—But, what can I do? It was only the other day that I sent my Librarian round with the book-van. That old Jailor there, was hard as flint. He growled, it appears, "What! Books for damned murderers!" It seems he even insulted my Librarian saying, "If you don't have a more decent way of earning your bread, take the earliest opportunity to break into a house, and I shall have a chance to give you some work."

The Jailor.—What? When was it?

The Second Law.—Some months back, I think.

The Jailor.—Thank God! it was not I!

The Psychologist.—All that is now an old story. That old jailor has now been retired. You do not seem to know how the recent reforms have humanised everything. That old biting sort of jailor is gone. They are now recruiting men of culture—men with sympathy, men who want to reclaim the criminals rather than keep them eternally in chains. That is why they want me there.

The Jailor.—I assure you, Madam, that you will ever have my heartiest co-operation in your philanthropic mission. On behalf of my predecessor, I tender you and your librarian, my most sincere apologies.

The Second Law.—Thank you, Sir, but I am so glad to hear of this change. I am most happy. One difficult problem that I had set for this conference is thus already solved.

The Psychologist.—Have you with you the list of books you sent the other day?

The Second Law.—Here it is.

The Psychologist.—It is all right, so far—as—it—goes But you seem to have

entirely forgotten the political prisoners.

They would like to have more serious books—Economics, Politics, Metaphysics, Sociology and so on.

The Second Law.—Will they allow such books inside the prison?

The Psychologist.—Certainly, why not?

After all, it is with the greatest reluctance that the Government consigns these men of culture to prison. It is more to vindicate the Majesty of Law, than to deprive them of their liberty. Sunday-players and Salt-law-breakers are usually the tallest intellectuals of a community. They go to prison only for technical offences, and the Government also is anxious that such men should be allowed a good supply of books and periodicals, lest their forced inaction should end in morbid melancholy.

The Jailor.—Yes. That is the correct policy. I shall post you this night a list of their requirements.

The Second Law.—I shall take it on hand immediately it arrives and see that the books reach you by noon, to-morrow.

But our service cannot be at its best, unless we get into personal touch with our readers.

The Jailor.—That is easily done. I shall put your Librarian on our weekly visitor's list. Will that do?

The Second Law.—Ideal.

The Blindman.—Ladies and gentlemen, I am glad you do all that for those who are shut in prisons. What about us who are shut in perpetual darkness? I hear that the last census revealed that we are no less than 479,637 in number.¹

The Second Law.—Indeed, that is my next point for discussion.

I am aware that fifteen persons in every ten thousand are blind in your country.²

But, I have books for you also.

The Jailor.—What? Can the blind read?

The Second Law.—Yes, the Braille-books. The blind can read them with the tips of their fingers.

The Jailor.—It's news to me. Do they look like real books?

The Second Law.—Yes, only they are very bulky. The Bible forms 38 volumes measuring 10 inches by 13½ inches by 2; while a novel by Scott or Dickens makes

(1) *Census of India*, 1921, Vol. II, Part II, *Tables*, p. 141.

(2) *Census of India*, 1921, Vol. I, Part I, *Report*, p. 211.

from 8 to 10 volumes of like dimensions.¹ Further they are very heavy. Each Braille-volume weighs 5 lbs.² Still, as the blind cannot go to the library, they are usually sent by post and the post office charges only a nominal rate.

The Illiterate.—Are the letters simple? Can we learn them?

The Psychologist.—Why should you go to that. You have your sight and you can learn the ordinary script.

The Braille-books are not written in the usual script. The letters are made of raised points arranged in accordance with a code.

The Jailor.—When was it invented?

The Second Law.—Long ago. Nearly a century ago. In fact the first book for the blind produced in the United Kingdom was in 1827.³ The first complete edition of the Bible in Braille was produced in 1890.⁴

The Blind man.—What! a century back! Where can we get them?

(1) THE CARNEGIE UNITED KINGDOM TRUST: *First Annual Report*, p. 13.

(2) PUBLIC LIBRARIES COMMITTEE: *Report on Public Libraries in England and Wales*, p. 142.

(3) *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 14th Edn., Vol. III, p. 721.

(4) *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 14th Edn., Vol. III, p. 723.

The Second Law.—Most of the countries have now established a National Library for the Blind. England had it founded as early as 1882.¹ America had it shortly thereafter. Germany, in 1894² and—

The blind man.—What about us here?

