

Foreword

"We earnestly request all users to give us the benefit of their criticism in order that sometime our successors may actually bring out 'the perfect book.'" This invitation which appeared in the foreword to the Standard (15th) edition was, of course, not accepted by "all users" but a generous number did respond in print, through correspondence, or orally. This extensive criticism, both favorable and unfavorable, cannot be summarized here but its constructive nature provided specific guidance for the preparation of this edition and led to a request on the part of the Lake Placid Club Education Foundation that the Library of Congress assume the responsibility for the editorial work. Responsibility for editorial policy rests with the Decimal Classification Editorial Policy Committee, a joint committee of the Lake Placid Club Education Foundation, the American Library Association, and the Library of Congress.

Editions 2-14 of the classification were each characterized largely by the addition of expansions of particular parts of the classification. After the 14th edition appeared in 1942 many American librarians came to believe that a standard edition, in which all parts of the classification were expanded to the same degree, would be preferable to one in which some parts appeared in extreme detail while others were relatively unelaborated.¹ In response to this desire for a standard edition the 15th edition which appeared in 1951 included reductions of those parts which were deemed to be in too great detail, expansions of parts insufficiently detailed, and, in addition to provision for new concepts, a modernization of the terminology.

Criteria for the 16th edition were adopted by the Editorial Policy Committee in 1953, and revised in 1955, to guide the editorial staff in the preparation of an edition to meet the criticisms that the 15th edition was insufficient for the needs of many libraries. In the restatement, the objectives of this edition were described as follows:

The 16th Edition shall be designed for use in the classification of books and similar materials in general libraries, regardless of size, except (1) those libraries which prefer to use an abridged edition and (2) those libraries with special collections which prefer to use close

¹ Clapp, V. W. *Progress towards the 16th edition of Dewey*. *Journal of Cataloging and Classification*, v. 12, p. 197-98, Oct. 1956.

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classification for which extremely detailed expansions are needed. Its structure should be such that it can be applied broadly or in detail, depending upon type and size of library. This requires maintenance of the flexibility of notation in the DC—a valuable feature not common to all classification schemes—which makes possible the shortening of numbers without damaging the structure of the schedules, so that the same edition can be used by libraries varying greatly in size. Stability of the fundamental structure of the schedules should be maintained, so that any part of any one of the three types of editions—abridged, regular or standard, and a possible future bibliographic edition—can be used with parts of the others, without making total reclassification necessary. The 16th Edition should also take into account, in both introduction and schedules, the needs of library schools in teaching the theory, principles, and practice of the DC.²

The most important decision that faced the Decimal Classification Editorial Policy Committee was whether to follow the principle of *continuity and integrity of numbers* or that of *keeping pace with knowledge*. These principles and the Committee's decision are well stated in Godfrey Dewey's preface to the 7th edition.

In the making and editing of any classification, two basic principles are constantly in conflict. One is the DC traditional policy of integrity of numbers, which enables its users to depend on each new edition to include few or no relocations of topics but to include expansions which are based on the schedules in earlier editions, thereby achieving continuity and avoiding the cost of reclassification. The other principle is the philosophy of keeping pace with knowledge, which holds that any classification scheme, to retain its usefulness must, from time to time, restate or redefine and regroup or rearrange subjects according to the changed concepts of a new generation. The first principle, strongly urged by Melvil Dewey, governed the editorial policy of the first 14 editions, the second principle influenced largely the editorial policy of Edition 15, resulting in relocation of something like a thousand topics, about 300 of which would appear in an abridged edition.

Professional opinion of these policies has varied widely but with no clear cut majority either as to principles or practice. In order to determine as clearly as possible the wishes of the library profession, and to incorporate the readjustments to meet those wishes in the present

² Journal of Cataloging and Classification, v. 12, p. 93 April 1956

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abridged edition, instead of waiting several years for Edition 16, publication of this edition was delayed for several months to give time for a questionnaire to be sent to nearly a thousand representative libraries and library schools. In the light of that questionnaire, about 55% of the relocations promulgated in Edition 15 are being retained, about 45% restored to the status of earlier editions culminating in Edition 14. At the same time, the Decimal Classification Editorial Policy Committee has expressly confirmed, for the future, the guiding principle of integrity of numbers, accepting the recommendation of the Special Advisory Committee on the Decimal Classification, appointed by the ALA Division of Cataloging and Classification that relocation of subjects be made sparingly, and only upon overwhelming need and demand.

The Decimal Classification Editorial Policy Committee knows that the conflict between these two principles will prevent any library classification from reaching the status of "the perfect book" but still invites criticism of this edition with the hope of making further improvements in the 17th edition.

The Committee has nine members, six of whom are appointed for six-year terms with nominations alternating between the Lake Placid Club Education Foundation and the American Library Association, the other three representing Forest Press, Inc., the Library of Congress (as long as LC maintains its concern with the Decimal Classification), and the Cataloging and Classification Section, Resources and Technical Services Division of the ALA. Present members are Elizabeth C. Borden, Godfrey Dewey, Virginia Drewry, Carlyle J. Frarey, Bertha M. Frick, Evelyn M. Hensel, Harriet D. MacPherson, Lucile M. Morsch, and Fremont Rider. Others who served during the preparation of this edition are Verne W. Clapp, who served as chairman until October 1956, Janet S. Dickson, the late Milton J. Ferguson, Richard O. Pautzsch, and Mrs. Lela de Otte Surrey.

Lucile M. Morsch

CHAIRMAN, DECIMAL CLASSIFICATION
EDITORIAL POLICY COMMITTEE

Washington, D C
1 May 1958

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Editor's Introduction

History

The confusion of the contents of the Amherst College Library in 1872 must have presented to Melvil Dewey student library assistant, a similar challenge to that of his mother's pantry when, at the age of five, he rearranged it systematically. Always an enthusiastic reformer, and urged on by his hatred of waste of time, it probably did not seem to him unusual that at twenty he should try to bring order out of chaos, a situation which had evidently been of little concern to his predecessors. Ultimately, in solving the problem at Amherst, he achieved a high degree of order for a vast number of libraries the world over.

After study of the classification of knowledge as conceived by Aristotle, Bacon, Locke, and other philosophers, and the recently published¹ library classifications of Schwartz and Harris, Dewey decided to use a scheme of arranging books by subject based upon Harris's inversion of the Baconian order of History, Poesy, Philosophy. This decision to use a subject arrangement was a radical departure from the almost universal practice of arranging books alphabetically by their authors' names, or by size or accession or even color.

The problem of devising a simple scheme of notation was possibly more difficult than deciding upon the plan of arrangement. None of the philosophic classifications used such a device. The Schwartz scheme was complicated by the addition of symbols for size, and the Harris notation provided only for classes, not for single books. Dewey's visits to libraries in New York and New England revealed only how much need there was for an efficient system. The three existing schemes for decimal arrangement of books, du Maine's in 1583, the Glasgow, *ca* 1790, and the Shurtleff in 1856, evidently did not impress Dewey. All three were based upon numbering shelves rather than books. In a moment of inspiration, born of intensive study and thought, came the solution which now seems so simple, the application of Arabic numerals used decimally as notation for books arranged by subject.

The Amherst Library Committee may well have been somewhat staid-

¹ For simplified spelling in this work, see the section on *Spelling* below.

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tled to receive from a student assistant three papers proposing, not only a revolutionary classification scheme for the library, but also a carefully considered account of its merits and how it was especially adapted to the needs of the Amherst Library. However, it approved the proposal, and, with the advice and help of others, the following three years were devoted by Dewey to improving and extending the original plan and in reorganizing and classifying the library.

In 1876 *A Classification and Subject Index for Cataloguing and Arranging the Books and Pamphlets of a Library*, an improved and amplified version of the original plan, was published anonymously. In the years that followed, Dewey was instrumental in establishing a number of library organizations which, in turn, contributed to the success of the new classification. Almost simultaneously with the publication of the classification, the American Library Association and an organization later to be known as the Library Bureau were founded. The *American Library Journal* issued its first number in the same year. Eleven years later, the first library school was opened at Columbia University. Thus, for the first time, the library profession was given a multiplicity of outlets for the expression and propagation of its increasingly liberal concept of the function of libraries and the resultant necessity for efficient library operation.

In its radical departure from the old order, the Decimal Classification was wonderfully fitted to the progressive spirit of this period of transition. It never lacked adherents, and they never lacked channels for spreading their enthusiasm. How widespread its use and popularity in the United States had become is well illustrated by the creation in 1930, because of popular demand, of a section in the Library of Congress for the purpose of assigning Decimal Classification numbers to books which libraries using the scheme might be expected to acquire. A recent estimate has shown that about 96 percent of the public libraries in the United States, 89 percent of the college and university libraries, and 64 percent of the special libraries follow the system.

Use of the classification has spread outside the United States to Canada, Latin America, Europe, Asia, Africa, and Australia. In part, or in its entirety, it has been translated into French, Spanish, Portuguese, German, Dutch, Czech, Greek, Hebrew, Turkish, Japanese, Korean, Indonesian, Malayalam, and other languages.

