

AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION COUNCIL

Saturday Morning, June 28, 1930

The meeting was called to order at nine-twenty a. m., President Keogh presiding.

PRESIDENT KEOGH: Will the Council kindly come to order?

Mr. Monnette, President of the Los Angeles Library Board and our orator of Monday evening, has a resolution to present.

MR. ORRA E. MONNETTE: Dr. Keogh, and Ladies and Gentlemen of the Council: This is a matter that was instituted by the American Institute of Genealogy at Chicago. Mr. Vircus, who is conducting some publications there from a commercial side, has appealed to some of the real genealogists of the country to assist him in the broad field of genealogy. I make that explanation because I would not want to appear before you and ask you to be sponsor in any way for any commercial undertaking.

We look at it this way, if we can persuade Mr. Vircus in his work to approach the high standards of genealogy in his publications, we will have accomplished just as much as we hoped to accomplish, to have the A. L. A. give a little more attention to the field of genealogy.

So he organized a committee which he asked me to take charge of as chairman, and this committee has this address to present to you, and I will read it very hurriedly.

... Mr. Monnette read the report of the Committee on Genealogy ...

MR. MONNETTE: This cooperative work should have been undertaken twenty-five or even ten years ago when it would have been comparatively simple. At this time most of the standard works on this subject are out of print, and therefore not easily available, and the hope of this committee lies in the cooperation of the American Library Association.

It is believed that several hundred copies of the different standard works on genealogy are in private hands, many of which could still be acquired from the owners by gift or purchase, and thus become available to as many libraries as desire them.

This committee believes that public interest in this subject, which makes it of library interest, can best be served by the appointment of a committee on genealogical cooperation of the American Library Association, and therefore respectfully begs leave to submit the following resolution for the consideration of and we trust adoption by your honorable board. We offer our cooperation and that of the Institute of American Genealogy to the fullest extent in whatever manner you wish it.

Now this appeal is signed in individual letters by the following, but grouped together by typewriting.

... Mr. Monnette read the list of signatures on his report ...

The resolution which we have prepared for your consideration isn't necessarily final in language. We lay no claim to that. You use it as you think best:

"WHEREAS, a very general public interest in American genealogy has made itself manifest; and

"WHEREAS, The public can be served in this field only through the services of the public library; and

"WHEREAS, The Standard works which are necessary for service on the part of public libraries are for the most part out of print and will have to be acquired through the organized effort of some organization or committee; and

"WHEREAS, The public libraries must look to their national organization, the American Library Association, for guidance in their work; now therefore be it

"RESOLVED, That the American Library Association appoint a committee on genealogical cooperation to study the requirements in this field and report its findings and recommendations to the Association."

You will see the only thought we have in mind and the only action we desire taken is with respect to the appointment of such a committee. Further than that we do not undertake to go.

May I say in a supplemental word that as an avocation merely, not as a professional, I have participated in this field of work for thirty-five years, have done some publishing myself, and a very great deal of compilation. I

can remember when the Los Angeles Public Library had less than 100 volumes and perhaps only an occasional inquiry in a month on this subject. You have been in our public library. You have seen an entire department devoted to this field, with hundreds of people coming every week to search those books and making inquiries on the subject.

In addition, the Sons of the Revolution in Los Angeles maintain a library of 16,000 volumes on this subject alone, and I happen to know of a personal private library on the same subject, not mentioning the name of the owner, in which there are nearly 3500 volumes, and I know from the experience of that librarian that this is a very important and universally appealing subject. Thank you very much.

PRESIDENT KEOGH: What action will you take with this resolution?

MR. MEYER: Mr. Chairman, Mr. Monnette was pleased to refer pointedly to the interest of the Library of Congress in this whole matter of American and English genealogy. I move by that to make a motion that this matter be referred to a special committee to be appointed by the President.

DR. SEVERANCE: Mr. Chairman, I will support that motion.

PRESIDENT KEOGH: Is there further comment?

