

A. L. A. - Handbooks

VERTICAL FILE

C. 1

LIBRARY OF THE
AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

American

Library Association

Organization and objects

[1890-91]

American Library Association

Organized October 6, 1876; incorporated December 10, 1879

Origin—A few librarians early in 1876 proposed a library conference in connection with the Centennial exhibition. The proposal meeting hearty response from prominent librarians and the U. S. commissioner of education, it was decided to call the meeting, and October 4, 1876, in response to general announcements in the press and special invitations sent through the Bureau of Education to American and leading foreign librarians, there gathered in the rooms of the Pennsylvania historical society in Philadelphia, 100 enthusiastic librarians, who spent three days in comparison of methods and in active interchange of views and experience.

The great practical benefit of this conference and the possibilities of progress and influence which it suggested, led to permanent organization, at its final session, as the AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION, "for the purpose of promoting the library interests of

the country, and of increasing reciprocity and good will among librarians and all interested in library economy and bibliographical studies."

Organization—The officers of the new association were: president, Justin Winsor; vice-presidents, A. R. Spofford, W. F. Poole, H. A. Homes; secretary and treasurer, Melvil Dewey. They were instructed to draft a constitution and by-laws, which at the second meeting in New York, September 4, 1877, were adopted as follows:

CONSTITUTION

Article 1 — Name

This organization shall be called the American Library Association.

Article 2 — Object

Its objects shall be to promote the library interests of the country by exchanging views, reaching conclusions and inducing cooperation in all departments of bibliothecal science and economy; by disposing the public mind to the founding and improving of libraries; and by cultivating good will among its members.

Article 3—Members

§ 1. **Eligibility.** Any person engaged in library administration may become a member of the association by signing the constitution and paying the annual assessments. Other persons may in the same manner become members after election by three-fourths vote of the board.

§ 2. **Annual fee.** Each member shall pay to the treasurer on or before the annual election such sum, not exceeding two dollars, as may be assessed by the board for the necessary expenses of the year.

§ 3. **Life members.** By the payment of \$25, any member may receive a certificate of life membership, which shall permanently entitle the holder to all the rights and privileges of membership without payment of the annual assessment.

§ 4. **Honorary members.** Persons unanimously elected as honorary members by the board shall be exempt from assessment.

Article 4—Officers

§ 1. **Number.** The association shall annually elect an executive board of five members, who shall have power to add to their own number, and from the board thus constituted they shall choose for the association a presi-

dent, vice-presidents, a secretary, a treasurer, finance and cooperation committees of three each, and any other needed officers or standing committees.

§ 2. **Executive board.** In the intervals between the annual meetings this executive board shall have full power to act for the association in all matters on which the board is unanimously agreed.

§ 3. **Secretary.** The secretary shall keep a faithful record of the members present at each meeting of the association or board, and of all business transacted; shall give due notice of any election, appointment, meeting or other business requiring the personal attention of any member, and shall have charge of the books, papers and correspondence.

§ 4. **Treasurer.** The treasurer shall keep a full and accurate record of all receipts and disbursements, with date, purpose and amount; shall pay no money without written order of two members of the finance committee, and shall make an annual report.

§ 5. **Finance committee.** The finance committee shall have control of all receipts from donations or assessments; shall solicit and receive contributions for carrying on the

work of the association; and shall make appropriations, audit bills and give orders on the treasurer for payment.

§ 6. **Cooperation committee.** The cooperation committee shall consider and report upon plans designed to secure uniformity and economy in methods of administration; and the association, board, or committee shall have power to refer subjects to special committees.

Article 5 — Meetings

§ 1. **Regular meetings.** There shall be regular annual meetings of the association at such time and place as the board may select, and each member shall be notified of the time and place at least one month in advance.

§ 2. **Special meetings.** Special meetings of the association shall be called by the president on request of 10 or more members, provided that one month's previous notice be duly given, and that no business shall be transacted unless specified in the call. Meetings of the executive board shall be called on request of five or more of its members.

§ 3. **Vote of executive board.** Any resolution or order which shall receive the written approval, through correspondence, of every member of the board shall have the full force of a regular vote.

Article 6 — By-laws

§ 1. **Adoption.** Any by-law not inconsistent with this constitution may be adopted by three-fourths vote at two successive meetings.