Some impetus to this general acceptance was given by the Institut International de Bibliographie in 1895, when it decided to use the DC as

the basis for a bibliographic classification for its international subject index. In 1905 the Institut published the *Classification Decimale*, using the basic plan of the DC expanded considerably and employing supplementary symbols to designate subject relationships. In 1927-1929 a revision was published under the title, *Classification Decimale Universelle*. Both of these are referred to interchangeably as the CD, the UDC, and the Brussels Classification. They have been translated in full or in abridged form from the French into a number of other languages, including Dutch, Swedish, German, and English. Differences have appeared through the years between the DC and the CD, due in part to the more complex demands of a bibliographic classification, but the basis is still fundamentally that established by Dewey.

Basic Plan

The Decimal Classification divides all knowledge, as represented by books and other materials which are acquired by libraries, into nine main classes numbered by digits 1 to 9. Material too general to belong to any one of these classes, such as newspapers and encyclopedias, falls into a tenth class numbered 0 which precedes the others. The classes are written as hundreds, thus, 000 is general works, 100 is philosophy, 200 is religion. Each class is separated into nine divisions, with general works on the class occupying a tenth division which precedes the others. Thus, 500 is pure science in general (dictionaries, periodicals, collected essays, and the like), while 510 is mathematics, 520 is astronomy and allied sciences, 530 is physics, and so on. Each division is again divided into nine sections preceded by a general section, thus, 510 is mathematics in general, 511 arithmetic, 512 algebra, 513 elementary Euclidean geometry. Further division, to any extent whatsoever which may be desirable to bring together like materials and separate unlike ones, may be made by the addition of digits following a decimal point. Although most numbers in this edition do not exceed six digits in length, *i.e.*, three to the right of the decimal point, nevertheless, the requirements of the literature in various subject fields which have grown rapidly since Melvil Dewey's original scheme was developed are such that the numbers extend sometimes to nine and in a few cases to even more digits.

All the books acquired by a library may be classed according to the tables provided by the DC, each being assigned to, and marked with the number of, the class, division, section, or subsection to which it belongs, the num-

ber being the device which brings together on the library's shelves all its books on a given subject, placing them next to books on related subjects, and placing related subjects together as part of the broad class which contains them, the whole in an orderly progression.

The basic pattern is presented in a series of summaries, the first of which shows the ten classes, the second the one hundred divisions, and the third the approximately one thousand sections. Use of the classification will rapidly make one familiar with the first two summaries and much of the third.

The three summaries are followed by full classification tables, often called schedules, which present in numerical order all classes, divisions, sections, and subsections to the full degree of expansion required by most general libraries of practically any size. Because the schedules are filled with definitions, scope notes, synonyms, cross references, directions, and other helpful devices which are described below, it is important that the classifier always refer to them before attempting to class a specific book, he should never attempt to do this from the summaries alone, which are supplied simply as a sort of bird's-eye view of the full schedules. Scattered thru the schedules are 76 special summaries which supplement the general ones by showing the pattern of division of various three-, four-, and five-figure numbers which, in their full development, are so complex as to be difficult to view as a whole.

In volume two is an alphabetic index, no less important a part of the classification than the tables, which supplies for all headings and many synonyms and related terms the number where each subject may be found in the schedules. Because the index is "relative," showing where the various relations of a given subject may be class, the classifier should refer to it even when he feels certain just where in the full tables the subject of his particular book belongs, to make sure that he has not overlooked a better number.

Full explanation of how to use the schedules, the index, and supplementary tables follows.

Mnemonic Aids

Numerous devices recur thruout the schedules which promote the ease of use of the system. One of these is the repeated use of certain numbers with the same meaning. For example, 450 is Italian language, 850 is Italian literature, 945 is Italian history, 035 is Italian encyclopedias, 075 is

Italian newspapers, and so on. In each of these cases the digit 5 stands for Italy. This does not, of course, mean that 5 always denotes Italy, for its use is required in many other contexts, but Italy is always represented by 5.

This mnemonic feature is especially useful in the areas of language, literature, geography, and history. In class 400 language, and class 800 literature, 2 means English (*e g*, 420 English language, 820 English literature), 3 German, 4 French, 5 Italian, 6 Spanish, 69 Portuguese (469 and 869), and so on. Under each *language*, 3 means dictionaries, 4 means synonyms, 5 means grammar, *e g*, English dictionary 423, French synonyms 444, Portuguese grammar 469 5. Under each *literature*, 1 means poetry, 2 means drama, 3 means fiction, 4 means essays, 5 means oratory, *e g*, German drama 832, Italian oratory 855. In class 900 history, Europe is 940, and 942 means England, 943 Germany, 944 France, 945 Italy, 946 Spain, 946 9 Portugal, under 950 Asia, 951 means China, 952 Japan, 954 India. In this fashion, the modern history of the entire earth is spread out over 940-999.

Each of these systems of division, the language division of 400 and the geographic division of 900, particularly the latter, are repeated in many appropriate places. Geography itself is classed in 910, and geography of specific parts of the world is in 914-919 *divided like* 940-999. Thus, whereas 940 is history of Europe, 914 is geography of Europe, whereas 942 is history of England, 914 2 is geography of England, whereas 946 9 is history of Portugal, 914 69 is geography of Portugal. In the same way, 336 4-336 9 is public finance of specific countries, with public finance of the United States in 336 73 because history of the United States is 973. This kind of division is not limited to whole countries: a guidebook to Detroit, Michigan is 917 743 4, because history of Detroit is 977 434, the reader will observe that the digits following 91 (for geography and description) are the same as those following 9 (for history), with the decimal point always following the third digit. In exactly the same way, many numbers throughout the schedules may be divided like 940-999 or like other appropriate sequences of numbers which have been spelled out at different points in the schedules, thus rendering it unnecessary to repeat long sequences over and over. For example, 312 3 statistics on incidence of specific diseases is divided like 616 medicine, so that, since 616 912 is medical treatment of smallpox, 312 391 2 is statistics on incidence of smallpox. In a few cases, a number may be divided like the entire classification, 000-999, most noteworthy of these is 016 bibliography, which

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may be divided by any appropriate number, *e g*, bibliography of medical treatment of smallpox 016 616 912, bibliography of English fiction 016 823, bibliography of history of Detroit 016 977 434.

By far the most frequently used division is that like 940-999, or like 930-999 (930 is ancient history) A list of the numbers which may be divided like these numbers follows the relative index.

The classifier should not permit his fascination with the possibilities of dividing one number like another to lead him into ill-advised combinations which may turn out to be more confusing than helpful Addition of digits not specifically provided in the schedules is likely to result in the blocking of a number which a future edition may expand in a way which will serve his purposes more satisfactorily It is always preferable, if local additions are required, to use letters or other devices instead of digits. Numbers are fascinating things, but the unwary can trip over them. The classifier should also remember that the instruction, "divide like," always means to divide like another number *only where applicable*

Form Divisions

Altho the classification is generally by subject except in class 800 literature, subarrangement for the form of presentation of a subject is often desirable To provide for this the classifier may use the regular "form divisions," a full list of which immediately precedes the complete tables. The chief ones are

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 01 Philosophy and theory | 06 Organizations and societies |
| 02 Handbooks and outlines | 07 Study and teaching |
| 03 Dictionaries and encyclopedias | 08 Collections and polygraphy |
| 04 Essays and lectures | 09 History and local treatment |
| 05 Periodicals | |

It will be noted that, while these are known as form divisions, and handbooks, dictionaries, periodicals are true forms, some of the divisions are more properly subject aspects, *e g*, philosophy, study and teaching, history. The chief point to be remembered, however, is that most subjects can be treated according to any one or more of these forms or aspects

The form divisions may be used with any subject when applicable For example, a dictionary of science 503, study and teaching of mathematics 510 7, history of Italian poetry 851.09. When two divisions are applicable,

e g, lectures on philosophy of science, 01, 07, 09, which are partly of a subject nature, should be preferred to 02-06, 08.

Altho the form divisions may be used with any subject, they should not be used indiscriminately. It is, for example, wise not to divide by them when the number to be divided is more than four or five digits in length, except where the possibility is explicitly shown in the schedules, lest their use block the library's taking advantage of expansions which may be introduced into future editions. This is particularly true when the subject which the classifier proposes to divide has a broader meaning than the subject of the book being classified. A form division should not be used when the specific aspect is otherwise provided for by the schedules, *e g*, 655 1 history of printing, 704 9 collected writings on art, the schedules often, but not always, lead the classifier from the expected form division number to the number which has been used in its stead. The relative index, too, has entries leading to such deviations from form division numbers, *e g*, Theory music 781. In general, except in the 900's, form division 09, as well as other numbers which the tables recommend be divided like 930 or 940-999, should not be divided closer than by the country, or in the United States by the state. Furthermore, any title should be classed by its most specific subject before subdivision by place is considered, *e g*, taxation in the United States 336 209 73 (or preferably just 336 2) rather than 336 73 public finance in the United States. Likewise, a form division for a specific work should be applied only to the narrowest number which includes the book, *e g*, essays on English history in 942 004, not in 940 04 or in 904.

In general, only one 0 is required to identify a form division, *e g*, 503 not 500 03, 510 7 not 510 07. However, in certain schedules it has been necessary to use 0 with a special meaning, and then the classifier should, and normally is instructed in the schedule itself to, use two 0's for the form divisions, in a very few cases, three 0's are required for form divisions. For example, in class 900 a 0 is normally used to distinguish period divisions in history, so that history of England in the Tudor period is 942 05, while a periodical devoted to English history is 942 005, and again, local government in Europe is 352 04, local elections are 352 004, essays on local government are 352 000 4.