The Second Law.—The movement is spreading. It has recently come to China and it may reach here at no distant date.

The blind man.—Till then?

The Second Law.—England and America will gladly serve you.

The blind man.—Have they enough volumes?

The Second Law.—Oh, yes. In England alone, the stock exceeds 100,000 volumes.

The Jailor.—A hundred thousand volumes for the blind!

The Psychologist.—Books are the main solace, you know, which those afflicted with blindness possess.

The Jailor.—Are they popular?

The Second Law.—Yes. The borrowers of the British library for the blind exceed 10,000, while the annual issue has gone beyond 50,000. It was only the other day that the Queen gave away prizes

(1) *Librarian's Guide*, 1928-9, ed. by Mark Meredith, p. 66.

(2) *Minerva Jahrbuch*, 1930, Vol. I, p. 1387.

to the blind children who used the libraries most effectively.

The Illiterate.—What kind of things do they read?

The Psychologist.—All kinds of things of course.

The requirements of the blind do not differ materially from those of others. The standard of intelligence is as high, and certain of the faculties are not infrequently more highly developed.¹

The blind man.—Why, we have one among us here who is an expert in watch and clock repair. He is now having a roaring business and his sighted competitors use their eyes to gaze at his success in wonder and envy.

The Second Law.—There are now several blind boys who appear for University examinations and get their degrees.

The Illiterate.—Then, we are worse than the blind.

The blind man.—Yes, as the Lord said, "Having eyes, see ye not".²

The Second Law.—You can easily help yourself.

The Illiterate.—But, I can't read.

The Second Law.—If you go to the library, you can have books read to you. There

(1) PUBLIC LIBRARIES COMMITTEE: *Report on Public Libraries in England and Wales*, p. 141.

(2) St. Mark, VIII, 18.

are readers specially appointed for the purpose—

The Psychologist.—And, in the meantime you can learn to read and write.

The Illiterate.—I should love to. But can I?

The Psychologist.—The library has a club for the liquidation of illiteracy. Have yourself enrolled in it and in six months you can yourself read without help.

The Illiterate.—May I bring my wife with me? She too would like to learn.

The Jailor.—Yes. Your granny too!

The mother of the dumb.—Now, what about my child. He is deaf and dumb.

The Second Law.—He is no special problem for me, provided he can read and write.

The mother of the dumb.—He cannot, that is my trouble.

The Second Law.—Then send him first to my sister, "EDUCATION FOR ALL". She will readily equip him with the power to read and write. Perhaps our friend the Psychologist may be able to give you more information.

The Psychologist.—It is now quite easy to teach the deaf and dumb. I shall arrange for it.

The mother of the dumb.—After he learns, can you give him books?

The Second Law.—With great pleasure. I am here for that.

The mother of the dumb.—Have you ever come across deaf and dumb readers?

The Second Law.—Any number. Here is one of the latest reports to hand.¹ “Across the desk of one reader’s adviser a young girl passed a slip of paper. Upon it were written the words:—

“I only went through the fifth grade. Can you tell me some books to help me upwards.”

The girl was deaf and dumb. She sat down beside the adviser at her desk and they wrote their messages to each other on a large sheet of paper.

“How old are you?” wrote the adviser.

“Nineteen,” she wrote in her turn, “I am a folder in a laundry. I like poetry, but I also want to know some facts.

The girl returned again and again for more books, encouraged by the knowledge that she could learn through her own ability to read.”

(1) *Adult Education and the Library*, Vol. III, p. 20.

The mother of the dumb.—Sweet girl! I wish my son could have that solace, granted him.

The Second Law.—The very purpose of my existence is to give it to him.

All sing in a chorus:

There’s room for all
Let not the mean
Or learned dean
Restrict the books
T’ a favoured few.
We’ve Books for all.

Books for the rich
And Books for the poor
Books for the man
And Books for the dame.

Books for the sick
And Books for the fit
Books for the blind
And Books for the dumb.

Books for the bungler
And Books for the wrangler
Books for the burgher
And Books for the cotter.

Books for the lettered
And Books for the fettered
We’ve Books for all
For one and all.

A stranger slips in singing:

Books for all; yes, Books for all
If and only if you add
Books for the land
And Books for the sea.

The Sailor.—May I know, sir, to whom I am speaking?