§ 2. **Suspension.** Any by-law may be suspended by unanimous vote at any meeting, but shall be repealed only by three-fourths vote at two successive meetings.

Article 7 — Amendments

This constitution may be amended by three-fourths vote at two successive meetings of the association, provided that each member shall be notified of the proposed amendment at least one month before its final adoption.

Objects—Beside advancing general library interests in every practicable way, the association, or, as it is commonly known, the A. L. A., aims:

1. To effect, by organization and force of numbers, reforms and improvements which could not be brought about by individual effort.

2. By cooperation, to lessen labor and expense of library administration.

3. By discussion and comparison, to utilize the combined experiments and experience of the members in perfecting plans and methods, and in solving difficulties.

4. To promote acquaintance and *esprit de corps*.

Allied agencies — From the A. L. A. have grown three agencies whose influence and value have been perhaps even greater than its own immediate action, though none of the three are under its direct control:—

1. The *Library journal*, the official organ of the A. L. A. and the monthly exponent of progress in library work, whose 15 volumes constitute a bibliothecal library which is now recognized as a necessity in every progressive library.

2. The Library Bureau, which, since its first three years when it was conducted as a part of the work of the secretary, has had no organic connection with the A. L. A., but is carried on in full harmony with its spirit and aims as a depot of supplies for all library wants and the instrument through which A. L. A. cooperative schemes may be realized. It undertakes as a library center for the country such needed enterprises as are impracticable for the society or periodical. It is thus the business supplement of the Library Association and Journal.

3. The Library School at Albany, under direction of the regents of the University of the State of New York. Only those are

admitted to the entrance examinations who have completed a high school course or its equivalent, though college graduates may be received without examination. One year in residence and an average for the course of 75% are required for a diploma; while for the degree B. L. S. are required, in addition, two years of college work and an average for the course of 90%. This school, with its two years' course, is a powerful agent in raising the standards of intelligence and efficiency for librarians and their assistants, and its graduates are already taking their places among leading members of their profession.

Meetings. Annual meetings are held at places having either special advantages of their own, or situated near points of natural beauty or historic interest.

Three sessions of the association and sections are usually held daily, while into the short intervals between sessions are crowded committee meetings and extra meetings of sections.

Papers and discussions on subjects previously announced fill to overflowing the days of the formal conference.

Post conferences. Experience having proved that perhaps quite as much practical good for the year's work comes from the

informal discussions carried on by twos and threes, it is usual to have a postconference, which is at once so enjoyable and profitable that it tends to hold together the leading members of the association for a few days when they have leisure to talk over freely the subjects in which each has peculiar interest.

This postconference, the intervals between sessions, and the one social evening which is a fixed feature of the program, afford opportunity for informal intercourse which does much to develop the strong *esprit de corps*, which characterizes the A. L. A.

Membership. Membership is open to any person connected with library administration, whether as trustee, librarian, assistant or in other capacity. The A. L. A. also cordially welcomes all other friends of library progress, and they may become members on vote of the executive board; for the vast field before the association offers abundant work to every earnest member, whether or not he has any direct library connection.

The annual fee payable by all except honorary members is \$2.

Every member receives free the annual volume of proceedings of the association, and in these days of rapid library progress every librarian who wishes to keep abreast of his

profession must keep in close touch with this representative national body. In it are enrolled not only librarians and assistants, but also publishers, booksellers, and library trustees from all parts of the country. To its leaders libraries everywhere turn for advice as to buildings, administration and employees; and from its ranks nearly all important library positions in the country are filled.

Beside its professional advantages, membership secures reductions in traveling and hotel rates for the annual meetings and post-conferences, which exceed many fold the trifling yearly fee.

Sections. Within the association are several sub-organizations of those engaged in the same specific work or seeking to accomplish some common purpose of too technical or novel character, or involving too great outlay to belong properly to the association at large. Through these sections, whose meetings are open to all, the needs of each special class of workers are provided for, while the regular sessions are left free for subjects of general interest.

Publishing section

Origin. Organized in 1886, this is an outgrowth of the standing cooperation committee established in 1876 "to secure uniformity and economy in methods of administration."

Constitution. The following is the constitution as now in force, with such proposed amendments as have already been formally approved bracketed in note type after the section affected.