Form divisions are always given explicitly in the tables under the ten major classes, *e g*, 109, 204, 303. Under other numbers they are spelled out only for specific reasons, such as when the form division of a number has been extended to take on a special but related meaning in addition to

the normal one, or instead of the normal one which is not applicable to the specific subject

Annotations in the Tables

Even with careful choice of terms for the headings corresponding to the numbers in the classification tables, it may be difficult for the busy classifier under the pressure of his daily work to decide where various titles should be classed. For example, altho it is easy enough to determine that a general work on the history of England should go in 942, it is not so obvious what should be done with a book on the history of the Commonwealth of Nations. What is the difference between a collection of English essays, and a collection of essays about English literature? Should a work on gambling class in 798.48 with betting on the horses? Do reparations for World War I go with works on the war, in history, or with works on public debt, in economics? To assist in making such decisions quickly and easily, this edition of the DC is the most extensively annotated of any in its long history. Notes are of several varieties.

Definitions are supplied for terms which might not appear in common reference sources, and also to distinguish the specific meaning intended from among a variety of common meanings.

Scope notes indicate the aspects of a given subject which are intended to be included in a specific number. A special kind of scope note is "comprehensive works," which means that, when different aspects of a subject are classed in different places, works treating of the subject comprehensively are classed at the place indicated, it is always followed by a cross reference telling where to class specific aspects. For example, comprehensive works on penmanship are classed in 652.1, but some specific aspects of the subject are classed elsewhere, *e g*, handwriting analysis and identification 137.7, handwriting analysis in criminal investigation 364.12, paleography 417, manuscripts 091, methods of teaching writing in elementary schools 372.51.

Inclusion notes enumerate parts of a topic and closely related topics which, because the amount of book literature is expected to be insufficient to justify their having separate numbers, are classed in the same number as the main topic. Sometimes an inclusion note under a broad topic is intended to apply to each of the subdivisions of that topic which are provided for separately, *e g*, the note, "including selection, deterioration, preservation, construction properties," which appears with 691 building

construction materials, is meant to apply to each subdivision, 691 1 timber, 691 2 building stones, 691 3 concrete and reinforced concrete, 691 6 glass, and so on

Instruction notes supply specific directions of various sorts, *e g*, when to use irregular form divisions, when to divide like another number or series of numbers, when to arrange subtopics alphabetically, where to find alternative provision for a subject, where to class topics which, in an earlier edition, were classed at the place where the note appears

Cross references, which are printed in *italics*, refer the classifier to other numbers where he should class related topics, thus to a degree serving to differentiate between numbers. For example, under 309 2 social planning, the classifier is told to see 338 9 for economic planning and 711 for planning of physical facilities. Many references, especially those following "comprehensive works" scope notes, are "blanket" references which advise the classifier to turn to that one of a group of related topics which is the subject of the specific book in his hand. Such a reference may be found at 942, history of England, "*For a specific part of the Commonwealth of Nations, see the part, e g, Canada 971,*" and at 770 photography, "*For a specific application of photography, see the subject, e g, astronomical photography 522 63*" The classifier must not let himself become baffled by references which at first sight appear to be "blind," that is, to lead to non-existent numbers. Upon examination he will realize that each such number referred to has been built from a base number by addition of digits authorized in a "divide-like" note or of digits coming from the form division table

Centered headings, which appear with the numbers and headings centered on the page instead of with numbers in the usual number column and which show the spread of a sequence of numbers which is spelled out in detail immediately following, perform two functions. One function is to show the organization of material by serving as a substitute for a broad comprehensive number when such does not exist and cannot be inserted. Such a centered heading is 787 1-787 42 bowed string instruments, used to distinguish these subdivisions of 787 string instruments and their music from 787 5-787 92 plectral instruments. The other function is to serve as a prop for various notes which need not then be repeated over and over with each specific number, when no single broad comprehensive number is available for the purpose. Examples of such headings are 231-237 specific subjects of doctrinal theology, and 940-999 medieval and modern history of specific places. Centered headings

bers devoted to American and English literature, United States history, Christianity, western philosophy, and so on, are out of proportion to the needs of libraries. Yet the editors have considered that they had a prime responsibility for furnishing a satisfactory and useful classification for the libraries of the United States, and solution to the problem of a classification universally acceptable has not yet been found. In spite of this, the present edition has made a start toward providing more useful expansions of topics in which libraries of cultures other than Protestant, Anglo-Saxon, and Western are likely to excel. It is the editors' expectation that the next edition, the 17th, will do still better.

But the library which has a large collection on subjects and in languages not strongly represented in United States libraries has a real problem in that the base numbers for the subjects in which it specializes are so much longer than the numbers for those in which U.S. libraries more often specialize. It is, therefore, recommended, that, when needed, a letter or combination of two letters be used as a substitute for a long base number, *e.g.*, works on Arabic language in 4A0-4A9 (to be shelved first in the 400 class) instead of 492.7-492.79, Arabic literature in 8A0-8A9, works on Buddhism in 2B instead of 294.3, works on history of Brazil in a Brazilian library in B instead of 981 (provided, of course, that the library has not followed the suggestion given at 920 to class biography in B, in which case another symbol would be required). This same suggestion may also be of use to libraries in any country with large collections on subjects with long base numbers. An institution specializing in electrical engineering could use E in place of 621.3, shelving it as if it were 621.3. UN may be used in place of 341.13. Examples could be multiplied. Other simplifications are suggested in the schedules at appropriate places.

Use of Letters

Altho the DC is a classification based on figures used decimally, it may be modified and supplemented by letters of the alphabet used in several ways and for a variety of purposes. In the first place, letters may be used as a substitute for one or more digits in the class number, as recommended above, or they may replace the whole class number. Some of the most widely used of these are suggested in the schedules, *e.g.*, B for individual biography in place of a three-figure or longer number from the

the second is that it makes it less troublesome for the small library to cut back schedules for use in classifying small groups of books, and then to expand, as the libraries become middle-sized and eventually large, simply by adding figures to the numbers already assigned to books. Since the present edition is designed for use by libraries of various sizes, classifiers in those institutions which wish to cut the schedules back should be especially wary as to the hazards of irregularity, the meaning of indention, and the best ways to reduce the length of numbers without incurring the risk at a later date of having to change numbers rather than merely to lengthen them. It is all very well to decide that no number longer than four digits will be used and all digits beyond the fourth will be lopped off. But to do so will throw all material on electric power generation, storage batteries, house wiring, radiocommunication, and railway electrification into one number, and also will place works on Baháism with those on Moslem sects. On the other hand, the library which decides to class all works on birds in 598.2 will find itself in difficulties when, at a later date, it wishes to expand, and finds that the various orders of birds are in 598.3-598.9, numbers which are coordinate in length but subordinate in meaning to 598.2. *Reduction of the schedules must be performed judiciously.*

Degree of Expansion

Since this edition is intended for use in general libraries of any size, its fullness is based upon the number of titles which large libraries may be expected to acquire in any given subject. The editors have tried to provide enough subdivisions but not too many, and have been guided by the principle that the existence in American libraries of more than twenty titles which would fall in a given number raises a presumption in favor of subdivision. The detail varies from one part of the tables to another, depending on the amount of material which has been published and is likely to be acquired by libraries. In this respect, the 16th edition varies distinctly from earlier editions, where some sections were developed beyond the needs of general libraries and other sections not at all. As compared with the two editions immediately preceding, Edition 14 has 31,364 separate entries in the tables, Edition 15 has 4,688, while Edition 16 has 17,928. However, because of the greater fullness of treatment through annotation, Edition 16 is at least 25 percent greater in over-all size than Edition 14.

One more use of A1 (or Z9 if preferred) may be suggested as a device to gather together early material in a class where timeliness is of special importance, such as in technical subjects like aeronautics

Structure

Ideally, a logical classification should be divided into parts, each part into subparts, each subpart into still smaller units, with the notation showing the structural breakdown at each level, until the specificity of existing literature is reached. To do this in the DC, however, frequently results in unreasonably long numbers, particularly in those areas where whole new disciplines of science have sprung up since the original pattern was established by Melvil Dewey and his successors, as, for example, in the technical revolution in electronic engineering 621.38

It has, therefore, been necessary at countless places in the tables to establish or to continue from earlier editions irregular structure of the decimal numbers. In some places, not enough digits are available in a decimal system to provide for all the subdivisions of a topic which require separate provision, as, for example, in the countries of Europe under 940, where Spain and Portugal must share 946, and no less than five countries share 943. In other places, more digits are available than are required for the subdivisions of a subject, and it seemed wise (in the past more than in the present edition, where the editors have been chary of using up all available numbers) to place topics subordinate to a larger topic in numbers coordinate with that of the larger topic, as, for example, in 221-224, where 221 is used for the Old Testament as a whole, and 222-224 for its parts.

It is possible, of course, to retain regular subject structure, even when the notation is irregular, by use of indention and type face, and this has been done in the present as in past editions. All too often, classifiers do not notice that structure is always shown by indention, and they may ask, for example, why is the Bahai faith, which is an independent religion, classed in 297.89 as a subdivision of 297 Islam, without realizing or understanding that the two numbers are coordinate by indention and by size of type.

