

## WHAT DOES A LIBRARIAN DO?

The librarian's job, in whatever kind of library he works, is three-fold:

He selects the books, periodicals, newspapers, pamphlets, documents, films, recordings, photographs, maps, technical reports, and other types of recorded knowledge which make up the library's collection. This involves choosing, from all the materials available, and in terms of his budget, those which will be most useful to the public his library serves.

From his knowledge of the content of these materials, he organizes and describes the library's collection by means of a system of cataloging and classification. This enables readers to find what the library has on a given subject, the books by a given author, or a particular book by its title.

And both of these activities exist to make possible the third — to help each reader, whatever his interest, purpose, education, or reading ability, to find material suited to his need.

In addition to these basic responsibilities, which are the librarian's in any type of library, there are others that vary, depending on the kind of library in which he works. The librarian of a business organization may do the research, translating, and abstracting for his company's research staff. The public librarian often works with groups as well as individuals. He plans and participates in discussion groups and conducts film showings and music recording programs. The librarian interprets the library to his public through newspapers, campus publications, or house organs, radio and television, by talks to community groups, exhibits and other public relations techniques.

Many librarians specialize and work in one field of librarianship or with a particular group of individuals and books. In a large public library or a school library, there are librarians who work only with children or with young adults. There are librarians whose specialty may be cataloging or the purchasing of books. Some librarians do reference work in a broad, general area; others may do highly specialized work in only one field, such as economics, technology, medicine, or art. Others provide reading guidance to individuals or groups, or may work in the field of adult education. Some are concerned with films and recordings, as well as books, documents, and periodicals. Librarians may work on bookmobiles, for agencies of the federal government, at home or abroad, in hospitals, or colleges. They may practice their profession in museums, factories, banks, or embassies.

Often librarians are also administrators — responsible for the library's buildings, quarters, and equipment, for its financial affairs, governmental relations, public relations, and personnel administration. In very large libraries, these may become specializations also.

There are many persons employed in libraries who are not librarians at all — assistants who charge books out to readers and keep records of books loaned, and others who locate books on the shelves and return them to their proper places after they have circulated. There are typists, stenographers, and bookkeepers, who assist with the business processes of the library. In large libraries there may be artists, printers, editors, book binders, and photographers.