Article 1—Name

This organization shall be called the American Library Association Publishing Section.

Article 2—Object

Its object shall be to secure the preparation and publication of such catalogs, indexes and other bibliographical helps as may best be produced by cooperation.

Article 3—Members

Any library, institution or individual elected by the executive board may become a member on payment of a fee of \$10 for each calendar year. Membership shall continue till resigned by the holder or withdrawn by the board.

[*Voted*, That the executive board be authorized to receive associate members at an annual fee not exceeding \$2, and to determine what privileges shall be accorded such members.

Voted, That the executive board be authorized to extend the privileges of regular membership to those who render equivalent services to the section.]

Article 4—Officers

§ 1. **Number.** The officers of this section shall consist of a president, a secretary, a treasurer, and an executive board of five members, of whom the secretary shall be one. The chairman of the executive board shall be regarded as the manager of the section, subject to the approval of the entire board.

[The officers of this section shall be a president, a secretary and treasurer, and an executive board of five, of which the above officers shall be members.]

§ 2. **Election.** These officers shall be chosen at the regular meetings of the section in connection with the annual meetings of the American Library Association, and shall hold office till their successors are appointed.

§ 3. **Secretary.** The secretary shall keep a faithful record of all meetings of the section and of the executive board; shall give due notice of such meetings and of any election or other business requiring the personal

attention of any member and shall have charge of the books, papers and correspondence.

§ 4. **Treasurer.** The treasurer shall keep a full and accurate record of all receipts and disbursements, and of the membership of the section; and shall pay no money without the written order of a majority of the executive board, and shall make an annual report.

§ 5. **Executive board.** The executive board shall be charged with the direction and control of the work of the section, and shall endeavor, in every way in their power to further its objects. They shall make a full report in writing at each regular meeting of the section, and this report, with the other proceedings of the section, shall be submitted to the American Library Association for publication with its proceedings.

Article 5--Amendments

This constitution may be amended by a three-fourths vote of those present at any regular meeting of the section provided that the proposed amendments shall have been specifically set forth in the call for such meeting.

Cooperative index. *Poole's Index* with its supplements illustrates how great saving of

labor and money results from organized division of labor. It has entirely superseded the practice, formerly followed in hundreds of libraries, of making a separate catalog entry for every leading magazine article. This work now, instead of being duplicated, is equitably divided. Each has but a fraction of the labor, but enjoys the whole benefit in the *Cooperative index*, which each year in printed form, available to all, brings up to date the great *Index to periodical literature*.

Reading for the young. The section has just issued *Reading for the young* by John F. Sargent, a classified, annotated and indexed list of the best books for young people, which is already widely recognized as the standard guide to this class of literature, so indispensable in all public libraries.

A. L. A. index. This work, now nearly ready for publication, aims to do for general literature what *Poole's Index* has done for periodical literature. Arranged on the same general plan, it furnishes a clue to the labyrinth of miscellaneous essays, collected biography and travel, historic monographs, reports of various sociological societies, boards, etc.

Other projects. Among these are:—Printing catalog cards of leading new publications

and standard works, thus cataloging once for all the great mass of books which are now cataloged in each of hundreds of different libraries.

Indexing scientific serials, translations and monographs. Such an index would save many a long search through indexes of individual volumes or through volumes entirely unindexed, beside frequently directing one to a source that he would have otherwise altogether missed.

This is but a part of the possibilities before the publishing section. The certainty and promptness of their realization must depend on the heartiness of the support accorded to the section by those interested in its work.

Communications should be sent to the president, W: I. Fletcher, Amherst College Library, Amherst, Mass., or to the secretary and treasurer, W: C. Lane, Harvard University Library, Cambridge, Mass.

College library section

The college librarians in 1890 held their second meeting for fuller consideration of topics peculiar to libraries of educational institutions, and formally organized, electing W. I. Fletcher, Librarian Amherst College, chairman, and Prof. G. T. Little, Librarian Bowdoin College, secretary.