There are two major reasons for maintenance of regular numerical structure to the greatest extent compatible with common sense. The first is that it makes it easier to teach and learn the DC and its principles, and

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	16	15	14
000	333	156	897
100	499	109	2028
200	760	284	805
300	1703	810	2527
400	324	188	319
500	2083	635	3649
600	4031	955	9860
700	1407	456	2880
800	302	285	2024
900	6486	810	6375
	<u>17,928</u>	<u>4,688</u>	<u>31,364</u>

Edition 16 has approximately 63,000 index entries, very close to the number in Edition 14.

Dealing with Long Numbers

Altho the maximum length of numbers in an ideal system should perhaps not exceed six digits, which, with even distribution and constant density, would allow one million separate numbers, no such ideal can be achieved short of making a brand new decimal classification Structure and expansion, discust in the two preceding sections, create many unavoidably long numbers, notably when divide-like provisions are followed.

Long numbers create hazards in transcription onto books, cards, and call slips, and no way to minimize these can be suggested. However, long numbers can be affixt to the spines of thin books, and made less unsightly on cards, by increasing the number of lines of the class number from one to two or even three. It might be decided arbitrarily to divide all numbers longer than six digits into two lines, *e g*,

336.343	336	338	and even 331
	3432	.456141	.892816
			1073

An interesting device used by a few libraries is to limit the numbers on the books, used for shelving purposes, to a predetermined number of

digits, say 4 or 6, and to give on catalog and shelflist cards the complete numbers, based on the full schedule, with the shelving digits in black and the additional digits in color

Relocations

The problem created by the relocation of topics in the 15th edition from the numbers provided for them in the 14th and earlier editions is explained in the *Foreword*. All relocations of topics from the 14th and 15th editions to new numbers in the 16th (and obviously this includes all the relocations of the 15th, which in the present edition must remain as relocations from the 14th or, by return to the 14th, become relocations from the 15th) are shown in the schedules, both at the number where now located and at the number relocated from, and in the index.

A series of conventions has been established to show relocations. A set of [square brackets] is employed in the schedules to distinguish numbers which are no longer in force or no longer in force with the meaning indicated, a dagger † preceding a number means that the number was used with the sense indicated in the 14th edition, while an asterisk * means the same for the 15th edition. In the index the dagger and asterisk have the same meanings, but superseded entries are preceded by the word *formerly* in italics rather than enclosed in square brackets.

When the classifier has these meanings well established in his mind, he should have no difficulty in understanding the relocation notes, and should be able with little trouble to annotate this edition, at those places where he decides not to reclassify, so as to continue to follow 14th or 15th edition practice without actually using the older volumes themselves except for occasional reference.

One kind of relocation has not been shown in the index, or in the tables except at the place relocated from. This is the "shotgun" relocation, which directs the classifier to class works on a given subject thruout the whole classification. A list of numbers from which "shotgun" relocations are made follows.

†174 1-4

†336 14

†336 279

*336 395

†526 99

Decimal Classification

There are in this edition 1,603 relocations. Of these, 832 are total, meaning that the entire number has been dropped, while 771 are partial, meaning that, while some topics have been shifted from a number, certain other topics remain in it. Counting both total and partial relocations, 851 are from the 14th edition, and 618 from the 15th. Of those from the 14th, 487 were already in the 15th, 255 are from one subdivision to another of a number not that far subdivided in the 15th, and 109 are relocations of topics the location of which in the 15th cannot be determined because of its extensive reduction of numbers. Of the relocations from the 15th edition, 528 were restored to their 14th edition locations, 42 are from one subdivision to another of a number not that far subdivided in the 14th, and 48 are relocations of topics the location of which in the 14th cannot be determined because of insufficient expansion. Finally, 134 of the relocations are new, that is, they are from both the 14th and the 15th editions, these have been made only for what appear to the editors to be fairly compelling reasons. In tabular form.

	000	100	200	300	400	500	600	700	800	900	Total
From 14											
Already 15	5	33	5	103	7	97	150	64	9	14	487
15 not divided	5	9	1	23	1	87	73	38	1	17	255
15 not clear	1	1		10		50	32	10		5	109
Total	<u>11</u>	<u>43</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>136</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>234</u>	<u>255</u>	<u>112</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>36</u>	<u>851</u>
From 15											
Back to 14	16	14	24	131	19	87	156	56	3	22	528
14 not divided			3	1	1	5	16	1		15	42
14 not clear	2		2	1		13	12	6	3	9	48
Total	<u>18</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>29</u>	<u>133</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>105</u>	<u>184</u>	<u>63</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>46</u>	<u>618</u>
From both 14 & 15		4	3	17	3	22	50	24	2	9	134
Grand total	<u>29</u>	<u>61</u>	<u>38</u>	<u>286</u>	<u>31</u>	<u>361</u>	<u>489</u>	<u>199</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>91</u>	<u>1603</u>

Of this total, not more than 50 may be regarded as major, that is, requiring the average large general library to reclassify more than about 30 titles each, nearly all of these are the kind first upon the editors because of relocation from Edition 14 to Edition 15.

Obsolescent Schedules

In one subject area a special situation exists. Concepts in the fields of inorganic and organic chemistry 546-547 have changed so completely

since the schedules were first developed that it was out of the question to interpolate modern concepts thru expansion of the existing schedules. Accordingly, these two sections have been revised thoroughly with little regard to earlier provisions, and with old numbers used with new meanings as required. Since immediate adoption of these all-new schedules may be prohibitively expensive for many libraries, obsolescent schedules are supplied following the relative index, based on the 14th edition schedules, with provision for certain new concepts and with helpful expansions. Libraries taking advantage of the expansions should note, however, that these obsolescent schedules will be dropped in Edition 17, and that reclassification to the new schedule should be undertaken before 17 appears (in approximately seven years) if that is at all possible.

Evolutionary Development

To minimize the periodic major readjustments incident to the coming of a new edition and to establish a continuous flow of information keeping pace with knowledge, the publishers have arranged that purchasers who return a card enclosed in this volume will receive "DC Additions, Notes and Decisions" as they accumulate, probably quarterly, and also notices of any new special expansions available at a nominal price. Thus with the current edition and these supplements, DC will always be up to date.

Suggestions for Use

How to Use the Tables and Index

It is wise to learn the ten main classes. Knowledge of the hundred divisions and numerous sections and subsections should follow gradually from use, without the necessity of special study, and will result more quickly if the tables are consulted first rather than the index. Locating the subject of a book within the scope of its main class brings familiarity with the class as a whole. When the tables are used in this way, the index should be checked to verify the result obtained.

How to Determine the Subject of a Book

There are several methods of deciding upon the subject of a book. These may be used in varying combinations where the subject is obscure.

Title. The title often indicates what the book is about. However, it is sometimes misleading, in consequence, some further method should be used as a check

Table of contents. This is usually an excellent guide to the subject of a book.

Chapter headings: If there is no table of contents, chapter headings or marginal notes are likely to give a good indication of the contents.

Preface. It is always wise to scan the preface for the author's point of view, even if it merely verifies your decision already based upon some other aid.

Reference books. Information regarding the subject of the book may be obtained from bibliographies, catalogs, biographical dictionaries, histories of literature, encyclopedias, reviews

Subject matter. An exhaustive examination of the subject matter of the book itself will occasionally be necessary

Specialists. Experts should be consulted when all other methods fail, and sometimes for verification of a tentative decision.

How to Assign the Class Number

When the subject of the book has been decided upon, its number may be found in the tables either by using them directly or by means of the index. Even if one is quite familiar with the classification, decisions based upon direct use of the tables should be checked with the index. It shows relationship and subordination, and often presents a choice of points of view. This method makes possible a much more accurate classification of the book than when only one portion of the tables is used.

The basic principle involved in the assignment of the class number is that of usefulness. As libraries and their clienteles differ, the decision as to where a book will be of the greatest value must be the responsibility of the individual classifier. The majority of books present no very complicated problem. There can be only a remote possibility that an elementary physics book could be more useful in some other class than physics. But, would a bibliography of physics be of more use in the bibliography section or with the physics books? The decision must be based upon an accurate knowledge of the aims of the individual library, and that can be gained only by the classifier's own experience, not by rules set down here.

The contents of the book, not its form or the wording of its title, should usually determine its number. The content of a history of art is

primarily art, not history, and such a book would be most useful in the art section

When a book treats of two or three subjects, assign it to the class in which it will be most valuable. The other subject or subjects may be taken care of in the catalog by means of added subject cards. If a decision regarding this type of book cannot be based on the principle of use, assign the class number to the first subject treated in the book.

When a book treats equally of four or more sections of a division, give it the division number, *e.g.*, a book discussing light, heat, sound, mechanics would be given the division number of 530.

Translations, reviews, keys, analyses, and other works about specific books should be assigned the class number of the original book.

The classifier may save much time by consulting the number which may already have been assigned to the book. DC numbers may be found on Library of Congress cards, Wilson cards, in *ALA Book List*, *Book Review Digest*, *Standard Catalog Series*, *Children's Catalog*.

A record of all difficulties and decisions should be made for the sake of uniformity and future efficiency. These notes should be written in the tables, in an interleaved copy, or arranged by class number in a file.

Spelling

In general, spelling of this edition follows standard reference tools. However, as a mark of respect to Melvil Dewey's long and deep interest in spelling reform a few simplifications are followed consistently, namely the words adopted in 1898 by the National Education Association: *catalog*, *decalog*, *demagog*, *pedagog*, *prolog*, *program*, *tho*, *altho*, *thoro*, *thorofare*, *thru*, *thruout*. In past tenses and past participles of verbs, *ed* is simplified to *t* and spelling modified as required when so *pronounst*, provided no possibility of misinterpretation is admitted. The classifier will find *publisht* but not *produst*.