MR. RANCK: Mr. Chairman, am I to understand by that that the special committee that Mr. Meyer moves is to take this resolution that is offered and we are not voting

on Mr. Monnette's resolution?

PRESIDENT KEOGH: Mr. Meyer.

MR. MEYER: My idea is to refer it to a special committee that can take the matter as presented by Mr. Monnette up at the point where he leaves it, and later on present it in such form as they elect to the Council.

MR. RANCK: That's all right.

PRESIDENT KEOGH: Are there other comments, inquiries of any kind?

MR. JENNINGS: We are not adopting it, but referring the resolution to a committee for consideration and report to this Council.

PRESIDENT KEOGH: If there is no further comment, I shall ask that those in favor of appointing this special committee to consider this resolution and report, say aye, opposed no.

... The motion was carried ...

MR. MONNETTE: Mr. President, I thank you, and may I further supplement by saying that I understood that gentleman's name to be Severance. To the best of my knowledge, I never saw him before, but he and I belong to the same family.
(Laughter)

PRESIDENT KEOGH: Mr. Ranck has a resolution to present.

MR. RANCK: Mr. President and Members of the Council: At the meeting on Tuesday a letter was read from

Ray Lyman Wilbur, Secretary of the Interior, with reference to the work of the National Advisory Committee on Illiteracy, and after some discussion the Chairman appointed Mr. Milam and myself a committee to draft a resolution covering the request of Mr. Wilbur. We offer the following:

"The American Library Association heartily endorses the efforts of the National Advisory Committee on Illiteracy, of which the Honorable Ray Lyman Wilbur, Secretary of the Interior, is Chairman, to encourage the various states and communities of the country in reducing illiteracy, and to lift the nation to a higher rank among the nations of the world in the standards of literacy.

"While the function of the libraries of the country is to promote and encourage the best use of books, beginning their work after the teaching organizations have developed the ability to read, the American Library Association is naturally very much interested in every practical movement whose objective is the creation of the ability to use the material which the libraries are most anxious to supply."

I move the adoption of that resolution.

PRESIDENT KEOGH: Is there a second to that?

MR. JOHN KAISER: I second that.

... The motion was put to a vote and carried ...

PRESIDENT KEOGH: Miss Gillis on Books for the Blind.

MISS GILLIS: Members of the Council: I shall

assume that you are all more or less familiar with the fact that there are too few books for the adult blind of the country and I shall confine myself to presenting a matter that our Committee has had in hand this last year. There are before Congress three Bills which are designed to take care of this situation. One is called the Pratt Bill, which has been fostered by the American Foundation for the Blind. This Bill provides for \$100,000 annually appropriated by Congress to be expended under the direction of the Library of Congress to provide books for adult blind.

The Library of Congress would assign books to certain regional libraries which would take care of service for the blind for department sections of the country.

The second bill is the Braille Bill which was put in by the Braille Institute of America, a California corporation, designed to promote literary work for the blind. This Bill also provides for \$100,000 annually to be expended by the Braille Institute for the Blind, books of course to be distributed to all libraries having departments for the blind in a certain ratio according to the number of readers throughout the country.

The third bill is known as the Josephson Bill and was introduced by Aksel G. S. Josephson, a former librarian who is now blind and lives in Alabama. Mr. Josephson's Bill provides for a perpetual fund of \$2,500,000 making an annual appropriation of \$100,000 for the use of books for the

blind. Mr. Josephson's Bill restricts the books to those of an educational character.

I shall not take your time to go into the merits of these bills, but will ask you to take it for granted that the Executive Board of the American Library Association and the Committee on Work with the Blind, all of whom were written to fully about the three bills, looked into this matter very thoroughly and considered the arguments for all three of them.

The Executive Board of the American Library Association favored the Pratt Bill, the first Bill I mentioned, without dissenting vote. The Committee on Work with the Blind consists of fourteen members, most of them librarians in charge of departments for the blind throughout the country. Of these nine voted in favor of the Pratt Bill, three against it, and one refused to vote because he felt he was biased for one reason or another.