Trustees' section

There has always been at A. L. A. meetings a sprinkling of library trustees, some of them being among its most interested and efficient workers. In 1890 special invitations sent to this class of officers to attend the White Mountains meeting, and an entire session devoted to consideration of the mutual relations of trustees and librarians, called out a much larger representation and resulted in permanent organization as a 'Trustees' section, with Hon. Pliny T. Sexton, Palmyra, N. Y., chairman, and John M. Glenn, 12 St. Paul st., Baltimore, secretary. The trustees will compare views and advise with each other on their peculiar duties, and the section in its importance to library interests is destined to be second only to the A. L. A. itself.

Their sense of the value of the A. L. A. conferences is expressed in the following resolution:

That the trustees of libraries attending the 12th annual conference of the American Library Association having been duly impressed with the benefit which these meetings confer upon the librarians of the country, and realizing that the benefit derived is eventually for the public good, earnestly urge upon their fellow trustees the great importance of sending their librarians to these conferences, and to pay their expenses and give them the

time in addition to their regular vacation; and realizing the benefit which they themselves have derived from these meetings, they earnestly urge upon their fellow trustees throughout the United States the importance to them and their libraries of trustees also attending these annual conferences.

Bibliographic section

This section is the next to be organized. The first 15 years have been wisely given to improving methods and appliances, and to organizing and getting the A. L. A. into good running condition. It is now time to unite our efforts in this highest field of library cooperation, to which all else is tributary, the supply of the best books. The greatest work before the new section is the *A. L. A. catalog*, a classified, annotated, and indexed list of best books on all subjects, which shall combine in a single manual the judgment of the most experienced librarians of the country. This will start with class lists on subjects most needed, which will be revised with each edition.

The great fault of most lists is that they embarrass young librarians and readers by offering too much. The new lists will consist of a few of the very best books, chiefly in English, selected with regard to those wishing: (1) primers of the subject; (2) fuller

manuals; (3) exhaustive treatises. Leading foreign books will be added in successive revisions. This work, already begun, is based on Sonnenschein's *Best books*, of which a special edition has been taken by 150 prospective members of this section. They will compare notes annually at A. L. A. meetings and interchange needed corrections and additions.

Some of the chief uses of this catalog are:

1. As a guide to book buyers, whether for private or public libraries.
2. As a guide to readers in choosing what books they might best take from the library or from their own shelves.
3. As a manual to answer most wisely the constant question, "What is the best book on my subject?"
4. To take the place of the printed catalog in small public libraries, by writing in the margin the location number of all books in the library, unmarked titles being the best conceivable purchase list.
5. As the most convenient form of catalog for most private libraries, by checking in the margin all books owned.
6. As a check list of books read, with personal notes.

All interested in this work are invited to send their addresses to the editor of the *A. L. A. catalog*, Melvil Dewey, Director N. Y. State Library, Albany, N. Y.

Affiliated meetings

In connection with the A. L. A. meetings, are also held, by provision of their constitutions, meetings of the Association of State Librarians and of the New York Library Association. The various other state associations now rapidly forming will doubtless follow this custom of gathering their members for at least a short session during A. L. A. week. There is also an annual reunion of all those connected with the Library School, whether as faculty, lecturers, graduates or students.

Interested list

A registry of those interested in the modern library movement in all parts of the country has been started. If the reader of this circular does not care to send the \$2 fee to the treasurer and become a member, but yet is desirous of receiving other printed matter about libraries and librarianship, he should send his address marked "interested in libraries" to Melvil Dewey, Director New York State Library, Albany, N. Y.

Officers 1890-91

President

S: SWETT GREEN, Public librarian, Worcester, Mass.

Vice-presidents

C: C. SOULE, Trustee Free Public Library, Brookline, Mass.

W: T. HARRIS, U. S. Commissioner of Education.

W: I. FLETCHER, Librarian Amherst College.

K. A: LINDERFELT, Public librarian, Milwaukee, Wis.

Secretary

F. P. HILL, Public librarian, Newark, N. J.

Assistant secretaries

General

W: E. PARKER, Treas. Library Bureau, Boston, Mass.

MARY SALOME CUTLER, Vice-director Library School, Albany, N. Y.

Travel

H. E. DAVIDSON, Sec. Library Bureau, Boston, Mass.

C: C. PICKETT, Librarian Chicago Law Institute.

Recording

Prof. G: T. LITTLE, Librarian Bowdoin College.

Treasurer

H: J. CARR, Librarian Albright Library, Scranton, Pa.