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Decimal Classification

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To Alpheus L. Walter and his staff of the Library's Card Division for gracious assistance in a variety of ways, most notably in printing and

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Conclusion

The reader is referred to the introduction by Melvil Dewey, which follows, for more complete information on many matters briefly touched upon in the foregoing It is reprinted, with a few minor changes, just as Dr Dewey wrote and spelled it, and should be read in the context of the time in which it was written Some statements in it and some examples are now obsolete, or do not apply specifically to the present edition, but the general principles enunciated are as true in 1958 as they were in 1876 or in 1926

A much briefer but apt quotation from Dewey in 1876 must close this introduction "A scheme can be satisfactory in use only to those who realize inherent difficulties and are satisfied because of their knowledge that a plan free from annoying difficulties is wholly unattainable"

Benjamin A Custer

EDITOR

Dewey Decimal Classification

Editorial Office

Processing Department

The Library of Congress

Washington, D C

21 April 1958

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Melvil Dewey's Introduction

Orijin and growth The plan of this Clasification and Index was de-veloppt erly in 1873, the result of long study of library economy as found in hundreds of books and pamflets, and in over 50 personal visits to libriaries. This study convinst me that usefulness of libraries myt be greatly increast without aded expense. Only a fraction of the scrvis posibl cud be got from them without clasification, catalogs, indexes and other aids, to tel libraiians and readers what they containd on any givn subject, yet, by methods then ized, this cud be dun satisfactorily only at a cost so great as to be prohibitiv to all but a few welthy libraries. With rare exceptions, libraries wer growing rapidly. Catalogs, made at great cost, soon became antiquated. Methods ized involvd frequent re-arrangement, renumbering and remarking of books, and of necessity re-making of catalogs and indexes, as the only escape from a confuzion that seriously cripld usefulness. In this costly repetition, work of previus li-brarians was larjly lost. The great need was a sistem which wud enable each to stand on the sholders of his predecessors, and fully utilize their labors, which wud make work dun today permanent, insted of sumthing to be superseded in so few years as not to be worth doing in the best way, which wud supply the best applyances, insted of leaving yung li-brarians not only to lern how to work, but to make all their own tools.

Practical use for 54 yeais proves that this sistem wil accomplish this result, for with its aid catalogs, shelflists, indexes and references, essential to this increast usefulness, can be made faster and cheaper than by any method not having its essential featuies, and, when dun, they ar better and vastly more permanent. Practical utility and economy ar its keynotes and no theoretic refinement has been allowd to modify the skeme, if it wud detract from usefulness or ad to cost.

It was chiefly necesary to find a method that wud clas, aranje and index books and pamflets on shelvs, cards of a catalog, clippings and notes in scrapbooks and index rerums, references to all these items, and indeed any literary material in any form, as redily as an ordinary index gyds to proper page of a bound book. This difficult problem was solvd by izing

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no reference marks except the simplest symbols known to the human mind, arabic numerals with their usual arithmetic values, and by aiding their unequalled simplicity by many practical mnemonic [mnemonic] devices

Tho the importance of classification was recognized, the filosofic systems proposed wer so difficult fully to understand or apply that not 1 person in 1000 cud uze them practicaly Decimal Clasification simplicity and even more its Relativ Index hav made this work 10-fold eazier In recent years, use of the sistem has spread rapidly in all civilized cuntries, meeting success in thousands of different applications In its simpl form a skoolboy can quikly master it and keep for instant referene not only his books but every note, clipping or pamphlet Almost every profession and occupation has lernd its wonderful laborsaving powers It is in daily use by miriads of business and professional men who wud never even attempt to understand or uze the old sistemas

By mere adition of figures, without changing this shorter form, this very simpl sistem is redily made to record the utmost refinements of specialists, and the Relativ Index, as simpl as a, b, c, sends the novis to the exact place where the expert has clasifyd the matter sought Thus 942 is history of England, and 942.99055 is history of County Pembroke in Wales, under Elizabeth, 5th of the Tudois A colon between 2 numbers to mean 'in relation to', and other combining symbols for time, languaj etc make of the sistem a compact shorthand for each fact But this brevity is les important than the eaz with which matter so markt can be arranged (giving figures and decimal point their common arithmetic value), stored as compactly as wisht and found again in the least posibl time.

The sistem has been found equally valuabl for cataloging, indexing analyzing and summarizing, and for clasifying, numbering and arranging books and pamphlets on shelvs

The 1st edition, publisht in 1876, 12 pajes of tables containing 1000 sections, was criticized as altogetheer too elaborate for even a laij libiary As fast, however, as the Relativ Index with its remarkabl powers became known, the rapidly increasing uzers askt for further subdivisions, til Tables hav grown from 2600 entries in Index of 1876 to 43,000 in this edition 12, becauz it has been found so eazy to gain the admitted great advantajes of close clasification, and yet, by means of this Index, avoid the old difficulties

Extent of use The rejister of libraies which hav actualy adopted it, tho growing rapidly, is incomplete Libraies often uze the sistem for

Melvil Dewey's introduction

many years before we learn the fact. We register all books of the Classification, so far as known, but do not assume that a library has adopted the system because it has ordered the book. *A L A Bulletin*, Sep 1926, p 167, estimates a use by about 14 000 libraries. There is also an immense use (for which not even approximate statistics can be furnished) by individuals, with their private, business and professional collections of books, pamphlets etc., and in their correspondence and notes files. The system has been adopted, not only throughout U S, but in other parts of North America, in South America, in many European countries, and, still more distant, in Asia, Hawaii, Philippines, Java, Australia and Africa, and the Tables are known to have been translated either wholly or in part, into French, German, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, Norwegian, Russian, Hungarian, Bohemian, Chinese and Japanese.

The table below shows the growth of the editions

Edition	Date	Number of pages				Copies printed
		Preface etc	Tables	Index etc	Total	
1	1876	12	12	18	42	1000
2	1885	66	162	86	314	500
3	1888	4	227	185	416	500
4	1891	41	234	191	466	1000
5	1894	"	235	"	467	2000
6	1899	"	260	210	511	7600
7	1911	48	420	324	792	2000
8	1913	"	462	340	850	2000
9	1915	"	465	342	856	3000
10	1919	"	517	374	940	4000
11	1922	61	551	376	988	5000
12	1927	67	683	491	1243	9340
13	1932	75	902	670	1647	9750
14	1942	80	1048	799	1927	15632
15	1951	55	469	192	716	11200
15 Rev	1952	56	"	402	927	11045

What is the System? A Subject Classification with a Relative Index¹ so numbered or lettered that reference is compact, accurate and quick, is the

¹ Tho the author is interested only in the usefulness of the system, not in questions of priority of its invention, extended investigation by others fails to show that this most important feature of the system—the Relative Index, on which all else hinges—had ever before been used as here to index by a single reference most diverse mate-

essential feature, anything beyond this is merely applying this plan with various helps and accessories. Any subject classification with a *relativ* index in which the entry indexes a book in the ordinary way, and also indexes shelves, cards, clippings or any other literary material, is a form of this system.

Notation We devised and experimented with several notations by means of numbers, letters, and combined numbers and letters, with bases of 26, 35, 50, 100 and 150, yet none seemed good enough to warrant publishing details, except that here printed, based on simple arabic numerals with their usual decimal powers. International adoption of this system is largely because no one ever complains that any classification is too simple, while there is constant complaint of complexity. Decimal simplicity has so commended itself that many think of it as the only form, though obviously it would be just as much a 'relativ index system' if the classification were wholly marked by letters or other symbols.

The Subject Index is the simplest application of a, b, c, the symbols next in simplicity to 1, 2, 3. This use of the simplest 2 sets of symbols known, with their common meanings, has given our notation its worldwide reputation as the simplest yet devised.

Best known decimal form Decimal form means simply that heads are grouped and numbered with common arithmetic figures used decimally. This, the only decimal form thus far carefully elaborated and published, is commonly spoken of as if it were the only possible form of our original plan, though obviously an infinite variety of 'relativ index systems' in decimal form could be made by filling the outline with different heads, or with the same heads in different order.

To make out new heads involves labor and cost vastly beyond the dreams of any person who has not tried exactly this work. Time actually spent on tables here printed, by various committees and individuals, totals hundreds of years and has cost an immense sum. Uniform and urgent advice of the experientist is to adopt a poorer scheme already made rather than undertake so herculean a labor. When done, the maker may possibly be

rial Relativ location had been used, but not in the present combination with the subject index, which gives it most of its value. The Classification Tables, while adopting suggestions from many sources, are original in their system of arrangement and notation, and in many minor features. The decimal form and many mnemonic features have not been found in earlier use, though since their invention in 1873 these as well as the Subject Index and other features have been very frequently copied, often with, but oftener without, acknowledgment of their source. But we are glad to find this system, which has cost so much labor, doing good service even for those who neglect to mention where they found so valuable a labor-saving literary tool.

better suited with it, but few if any others will be. It is wiser for anyone whose time is of value, to use it in something more practically useful to himself and his library than in trying to construct a 'satisfactory' scheme of classification. No one yet ever wholly suited himself or anyone else, and probably no one ever will. By adopting this already worked out he saves much time and money, and gains the immense advantage of using a system in common with thousands of others, so that he may utilize their labors and investigations and share with them economies of cooperation.