I will tell you this very simply, that the main reasons for favoring the Pratt Bill are these: In the first place the organization of the work is very simple. The Bill is not elaborate and does not have a great many details, but the principal thing is that it places the spending of the money in the hands of the Library of Congress, an already established governmental agency in which we have the greatest confidence. The Bill is backed by the American Foundation for the Blind, for which all of us who deal with the blind have a great deal of respect.

Believing that you will feel that the Committee and the Executive Board have judged this matter on its merits, in regard to the arguments, carefully, I move that the Council also approve the Pratt Bill H. R. 9042, providing books for the adult blind.

PRESIDENT KEOGH: You have had this interesting report by the Chairman of the Committee For Work with the Blind. I am quite certain anything we can do for the blind we hope to do. Does anyone second the resolution proposed?

MR. GEORGE UTLEY: I second the motion.

SECRETARY MILAM: I should like to supplement what has been stated by the Chairman of the Committee for this work. You are not asked to take it on faith or on sympathy to endorse what has been done. You have had the full report of the Committee in the Bulletin which came to you a month or two ago, and you have had frequent brief statements about the activities in the Bulletin during the past four months. So that those who are interested are presumably thoroughly informed already.

PRESIDENT KEOGH: Are there questions or comments of any kind? If not, those who are in favor of endorsing and approving and adopting the resolution say aye, opposed no. It is a vote.

Thank you, Miss Gillis.

Mr. Kaiser will speak on "Trends in Civil Service."

MR. JOHN B. KAISER (Oakland, Calif.): Mr.

Chairman and Members: I am here to represent the Committee on Civil Service Relations rather informally because the Committee's report has been published with the other reports. We are here really for a word of advice from you, or instructions, on a problem to which we gave consideration.

The Committee was a bit in doubt during the year as to whether it should simply consider matters referred to it, whether it should take up some special phase of civil service and make an intensive study, or whether it might profitably make a thorough study of trends in civil service as affecting libraries.

The majority of the Committee favored the latter plan, but it was a large undertaking, would have taken a good deal of organization, perhaps some money, to do it effectively. One or two members of the Committee thought it would be unwise to attempt it for one or two special reasons, so I am here just to ask your advice and instructions on behalf of the incoming Civil Service Committee on this point.

The proposal was that the Committee investigate and report upon present trends in civil service relations of libraries as revealed by a study of recent legislation, federal, state and municipal legislation, city charters, ordinances, and court decisions, opinions of legal advisers, rulings of civil service commissions, resolutions of library boards, trends as seen by library administrators and directors of library schools,

and trends as seen by the Director of the Bureau of Public Personnel Administration.

Personally, I think it would be a very wise thing for the Committee to make such a study. Whether or not we are in favor of civil service for libraries, I feel that we should be very accurately informed as to the trend, and so I present this matter on behalf simply of the incoming Committee with the request that you express yourselves and advise them what you think should be done in the matter.

PRESIDENT KEOGH: Will anyone express himself or advise the Committee? Of course, this can be done in writing, but we would rather have it now if someone has something to say.

SECRETARY MILAM: Mr. President, I would like to endorse the suggestion which has come to Mr. Kaiser from some members of the Committee. It seems to me that this Civil Service Committee has been running along now for four or five years, not the same members to be sure. There has been very little action because nothing much has been referred to it.

It seems to me that it would be entirely appropriate for the Council to at least suggest to the Committee that it make an investigation of the trends of civil service and report at its convenience. It would probably have to be done on a purely voluntary basis. It may take one year, it may take two or three. For my part I should be very interested to know what are the trends in civil service as they relate

to libraries. There hasn't been a report on that I think for quite some time.

MR. JENNINGS: Mr. President, I have been a member of this Committee for a good many years and I think on this particular question I voted in the minority, and I want to explain why I did that.