The Stranger.—I am an ordinary sailor, sir. My vessel touched this port last night. As I was strolling along the street, your chorus caught my ear. The porter told me that you were having a Books-for-the-abnormal-Round-Table, and the old man was kind enough to let me in.

The Sailor.—I am sorry, you are too late. We are just breaking up.

The Sailor.—Did our claim engage your attention at all, sir?

We are the most abnormal people on earth, spending all our days on water, floating from end to end of this vast world.

The Second Law.—I am taking it up as a question by itself. You may rest assured that you won't be forgotten.

THE LAND AND THE SEA

While the antitheses between the rich and the poor, the male and the female, the town and the country, and the normal and the abnormal, have

been, from the beginning, engaging public attention with varying results, the antithesis between the land and the sea seems to have, for long, suffered neglect because 'Out of sight's out of mind'. The sea-faring people spend most of their time away from their home and their requirements and handicaps are seldom realised by those that lead a settled life on land. Nevertheless, even in India, which is not very prominent in her maritime activities and enterprises, as many as 600,000 persons¹ spend more time on water than on land. Even if their case is brought to our mind, the problem of giving EVERY MAN AT SEA HIS BOOK bristles with difficulties. In the words of the Executive Committee of the Carnegie United Kingdom Trust, "conditions inseparable from life at sea combine in creating obstacles to an organised service. The impracticability of financial support from local rates; the constant changes, except in large companies, in ships' crews; uncertainties in the movements of tramp ships; the need for exchange facilities in many of the principal ports of the world—all these factors contribute to the difficulty of the problem".² Still the Second Law of Library Science insists that such difficulties are not insurmountable, and should be solved. In response to its insistence, England founded, in 1919, "the Seafarers' Education Service, which attempts to supply ships with books on an ambi-

(1) *Census of India*, 1921, Vol. I, Part II, p. 204.

(2) *Thirteenth Annual Report*, p. 31.

tious scale, as regards both organisation and choice of books . . . In May of that year the World Association for Adult Education called together representatives of the owners and maritime trade unions and the mission societies. A permanent commission was thereupon appointed to undertake the work of providing libraries as part of a complete educational scheme for seafarers".¹

Experience soon showed that seafarers would read the best books and would treat them with respect. On long voyages especially, most of the books get into use and it is estimated that nearly 75 per cent of the crew take to reading, while hardly 10 per cent of those on land are inclined to do so. At the end of 1928, the total number of ships thus served was 1276.²

The problem of putting the supply of books to seafarers on a proper financial basis has been fully discussed by the Public Libraries Committee.³ It starts with the message of the Second Law: 'BOOKS FOR ALL, WHETHER ON LAND OR ON WATER'—the seafarers have no less right than their compatriots on land to a service of books paid for out of public funds. The only question is whether the responsibility for meeting their needs should be met by the State exclusively, by co-operation between the State and the local

(1) PUBLIC LIBRARIES COMMITTEE: *Report on Public Libraries in England and Wales*, pp. 144-145.

(2) CARNEGIE UNITED KINGDOM TRUST: *Fifteenth Annual Report*, p. 44.

(3) *Ibid.*, p. 146.

bodies of the port-towns or by the latter alone. The members of the Committee do not regard the last alternative either as reasonable or as practicable. Nor would they recommend that the State should be saddled with the entire responsibility. On the other hand, they would suggest that the task should be divided evenly between the shipping companies, the seafarers themselves, the library authorities of the seaports and the State.

The Committee makes the following analysis of the library income of the Seafarers' Education Society during the first five years:—

	£
Shipping Companies ..	6,899
The Chamber of Shipping ..	500
The Maritime Trade Unions ..	590
The Carnegie United Kingdom Trust	2,385
Sundry bodies and individuals ..	390
Sale of literature, etc.	84
	10,848

This analysis discloses the significant absence of the State and the Local Bodies. The Committee would invite their attention to the call of the Second Law and urge them to put in their quota, not necessarily as money, but perhaps better as books, the books on the shelves of the Central Library of the State and the books on the shelves of the Municipal Libraries of the ports.