Relative Subject Index This alphabetic Index, the most important feature of the system, consists of headings gathered from a great variety of sources, as users of the system have found them desirable in 54 years experience. After all these efforts, many new heads are added in each new edition.

The Index guides in both numbering and finding books. In assigning numbers, the most specific head that will contain the book having been determined, reference to that head in Index gives proper class number. Conversely, in finding books on any given subject, reference to Index gives number under which they are found on shelves, in shelflist, or in class catalog. When any new subject comes up, interline it and its synonyms in Index, with class number decided on, so classification may be uniform with himself in future work.

The Index gives similar or synonymous words, and the same words in different connections, so any intelligent person will surely get the right number. A reader wishing to know something of the tariff looks under T, and, at a glance, finds 337 as its number. This guides him to shelves, to all books and pamphlets, to shelf catalog, to class subject catalog on cards, to class record of loans, and, in short, in simple numeric order, throughout the whole library to *anything* bearing on his subject. If he turns to Tables, he sees that it means class 3, Sociology, division 3, Economics, section 7, Protection and free trade, but the number alone is enough to class the book or find it, for either classifier or reader. If he had looked under P for protection, or F for free trade, or D for duties, or C for customs, or under any other leading word relating to his subject, he would have been referred to 337, or some one of its subdivisions.

Had he looked for 'railroad' he would have found after it 22 separate entries, each preceded by a word or phrase indicating the phase of the subject in the scheme. A book on railroads may treat of the desirability of government ownership, control etc. and then is clearly a question of social science, or it may be a practical handbook for an employee, ex-

planning business methods of railroading, running trains, handling freight, etc. when it is as clearly one of the useful arts. The classifier knows to which of these heads his book belongs, and the reader knows in which of its faces he wishes to examine the subject. Moreover, 3 and 6 beginning the numbers clearly indicate character of each class. But even if significance of these figures is entirely disregarded, no confusion results, for, on consulting the numbers in catalog, in scheme, or on shelves the difference is clearly seen. In other cases, it is more useful to keep books on the same subject together, though treated from different standpoints. A glance at the Index tells either reader or classifier which plan has been adopted.

All topics in blackface type in Index are further divided in Tables, where one may see the subheads. This saves reprinting all these subdivisions, which would increase Index bulk many-fold, e.g. if one having a book on 'prison labor' looks in the Index for 'Convict labor' or 'Prison contracts, he finds at once its special number 331.51, but if, on the other hand he thinks to look only for general subject 'Labor', he finds in blackface type the entry 'Labor, political economy, 331', and turning to Tables he finds under 331 the subdivision '331.51, Convict labor', the exact topic in hand.

The greatest objection to a class catalog has always been the difficulty in knowing just where to class a book and just where to look for it when again wanted. Different librarians, or the same librarian at different times, class the same or similar books in widely different places. Where one man did all the work for many years, there was a degree of uniformity, but even then there was danger of looking at the same book at different times from different viewpoints, thus causing confusion. When the daily press is full of one phase of a subject, tendency is strong to class all books on this subject from current viewpoint, and next year, if a different side of this same subject is before the public, there is same tendency to class books from new viewpoint, thereby separating similar books and bringing together books on different phases. But fortunately, practical usefulness does not require that the ideas of this or that one be followed, but only that books of same character be always put in same place, and that there be some means of knowing readily what that place is. The Relative Index, with its catchwords, was designed and is found in use to meet both these requirements, for it insures that books on same phase of any subject coming before the classifiers shall be assigned to same place, and that any reader seeking these books shall be referred instantly to that

place. If this is done, all requirements of a good classification are filled. If it is not done, the system is a failure, for the only real test of any scheme is its helpfulness to its users.

Some prominent opponents of class catalogs admit that the Relative Subject Index, in deciding where to class a book at first and where to look for it even afterwards, has removed their strongest objections. Certainly it would be impossible to make an Index more compact or easier of reference.

This Index allows a great part of the work of classifying to be done in advance by experts in large central libraries with ample resources, thus securing, at a mere fraction of usual cost, better and more uniform results than would be possible to the ordinary classifier and reducing labor to much narrower limits than ever before.

To these thousands of subjects have been carefully assigned their individual numbers, many of them after long consideration and consultation with specialists. No one person is learned enough to class wisely books on all subjects and sciences, but botanists can assign all botanic subjects to the right number, mathematicians all mathematical topics, and thus the Index will in time become as accurate as the best scholarship of the day can make it. Even if the decision reached is not always wisest, all practical purposes are served, because, as each classifier copies the number from some Index, all books on that subject are together, and, as each reader gets his number from this same Index, he goes directly to the book he seeks.

What Relative Index includes. The Index, containing 43,000 entries and constantly being enlarged by adding new subjects, aims to include all topics expressed or implied in Tables, together with every corresponding synonym likely to be sought, but does not include most names of countries, towns, animals, plants, etc. except when mentioned in Tables, e.g. it can not enumerate all species of trilobites, but when classifier has found from proper reference books that *Remopleurides* is a trilobite, the Index sends him to 565.393, and he can class his monograph on that subject.

Tables. The essential complement of the Subject Index is the Tables of Classification, so mapped out as to show in 4 ways—i.e. by size of type, face of type, indentation, and number of figures prefixed—each subject's rank in the Classification.

The field of knowledge is divided into 9 main classes, numbered 1 to 9, and encyclopedias, periodicals, etc. so general as to belong to *none* of these classes are marked 0 (naught) and form a 10th class, e.g. class 1 is library of Philosophy, class 5, library of Science, class 9, History, etc. These special

Decimal Classification

classes or libraries are then considered independently, and each is separated again into 9 special divisions of the main subject, numbered 1 to 9, as were the classes, general works belonging to *no* division having 0 for their division number. Thus 59 is division 9 (Zoology) of class 5 (Science). A 3d division is then made by separating each of these divisions into 10 sections, numbered in same way with 0 and the 9 digits, and this decimal subdivision is repeated, till it secures as many subsections as may be needed in any topic. Thus 513 is section 3 (Geometry) of division 1 (Mathematics) of class 5 (Pure science). This number, giving class, division, section and subsection, if any, is called the class number, and is applied to every book and pamphlet belonging to the library. All geometries are thus numbered 513, all mineralogies 549, and so throughout the library all books on any given subject bear the number of that subject in this scheme.

Where 0 occurs before the decimal point in a class number, it has its normal zero value. Thus a book numbered 510 is class 5, division 1, but *no* section, i.e. treats of division 51 (Mathematics) in general, and is limited to *no* 1 section, as is geometry, marked 513. 500 indicates a treatise on science in general, limited to *no* division 0 occurring in the 1st place would in the same way show that the book was limited to *no* class, e.g. a general cyclopedia which treats of all 9 classes.

With the same 'general' sense, 0 is often used to indicate change in character of subdivision, meaning in this case 'basis of subdivision changes at this point', i.e. figure (or figures) following 0 apply to what precedes *in general*, e.g. 505 indicates science in general treated in the form of a periodical. In history, classification is by countries (i.e. *geographic*) and as minute geographic divisions are needed for travels, guide books, and various other uses, the figures 1-9 are generally used for geographic subdivisions and again for further geographic subdivisions, as far as needed, and 0 followed by another figure for time division, i.e. the figures before the 0 indicate the locality as a whole, while figures after the 0 indicate the special time at which the history of the locality is being considered, e.g. 942 06, consisting of 942 (*geographic* division) and 06 (*time* division), means history of England in general in time of the Stuarts, while 942 6 and 942 67 mean respectively history of eastern England and history of Essex co., to which the same time division may be added, giving 942 606 and 942 6706 as the history of those localities under the Stuarts. As any subdivision may, by adding figures 1-9, be given 9 further subdivisions, any desired degree of minuteness may be secured in classing special subjects.

First subdivision under many rubrics is used for General and theoretic

questions to provide for such specific topics as are common to all or most of the principal subdivisions of a relatively broad subject

Coordination Theoretically division of every subject into just 9 parts is absurd. Practically it is desirable to classify as minutely as possible, without use of added figures, and decimals, on which our scheme hinges, allow 9 divisions as readily as fewer. This has proved wholly satisfactory in practice, though apparently destroying proper coordination in some places.

Where more than 9 divisions are needed the difficulty is commonly obviated by grouping on single numbers the subjects most closely allied, or by assigning 1-8 specifically to most important subjects and grouping minor subjects on 9 as 'Other'. Since any of these groups may be further subdivided for specific topics as needed, provision is thus made for an unlimited number of subjects.

As in every scheme, many minor subjects are under general heads to which they do not strictly belong. In some cases, these heads are printed in distinctive type, e.g. 829 Anglo-Saxon, under English literature. The rule has been to assign these subjects to the most nearly allied heads, or where it was thought they would be most useful. The only alternative was to omit them altogether. If any such omission occurs, it will be supplied as soon as discovered, for we intend to provide in the Tables a place for every known topic.

New subjects A new topic is always closely related to some existing head. If there is no blank number available it is combined with the head nearest allied, and, when important enough, distinct provision for the new number is made by adding another decimal. The system is thus capable of unlimited expansion, and can never break down for lack of room for growth.