It seems that every time we come to Los Angeles the question of civil service comes up. Nineteen years ago I was asked to read a paper on this subject in Pasadena and I was asked to handle it without gloves, which I tried to do.

My reason for opposing this investigation at this time -- I have a double reason. In the first place, I think that investigation might raise the question of putting libraries under civil service, and civil service men favor that. I think librarians do not favor it. That is the only reason that I will name, but it seems to me a valid reason for not undertaking any extensive investigation of civil service trends as applied to libraries.

Very few libraries are under civil service, and very few want to be. If an investigation could be carried on without raising the question in the minds of civil service men, I think I would be willing to undertake such an investigation. I would be willing to undertake it if it could in any way aid libraries that are under civil service, but I have opposed it in the Committee because I felt that it would raise the question and put some of the rest of us in danger. The

Seattle Public Library came out from under civil service about twenty-one years ago, and we certainly do not want to do anything that would bring us back under civil service domination.

I may be wrong in my vote, but I just wanted to explain how I felt about it.

PRESIDENT KEOGH: Is there any further comment?

MR. P. B. WRIGHT (Kansas City, Mo.): It seems to me if we knew the trend of the civil service movement we might be in position to combat it. I had some little experience on the Coast with the civil service, and if we know what they are trying to do to us, we might be in position to fend it off. I am one of the people, like Mr. Jennings, who believes that civil service is not desirable for public libraries, and I should like to have all the ammunition possible to fight it. If this Committee can let us know what the other people are trying to do, then we may know the ammunition that is needed to prevent what happened in his town in the early days, and what happened here and in other cities.

MR. UTLEY: Mr. President, I am in favor of both sides. It seems to me that we ought to keep informed of the trend. I can see Mr. Jennings' position very clearly, but I think also, and I speak as one who represents a library that is not in civil service and under no danger of coming under civil service, that any public library may suddenly be faced with the situation of needing to know what the trend is and what the situation is.

Could we not have our Civil Service Committee make such investigation as will show us the trend, give us as clear information as possible in regard to the movement, but have this investigation made rather quietly, not made public, in the hands of a committee and available when needed by persons who do need it?

PRESIDENT KEOGH: There is no motion before the house.

MISS MAY MOORE: I think it is quite proper that there should be something written down in regard to the matter of the library's position in regard to civil service, so that charter-making bodies can turn to it for advice.

That matter came up in my city. A new charter was being framed and it developed that the position of the library in city government was not clearly defined in any publication whatever and that it varied very considerably over the country, and there was no good guide for charter-making bodies in the whole matter of the relation of the library to the city government, to other departments of the civic organizations, and especially in regard to civil service.

MR. KAISER: Speaking purely personally, I am really in favor of such a study as has been suggested. I agree with Mr. Utley and the others who have said that we ought to know the trend and be informed irrespective of our present status or possible status in relation to civil service.

I think that if we don't make such a study the

civil service people will sooner or later. They are alert. They are interested in libraries. Most of them are trying to help them, and we are not going to be kept out of sight at all. So I think if there is to be a study or any likelihood of there being one, we had better make it first. It is going to be a big job if it is done well, and while we do not need to give it publicity, yet we cannot keep it in the dark. I really think the way to be prepared in the matter is to make such a study.

PRESIDENT KEOGH: Will you make a motion, Mr. Kaiser, or will someone make a motion?

MR. KAISER: I move, Mr. Chairman, to get the matter formally before the house, that the incoming Committee on Civil Service Relations be instructed to make a study of the trends in civil service as outlined in the report of the outgoing committee.

PRESIDENT KEOGH: Is there a seconder?

MR. WRIGHT: I second the motion.

PRESIDENT KEOGH: Is there further comment?

MR. RANCK: Mr. Chairman, I think the nub of this matter is not that the libraries are opposed to civil service but as to who is to administer. Most of the libraries that are outside of a municipal civil service commission have in their own organization a method of civil service and the question really is, which way you get the better results. I think it would be unfortunate for the impression to go out that the American Library Association is opposed to what is gener-

ally termed civil service. It is a question really of who is to administer.