Finance committee

W: C. LANE, Assistant Librarian Harvard College Library.

J: M. GLENN, Treas. New Mercantile Library, Baltimore, Md.

Cooperation committee

C: A. CUTTER, Librarian Boston Athenæum.
GARDNER M. JONES, Public librarian, Salem,
Mass.

HARRIET E. GREEN, Cataloger Boston
Athenæum.

Library school committee

J. N. LARNED, Librarian Buffalo Library,
Buffalo, N. Y.

F. P. HILL, Public librarian, Newark, N. J.

ELLEN M. COE, Librarian New York Free
Circulating Library.

Public Documents committee

E. C. HOVEY, Trustee Free Public Library,
Brookline, Mass.

WESTON FLINT, Statistician, U. S. Bureau of
Education.

R. R. BOWKER, ex-Editor *Library journal*.

J. P. DUNN, jr, State librarian Indiana.

Standing committee

The PRESIDENT and the SECRETARY, *ex
officio*.

F: M. CRUNDEN, Public librarian. St Louis, Mo.

Endowment committee

J: M. GLENN, Treas. New Mercantile Library,
Baltimore, Md.

E. C. HOVEY, Trustee Free Public Library,
Brookline, Mass.

PLINY T. SEXTON, Regent University of the
State of New York.

Trustees of endowment fund

PLINY T. SEXTON, Regent University of the
State of New York.

NORMAN WILLIAMS, Trustee Crerar Library,
Chicago, Ill.

E. C. HOVEY, Trustee Free Public Library,
Brookline, Mass.

Councillors.

JUSTIN WINSOR, Harvard University, ex-
President 1876-1885.

W: F. POOLE, Newberry Library, Chicago,
ex-President 1885-1887.

C. A. CUTTER, Boston Athenæum, ex-Pres-
ident 1887-1889.

F: M. CRUNDEN, St Louis Public Library,
ex-President 1889-1890.

MELVIL DEWEY, N. Y. State Library, ex-Pres.
1890-1891.

W: H. BRETT, Cleveland Public Library.

C. R. DUDLEY, Denver Mercantile Library.

R. A. GUILD, Brown University.

K. A. LINDERFELT, Milwaukee Public Library.

C: A. NELSON, Newberry Library, Chicago, Ill.

H: M. UTLEY, Detroit Public Library.

A: W. WHELPLEY, Cincinnati Public Library.

A. VAN NAME, Yale College Library.

JOHN EDMANDS, Philadelphia Mercantile
Library.

L. H. STEINER, Enoch Pratt Free Library,
Baltimore, Md.

J: V. CHENEY, San Francisco Free Public
Library.

Miss H. P. JAMES, Osterhout Free Library,
Wilkes-Barré, Pa.

Miss M. E. SARGENT, Middlesex Mechanics
Ass'n, Lowell, Mass.

13/2/4

THE LIBRARY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

PRINTED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO PRESS
STATE OF NEW YORK

NORMAN THOMAS

CHICAGO, ILL.

IN THE CITY OF CHICAGO, ILL.

IN THE COUNTY OF COOK, ILL.

IN THE STATE OF NEW YORK

IN THE CITY OF NEW YORK

IN THE COUNTY OF NEW YORK

IN THE STATE OF NEW YORK

IN THE CITY OF NEW YORK

IN THE COUNTY OF NEW YORK

IN THE STATE OF NEW YORK

IN THE CITY OF NEW YORK

IN THE COUNTY OF NEW YORK

IN THE STATE OF NEW YORK

IN THE CITY OF NEW YORK

IN THE COUNTY OF NEW YORK

IN THE STATE OF NEW YORK

IN THE CITY OF NEW YORK

IN THE COUNTY OF NEW YORK

IN THE STATE OF NEW YORK

IN THE CITY OF NEW YORK

IN THE COUNTY OF NEW YORK

IN THE STATE OF NEW YORK

IN THE CITY OF NEW YORK

IN THE COUNTY OF NEW YORK

IN THE STATE OF NEW YORK

IN THE CITY OF NEW YORK

IN THE COUNTY OF NEW YORK

IN THE STATE OF NEW YORK

IN THE CITY OF NEW YORK

IN THE COUNTY OF NEW YORK

IN THE STATE OF NEW YORK