Choice and arrangement of heads Detailed explanation of selection and arrangement of the many thousand heads would be tedious, but everywhere philosophical theory and accuracy have yielded to practical usefulness. The impossibility of making a satisfactory classification of all knowledge as preserved in books, has been appreciated from the first, and theoretic harmony and exactness have been repeatedly sacrificed to practical requirements.

Sequence of allied subjects Wherever practicable, heads have been so arranged that each subject is preceded and followed by most nearly allied subjects, and thus added convenience is secured both in class catalogs and on shelves, e.g. Building (690) follows Mechanic trades (680) at end of Useful arts, and Architecture follows at beginning of Fine arts.

Students of Biology (570) find fossil life or Paleontology (560) before, and vegetable life or Botany (580) after, this followed in turn by animal

life or Zoology (590), ending with Mammals (599), while Useful arts (600) begin with human Anatomy (611) under Medicine, thus giving a regular growth from fossil plant thru vegetable and animal kingdoms to living man

Cachtitles In naming headings, strict accuracy has often been sacrificed to brevity, for short familiar titles are more important than that terms chosen should express fully and exactly character of all books classed under them. Many subjects, apparently omitted, will be found in the Index, associated, with allied subjects, to a head which bears the name of the most important only. Reference to the Index will decide at once most doubtful points

Form distinctions The classification is mainly by *subject* or *content* regardless of form but an added form distinction for general treatises is found practically useful

Thus, in Science there are many compends, dictionaries, essays, periodicals and societies, treating of Science in general, and so having 0 for the division figure, but treating it under different forms, and therefore divided into sections according to this form. 501 for philosophy or theories of Science, 502 for compends, 503 for dictionaries, etc. This treatment is as nearly as practicable, uniform in all classes. Creasy's '15 decisive battles' is 904, the 1st figure being 9, because the book is clearly history, the 2d figure 0, because limited to *no* division of class 9, and the 3d figure 4, because the book is a collection of essays.

The 10 main classes are regularly divided by form, e.g. 809, history of literature in general. For divisions, sections or subsections having *enough* general material to make such division advisable, form numbers, preceded by 0, may be used (e.g. 820 9, history of English literature, 821 09, history of English poetry), except when 0 and the following number have been otherwise associated, e.g. 821 04 English lyric poetry, *not* essays on English poetry, 942 05 England in time of the Tudors, *not* a periodical on English history. A history of English literature is 820 9, not 809, because every book belongs to the *most specific head* that will contain it, so 809 is limited to histories of literature in general. Books treating of many classes, such as general encyclopedias or periodicals, go in class 0 and are then divided by form into encyclopedias, periodicals, societies or newspapers.

Do not confuse form number 07, meaning 'methods of study or teaching', with number for same subject under 375, which is for its value as a means of education, or for its curriculum place.

These form distinctions are introduced at the beginning of the class be-

cauz the number of jeneral works is larj, and these 1st numerals wud otherwize be unuzed

Form divisions always hav the same set of numbers, preceded by 0, i e 1 filosofy, theories etc, 2 compends, outlines, 3 dictionaries, cyclopedias, 4 essays, lectures, letters etc, 5 periodicals, magazines etc, 6 societies, associations, transactions, reports etc, 7 education, study, teaching, training etc, 8 poligrafy, collections etc, 9 history Thus a periodical on a subject has the subject number followd by 05, e g a periodical on public helth, 614 05

But if the number aliedy ends in 0, 0 is not repeated before form-division figures, e g a zoologic magazine is 590 5, not 590 05

Minute clasing On first publication in 1876, a common criticizm was that 1000 heds cud never be successfully uzed, however desirabl so close clasification myt be As soon, however, as actual experience proved it as eazy to uze 1000 heds in the new sistem as 100 in the old, the obviusly great practical value of close clasing led one uzer after another to uij strongly publication of more subdivisions Minute as ar many now givn there ar none that sum hav not askt for and almost none that others hav not declared needless Subdivisions ar made in such a way that one may uze all, or any part and ignore the rest without difficulty or confuzion, thus allowing each to uze minute subdivisions where he wishes or needs them, without being forst into refinements in subjects where he has few books or litl interest Since the degree to which any skeme shal be applyd is optional with each clasifyer and close analisis is useful to everyone in defining content or in clarifying differences between related subjects, even elaborate skemes ar printed in ful if no essential objection has been bro't against them by the best qualifyd critics. The 1st 3 figures only may be uzed when preferd, and the rest show the scope of the subject On many topics minute subsections ar printed simply for this puijose, and for use in indexing periodicals and socyety transactions, and in keeping notes Note typ is uzed for topics clearly useful only to specialists or as showing scope Many others probably belonging in same category, if doutful ar in regular typ of their grade

The advantaj of close clasing is unquestiond, if the uzer knows just what it is With this plan it is not only practicabl, but comparatively eazy If there ar only 10 books on a givn topic, it is useful to hav them in groups among themselvs, for otherwize they wud hav only accidental order, which is of servis to no one A reader wishing a specific book shud go, not to shelvs, but to catalog, where he can find its place quickest If

he wishes a specific subject, he is sent instantly to its exact place by the Subject Index. If he wishes to study the library's resources at the shelves, he will be *greatly helped by minute classing*. A teacher showing his pupil the material on any subject would, if there were only 20 books, surely *put together* those covering same points, even if there were only 2. Much more should librarians group closely their greater collections, that readers may gain something of the advantages of an experienced guide.

Thus every specialist has his own special library. If a student of science in general, he is sent to class 5, if his department is zoology, his library is 59, if his specialty is shells, he finds all works and references on that subject in library 594. Whether a specialist needs it or not, every subject, being a library by itself, shows resources and wants as no catalog can. A catalog can not be made to take satisfactorily the place of handling books themselves. This advantage weighs most in a college or society library, where many go to the shelves, but even if only librarians are admitted, close classing is worth its cost because of added power given.

Tentative tables More and more minute subdivisions have been specially called for till the 1000 heads of 1873, with 2600 index entries in edition 1, have increased till they command 43,000 index entries, in edition 12. After getting many suggestions, sometimes hundreds, for additions or further subdivisions of some subject, we draft a scheme and test it on a sample collection. To get larger cooperation in perfecting it we sometimes print the new draft in Tables without including its new words in Index, so every user will see what is proposed and if interested may test it on his own work and submit suggestions for improvement. Then in the next edition, with this great help, needed revisions can be made and all new words inserted in Index.

As result of agreement between Institut International de Bibliographie and ourselves we have included in edition 12 many I I B expansions, while some other expansions recently prepared by us have not yet, for lack of time, been submitted to I I B and must therefore, strictly speaking, be regarded as tentative till accepted by that body, but as these expansions were developed with view to such acceptance we look for little change, and their large number has made it impractical to designate them.

Nemonics [mnemonics] Heads have sometimes been arranged to secure nemonic aid in numbering and finding books without the Index, thus China has always number 1. In Ancient history, it has the 1st section, 931, in Modern history, under Asia, it has 951. Similarly the Indian number is 4, English, 2, German, 3, French, 4, Italian, 5, Spanish, 6, Russian,

7, European, 4, Asian, 5, African, 6, North American, 7, South American, 8, and so for all divisions by languages or countries Italian 5, for instance, is in 035, 055, 065, 450, 850, 945, and other many others This mnemonic principle is specially prominent in Filology and Literature, and their divisions, and in *form* distinctions used in the 1st 9 sections of each class Philosophy, methods or theory, occurring as a head, is always 1, dictionaries and encyclopedias are 3, essays, 4, periodicals, 5, associations, societies and institutions, 6, education, 7, polygraphy or collections, 8, history, 9 In numerous cases several minor heads are grouped together as Other, usually numbered 9.

While Italian is always 5, 5 is by no means always Italian Grammar is 5, Periodicals are 5, Asia is 5, Oratory is 5, etc Even were it possible, to limit 5 to Italian would waste numbering material, and results would not justify cost The purpose is to give practical aid, not to follow fanciful theory A classifier marking a French grammar, remembers that all Filology begins with 4, and, as French is always 4 and grammar 5, he knows the number *must* be 445 Italian (5), poetry (1), is plainly 851 with no danger of being mistaken for 'poetry of grammar' or 'theory of Asia,' because the numbers also have those meanings This feature is an *aid*, not regular method, and in all doubtful cases one refers at once to Index or Tables Suggested difficulties are usually creations of ingenious theorists and not outgrowth of practical experience

Wherever practical, this mnemonic principle is used in subdividing sections 558, Geology of South America, is subdivided by adding the *sections* of 980, History of South America Geology of Brazil then *must* be 558 1 memorably, the 1st 5 is Science, 2d 5, Geology, 8, South America, and 1, Brazil. Any library attendant or regular user of the scheme recognizes 558 1 at a glance as Geology of Brazil This mnemonic feature occurs in several hundred places, and is of great practical utility in numbering and finding books without catalog or index, and in determining character of any book simply from its call number. Extent of use is shown in 5 tables appended to main Index, giving alphabetic lists of (1) subjects, with class number of each, which may be subdivided geographically, (2) form divisions, with figures to be added in making such division, (3) languages, with their class numbers, which may be further subdivided filologically by adding figures given in Index table 4, (4) filologic divisions, with figures to be added in subdividing any language in Index table 3, (5) literatures, with their class numbers, which may be further subdivided by adding form divisions from English literature

As in close subdivision, wish for nemonic correspondence has never outweighed any claim of greater usefulness. In many cases choice between numbers was hardly perceptible e.g. whether in filology order should be French, Spanish, Italian, or French, Italian, Spanish. In such cases nemonic numbers were given preference, and 54 years use has proved this wisest. Great gain, beside ease of remembering, results from this *uniform* use of same numbers with same meaning whenever similar division is made. Wherever division by languages or countries is made, it follows filology or history numbers, and in Tables, the note 'Divided like 900' fully takes the place of reprinting all history subdivisions. This saving justifies use of these numbers in sum cases, even where a somewhat different order might seem more nearly fitted to the special case, e.g. in 342, constitutional history of Canada (342 71) and Australia (342 94) next that of England (342 42) would be better than our order, which separates them both from England and from each other. Still by following the usual 'procrustean' numbers, many topics can be subdivided minutely without further study, by simply applying history or language subdivisions. A single illustration of the astonishing power this principle gives will suffice, tho thousands might be given. 016 is 'Bibliography of special subjects, divided like main classification', therefore by aid of tables under 581, 016 581974742 readily translates itself to all users into 'Bibliography of flora of Albany co., N.Y.' While these 12 figures might never be used, if a specialist wishes minute division, it is ready to his hand, conforms to Index, and will be clearly understood by anyone familiar with our plan. A specialist would in such cases probably adopt a contraction for his long number, and use in full only the minute divisions.