I was a member of the committee a good many years ago that drafted the so-called library clause of a model city charter, and at the meetings of the National Municipal League which sponsored that model municipal charter, we went to the mat quite vigorously on the whole question of library support and general administration. That is a fundamental question and it seems to me there is even more involved in this subject than simply the matter of civil service in its relation to libraries.

What we are interested in, it seems to me, is the type of organization and administration which will give the best results for libraries. I may add that my personal conviction based on considerable study and observation, is that very much better results are obtained and achieved when the civil service is administered by an intelligent library board than by any municipal civil service commission in the city hall outside.

PRESIDENT KEOGH: Any further comments? Are you ready for the question?

SECRETARY MILAM: Mr. President, in view of the comments of two or three members, I wonder whether we would like to consider an amendment which would ask that this report be presented to the Council before it is published, rather than after, which is the custom with our committee reports.

Do you accept that, Mr. Kaiser?

MR. KAISER: I would accept that amendment.

MR. JENNINGS: Mr. President, may I ask if the mover of the motion would be willing to insert the word "quiet" before the word investigation? (Laughter)

PRESIDENT KEOGH: Did you hear that, Mr. Kaiser?

MR. KAISER: I think so. The investigation needn't make much noise.

PRESIDENT KEOGH: Are you ready now? Those in favor of the resolution say aye, opposed no. I think you are the only one opposed, Mr. Jennings. It is a vote.

Mr. Kaiser, will you kindly report for Mr. Van Hoesen on the Bimillennium Vergilianum?

MR. KAISER: Dr. Richardson and Dr. Van Hoesen are not present. I have been asked to make a very brief report for the Vergil Bimillennium activities in libraries. There is before you here a two page letter sent out by the Committee some time ago to state and provincial library commissions which contains a good deal that I shall not touch upon other than to say there are three projects before the ^{Committee} Commissions:

1. The preparation of Union catalog at the Library of Congress of Vergil items.
2. Exhibits of rare books in certain libraries.
3. List of best books which any libraries might exhibit.

Libraries which are planning or have already

established important exhibits are: Enoch Pratt Free Library, Baltimore; Newark Public Library, Newark, New Jersey; and the New York Public Library. There is a list available in type-written form of what the Newark people are displaying. I understand that the bulletin of the New York Public Library, probably the June number, will contain a list of its material on exhibit, and the Enoch Pratt Library has published a list similar to the one issued by the American Classical League and that is available for one or two cents a copy and is of definite use to many libraries.

The General Chairman of the Vergil Bimillennium is Anna P. MacVay, Vice-President of the New York Classical League in New York City, and I said Dr. Richardson was Chairman of the Committee on Exhibits and Activities in Libraries.

Here at this convention through the courtesy of the Classical Center of the Los Angeles School District, of which Miss Josephine Abell is Director and Miss Evelyn Bank is Assistant, there has been made available to us an exhibit in the far corner of the room of some of the more easily accessible materials that almost any library could get together.

October 15th is the date of the two thousandth anniversary of Vergil's birth, and it is working toward this date that it is suggested we have these various exhibits.

PRESIDENT KEOGH: There is no action desired on this, Mr. Kaiser. This is for the information of the Council.

Mr. Hanson has written a report on the Journal of Discussion, and as he is not here, I have asked Miss Howe to read the report.

MISS HARRIET E. HOWE (Chicago): The report from the Committee on Journal Discussion.

... Miss Howe read the report of the Committee on Journal Discussion ...

PRESIDENT KEOGH: You have had this report read to you. What action would you like to take? Does the general plan appeal to you, and if so, would you like to refer it to the Executive Board, or is there other action more desirable?

MR. RANCK: Mr. Chairman, I move that the matter be referred to the Executive Board with power.

MR. KAISER: I second the motion.