The keepers of light-houses stand in need of books no less than the sailors themselves. The fate of most of the men confined in the solitude of light-houses is as hard as that of Robinson Crusoe in his desert-island. Or perhaps worse. While Robinson Crusoe had the freedom to wander about, even that freedom is denied to them. While the fate of the ships and their passengers as well as the prosperity of the merchants on land depend on their vigilant and selfless services, it is but reasonable that the call of the Second Law on their behalf should be heard with the greatest willingness. While shore light-houses may be served by the District Libraries or the Municipal Libraries, as the case may be, there should be a special central organisation for catering to the needs of isolated rock light-houses and light-ships. The total number of light-houses and light-ships that are thus regularly served with books in Great Britain and Ireland is nearly 300.

THE ADULT AND THE CHILD

But the struggle of the Second Law takes the most puzzling phase when it has to negotiate the antithesis between the adult and the child. It has been, for long, held by all—and it is even now being held by some—that the child has no right to any books other than text-books and that it is only n'ver-do-well's that will "waste time in extra-reading". On the other hand, it has been—and by some even is—at the same time believed that one who has completed formal schooling has

already made the closest possible approach to the omniscience that books can supply. One has only to witness, from the Cauvery Bridge at Kumbakonam, the surface of the Cauvery water bestrewn and bedecked with the printed pages of torn books, cast away by the candidates coming out of the College-Hall, after the last of the University Examinations. This casting off is meant by many as a ceremony to symbolise that they have passed the stage of books.

This belief that the educated adult does not need books any longer can really be traced to what may be called 'the Camel theory' of education—that before we start on the journey of life we can be given all the mental food necessary to carry us through the whole way. It does not recognise that maturity has its educational aptitudes, aspirations and urgencies. But this theory, that education has primarily to do only with the training of children, has, however, little basis in psychology and gets little support from practical experience. Of course, children must be educated. But an educational system, that does not recognise the perpetual need of the adult for the tools of education, is a mere futility. In any dynamic democracy, that is constantly evolving newer and better order of things, the definite task of Public Education is that of constantly educating the adults to participate intelligently in this new order of life. Adults must first learn how to live the new order before they can teach it. It is the unfortunate neglect of



Ranganathan, Shiyali Ramamrita.
The Five Laws of Library Science.
(Sarada Ranganathan Endowment for Library Science).
Madras Library Association, 1931.

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this factor that has led to the clock of our educational curriculum being blindly, but harmfully, set back every now and then, at the instance of powerful politicians, who insist on having their fingers in every pie, but who, in the plenitude of their ignorance, would know of no curriculum other than what they were themselves drilled through, in their own far-off boyhood. Out of the practice of living must come the understanding that can translate this kind of living into education for the children. Hence, even though a man has as many degrees as a thermometer, even though he be graduated with the highest honours, he is grossly uneducated, or will soon become so, if he stops his reading and lets his brain grow rusty from the day of his convocation onwards. Education really begins at the cradle and is completed only at the grave. All the educated adults are therefore comprehended in the 'ALL' in 'BOOKS FOR ALL'.

Persuading the graduate adult to submit himself to the sway of the Second Law is only one side of this phase of the struggle. The Second Law has an equally up-hill task to do, to convince the University that her interest in the education of her *alumni* should not end on the day she confers her degrees on them. Although she has no right to force on them any more of formal teaching, the duty of continuing to educate her *alumni* through the books of her library is cast on her. One of the achievements of the Second Law of Library Science is the driving home of this new duty, in

which progressive Universities and their libraries are beginning to take an increasing part. The Second Law would even offer a threat to the University saying, "You cannot retain the interest and the loyalty of your graduates, unless you strengthen this new service to them through your books. There must be this higher intellectual bond. Nay, viewed from the national point of view—and after all it is the National Exchequer that maintains you—such service to *alumni* is essential if the money spent on under-graduate education is not to be thrown away for lack of proper follow-up work after graduation".