SECRETARY MILAM: May I suggest a word of thanks to Professor Hanson for having put this thing through. This is something we have been talking about now for four or five years. He took the chairmanship very reluctantly and his report is certainly something to justify approval.

MR. RANCK: Do you want that included in the same motion?

SECRETARY MILAM: I think it would be nice.

MR. RANCK: I am willing to include that in the motion.

PRESIDENT KEOGH: And the seconder is willing to include that also?

MR. KAISER: Yes.

PRESIDENT KEOGH: Is there other comment?

... The motion was put to a vote and carried unanimously ...

PRESIDENT KEOGH: Mr. Bostwick has submitted a resolution.

... Secretary Milam read the resolution of appreciation to the White House Conference on Child Health and Protection ...

DR. SEVERANCE: I second the resolution.

... The question was put to a vote and carried ...

PRESIDENT KEOGH: There is a recommendation to the Executive Board which Mr. Milam will bring before you.

SECRETARY MILAM: The Executive Board recommends that the Committee on Committees be requested to re-define the duties of committees. Mr. Reece, who is the Chairman of that Committee, and I have been in correspondence and we made the recommendation to the Executive Board.

The point is this, that in 1923 the Committee on Committees presented a relatively complete definition or statement of definitions, compilations of definitions of the duties of the committees, dividing the committees into standing and special.

Since that time new committees have been appointed by various appointing bodies on the authority of the Council, on the authority of the Executive Board, and perhaps

occasionally by the President alone in an emergency. These committees have been inadequately defined. Moreover, some of the committees which were small, like the Committee on Education, five or ten years ago, have now grown into very large committees with numerous sub-committees.

It seems to me we ought to have a reconsideration by the Committee on Committees of the whole set-up of the committee organization which would be involved in re-defining these committees. They may discover overlapping of duties and so on.

It seemed to the Executive Board that while the Executive Board itself could ask the Committee on Committees to do it, it would have greater weight if the Council should endorse the Executive Board's request to the Committee on Committees.

PRESIDENT KEOGH: Have we that endorsement?

MR. KAISER: I would so move.

MR. RANCK: I second the motion.

PRESIDENT KEOGH: Any comment?

... The motion was put to a vote and carried ...

PRESIDENT KEOGH: We have no other business on our docket. Has any member of the Council anything to bring before us?

MR. RANCK: Mr. Chairman, I am asking a question and that is, as I recall there has been no study, no recent study of the status of libraries under the commission manager

or commission form of government.

Some very curious things have come to my attention in the last year or so, and some since I have been here in discussing it with various people, and it seems to me that it would be very useful if a study of that whole subject were made and presented to the Council.

As an illustration, I recall one library where when the librarian was absent on vacation, the city manager in the meantime had more or less upset the internal organization of the institution, appointing a new set of people and so on.

The question of finance and the whole integrity of the administration as we have been trying to build it up for a series of years is, I think, somewhat seriously impaired in some of our cities, and it seems to me a study on that whole subject would be of great interest and importance to the library profession.

I am offering that as a suggestion and will be glad to hear if any others have any ideas on that subject.

SECRETARY MILAM: Mr. President, we have a Committee on Libraries in Relation to City Manager Government. Miss Bogle, will you show that to Mr. Ranck? It does not cover commission government itself, but the Committee has made a brief report this year suggesting or saying to the Association it has seemed wise not to make an ambitious program or much noise but to promote the matter quietly. I am not quite sure

how much they have done or how much they are going to do, but it is a new committee and I think we probably would wish, we might wish simply to refer Mr. Ranck's suggestion to that Committee as a means of stimulating this Committee to further action.

MR. RANCK: That will be all right.

PRESIDENT KEOGH: May we do that without any formal action?

MR. RANCK: That's all right.

PRESIDENT KEOGH: Is there other business? This is the last session of the Council.

If there is no other business, I declare the session ended.

... The meeting adjourned at eleven-ten a. m....