This brings us to the new orientation which the Second Law has brought about in the methods of instruction. It tells the Universities, "The best thing that you can do for your raw under-graduate is to awaken in him a zest for thinking and the habit of reading. Remember, education does not end in your class-room. I have to begin where you leave. It is easier for me to keep the reading undergraduates reading, than to catch them when they are men and women and start them afresh to read. In return, I have no objection to your relying upon me, more fully in your class-room teaching; indeed, I am quite prepared to be by your side in your daily task and take the under-graduate by hand and walk alone with him when he leaves you behind." Similarly it tells the schools, "The hope of the future lies in the children of to-day. Remember that a large proportion

of children walk straight from your care to mine. There is no University for them. Hence, it is imperative, that you should give them the widest opportunity in your school-library to form the correct reading-habit. You know that the child, who forms a deep love of reading in the school, is more likely to continue that reading-habit in after-life. Hence, reinforce the library-work at school so that I can reinforce the library-work of the future". In its attempt to scale over the perplexing antithesis between the adult and the child, such is the reconciliation and understanding that the Second Law is achieving between the old and the new instruments of education, *viz.*, the Schools and Colleges, on the one hand, and the Library on the other.

Thus the struggle of the Second Law of Library Science was largely due to the unlimited democracy and universality of its appeal. The vagaries of Nature may militate against the rule of democracy in many spheres of life. No political or ethical creed can equalise the differences of physique, temperament and intelligence any more than the differences in height or colour. But, the Law "BOOKS FOR ALL" has proved to be more than a match to her mischievous whims. She may blind the eyes of some; she may tie up the tongues of others; she may cast the lot of still others in solitude; she may subject the majority to the grind of poverty. And yet, the Second Law would treat them all alike and give to EACH HIS OR HER

BOOK. It would scrupulously maintain the principle of equality of opportunity for books, of opportunity to learn and of opportunity to enjoy. It will not rest until it has gathered up one and all—the rich and the poor, the men and the women, the land-men and the seafarers, the young and the old, the deaf and the dumb, the literate and the illiterate—one and all, from all the corners of the earth until it had led them into the temple of learning and until it has secured for them that salvation which flows from the worship of Sarasvati, the Goddess of Learning.

For a parallel to this universal sweep of the Second Law one has to go to Sambandar and the 7th century.¹ Shiyali, his birth place, still treasures the memory of his last act. On the day he was married in the neighbouring village of Achalpuram, while he walked round the Temple with his newly wedded spouse, seeing the gates of heaven open suddenly, he first gathered together his parents and kinsmen, his friends and visitors, his servants and retinue—and not only these but all the residents of the place, all the men of all the religions, whether moving with the crowd or not, whether blind or lame, whether young or old, whether willing or unwilling—he gathered one and all, first made them pass into the gates of heaven, and himself entered last with his beloved wife and became At-One with

(1) SUNDARAM PILLAI (P.): *The Age of Tirujnanasambandar*, p. 65 [Forming part of the *Tamilian Antiquary*.]

the ONE, in company with all the others.¹ This last act of Sambandar would, in its expression of universal brotherhood, serve as a symbol of the Second Law of Library Science.

சீர் பெருகு நீலநக்கர் திருமுருகர் முதல் தொண்டர்
வர் கெழுவு சிவபாதவிருதயர் நம்பாண்டார் சீ
ரார் திருமெய்ப் பெரும்பாணர் மற்றெனையோர் அனைந்துளோர்
பார் நிலவு கிளை சூழப் பன்னிகளோடுடன் புக்கார்.

அணிமுத்தின் சிலிகை முதல் அணிதாங்கிச் சென்றார்கள்
மணிமுத்த மால புனை மடவார் மங்களம் பெருகும்
பணி முற்றும் எடுத்தார்கள் பரிசனங்கள் விளைப்பாசம்
துணி வித்த உணர் வினராய்த் தொழுதுடன் புக்கொங்கினார்.

ஆறுவகைச் சமயத்தில் அருந்தவரும் அடியவரும்
கூறுமறை முனிவர்களும் சும்பீடவந்த அனைத்தாரும்
வேறு திரு அருளினால் வீடு பெற வந்தாரும்
ஈழில் பெரும் சோதியினுள் எல்லாரும் புக்கற்பின்

காதலியைக் கைப்பற்றிக் கொண்டு வலம்கொண்டு அருளித்
திது அகற்ற வந்தருளும் திருஞானசம்பந்தர்
நடதன் எழில் வளர் சோதி நண்ணி அதனுட்புகுவார்
போத நிலை முடித்த வழிப்புக்கு ஒன்றியுடனார்.¹

(1) Cf. SEKKILAR: *Periya Puranam*, II Kandam, verses 1250-1253.

[Sekkiar was a famous biographer of the Tamil country in the twelfth century.]



Ranganathan, Shiyali Ramamrita.
The Five Laws of Library Science.
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