Decimalism Utility has not been sacrificed in order to force subjects on the 'decimal procrustean bed'. *Decimals have been used as servants, not as masters*. When subjects are combined or separated into just 10 heads, it has been from no necessity of the scheme, but because it seemed most useful, all things considered. In many cases there were originally only 3 to 7 heads instead of 10, but usually, during years of testing before publication, it proved advisable to divide sum of these heads, as it took no added space or labor. On the other hand, there were cases where more than 10 heads seemed more natural, and, as any number up to 100 is provided for by adding one decimal, this was done in most cases. As only 1000 sections were first printed, it was often necessary to put 2 or more closely allied topics together under the same number, as must still be done whenever a library limits number of figures used to 3, but during 54

years use subdivisions hav multiplyd, til now nearly every topic has its own special number. The skeme givs us for each topic as it wer, a case of 9 pigeonholes, with a larj space at the top, and we uze them as every practical business man uzes such pigeonholes about his desk. If, as in 220, there ar les than 9 main topics, it is often convenient to uze the extra spaces for subdivisions. Thus we keep separate, under Old Testament, historic, poetic, and profetic books, and under New Testament, the Gospels, Epistls and Apocalips. Spaces ar there, and it is convenient to uze them for jeneral works on those groups—a reason that experience proves a good anser to the charj of lak of coordination, tho indention and typ in Tables make that charj baseless. Then in 280, having more than 9 topics, if we ar uzing only 3 figures we put Congregational in same space with Piesbyterian, and small denominations together in the last box, just as a business man puts his papers in his pigeonholes. If he insisted on having a different case made to order for each use, it wud cost over twice as much, he cud not group them together or interchange them, and they wud not fit offis shelvs.

There has been perverse misapprehension of this feature, and critics oftenest stumbl over 'procrustean 10'. In fact, this is an element of usefulness. A railroad also has the fault that it is procrustean in its path and in its times. It can not cum to yur dpor nor wait yur convenience, as does the automobile, it can not go to the fields for its loads of produce, it can not turn out for obstacks, but *becauz it is procrustean* it can do its larj-scale work much better and quicker and cheaper. The paralel cud be fairly extended to many other cases, but any tho'tful mind wil recognize that the economy and eaz of working the Decimal sistem ar larjly dependent on its being procrustean. To this we owe much of the great simplicity of the Relativ Index, many nemonic correspondences and the useful 0 to indicate form and period divisions. Our intersecting lines of space and time in History, etc., of languaj and form in Filolojy and Literature, and scores of similar advantajes, depend wholly on 'procrustean 10', or else on sum other number equally procrustean, but lacking the advantajes of exact correspondence to our arithmetic.

Relativ location. Economy and simplicity cald not only for the Subject Index, but also for sum plan of consolidating the 2 sets of marks previously uzed, one teling *what* subject a book treated, the other *where* the book was shelvd. By relativ location and decimal clas numbers we make our simpl arabic numerals tel of each book and pamflet, both *what* it is, and *where* it is.

Decimal Classification

In fixt relation, to find book, pamphlet, clipping or note is like finding a man when yu know his town, street, hous and room

In relativ location it is like finding a soldier if yu know his army, division, rejiment and cumpany. If John Smith is 3d man in 2d row of Cumpany B, rejiment 69, 4th division, whether the rejiment is in camp, on parade or on march, his place is not determnd by the bit of ground on which he stands, but by his relation to the rest of the army. If soldiers ar ded and in the cemetery they ar as eazily found by fixt as by relativ location. But if the army is alive and militant, as every library or private working colection o't to be, its resources shud be *findabl* whether in camp, on march or in action.

In arranng books on shelvs, the formerly common absolute or fixt location by shelf and book number is wholly abandond, relativ location by clas and book number being our chief featue. Accompanying clas number is the book number, which prevents confuzion of different books on the same subject. In finding books, numbers markt on baks ar followd, the upper being the clas and the lower the book number. Clas is found in its numeric order amung clases, just as shelf is found in fixt systems. Shelvs ar not numbrd, as increasing different departments, opening new rooms, and any arranng of clases to bring books most circulated nearest delivery desk, wil at different times bring different clas numbers on any givn shelf. New books, as reciev'd, ar numberd and put in place, in same way that new titles ar aded to card catalog.

Thus all books on any givn subject stand together, and no aditions or changes ever separate them. Not only ar found together all books on subject sought, but most nearly allyd subjects precede and follow, they in turn being preceded and followd by other allyd subjects as far as practicabl. Readers not having access to shelvs find short titles arrannged in same order in shelflist, and ful titles, imprints, aded subject entries, references, notes etc in clast catalog.

Parts of sets, and books on same or allyd subjects, ar never separated as they ar sure to be, sooner or later, in a library arrannged on fixt plan, unless it be frequently rearrannged and recatalogd, a procedure too expensiv even for very wealthy libraries. Relativ sistem clas and book numbers remain unchannged thru all channges of shelving, bildings or order of clases.

Amung hundreds of points raizd by librarians as to its practical workings and usefulness, the only one in which it was not shown to be equal

or superior to earlier systems was that in this relative location a book which this year stands, e.g. at the end of a certain shelf, may not be on that shelf at all another year, because of uneven growth of parts of the library. This slight objection, however, inheres in any system where books are arranged by subjects, rather than by shelves, windows, doors, and similar non-intellectual distinctions.

Sizes on shelves Most libraries have abandoned close distinction of sizes. It is true that this distinction saves a little space, but at far too great a cost, for every distinction of sizes makes a parallel classification. If books are grouped in 5 sizes, one must look in 5 places before he can be sure of having seen them all.

It is better to shelve octavos and all smaller books together in 1 series, and arrange in parallel libraries only quartos and folios, which are too large to stand on regular shelves, showing series in which any oversize book is put by a size letter prefix to the book or class number, e.g. 749 qA or q749 A shows that book A on Artistic furniture is too large for regular shelves, and so is placed in q or quarto series. One uses a wood or pasteboard dummy to show location of a book not in its regular place. But, however solved, size problems are no more troublesome with Decimal than with any other classification.

Catalogs

Any system of catalogs may be used with this scheme, but the 2 essentials of even the simplest system are name or author catalog and shelflist. The chief uses of this system for catalogs are for shelflists and for class catalogs on cards.

Name catalog In this, arranged strictly by names of authors and of persons or places written about, the class number holds a subordinate place, yet is constantly useful. If printed, it appears in a single column as in the Relative Index, and where there is no subject catalog one can rapidly pick out books on any topic by glancing down column for class number wanted.

Shelflist Here class number is again highly important, as it makes this list the most useful form of brief subject catalog, giving author's name and brief title of every book on specific subject bearing that class number.

Class catalog In the class card catalog the classification is mapped out

above the cards by projecting gyds, making reference almost instantaneous. Subjects are arranged in 1, 2, 3 order of their decimal subject numbers exactly as in class tables, and cards of each subject are then subarranged alphabetically by authors (or, in some cases, e.g. biography or local history, by subjects) or chronologically, or by book numbers.

The printed subject catalog on this plan is also most compact and satisfactory in use. Under each class number are given the library's resources on that subject, the heading giving, for convenience, name as well as number of subject, e.g. '513 Geometry'. General notes are printed in finer type under general heads, and a relative index at the end shows just where to open the book to find any topic. As class numbers are put in place of page numbers, this index serves for *any* catalog, list or library arranged on this plan.

Dictionary catalog The dictionary catalog is as easily used with this system as with any other, and is at present on the crest of its wave of popularity. Its failure to meet scholars' requirements has often been pointed out. While far the best for an index, it still leaves much need of a good class catalog. But difficulties both of making and of using a class catalog were formerly so great that there was a conviction among many librarians that notwithstanding its great advantages, the idea must be abandoned as impracticable, though other eminent authorities ably argued that the poorest class catalog was better than one unclassified, and that any use of such a catalog was in itself a lesson in bibliography. Now that the serious difficulties of making a good class catalog have been so largely removed by the simple arabic numerals and Relative Index of this decimal plan, the merits of class over the more common dictionary systems are doubly prominent.

The Subject Index of this system is a skeleton dictionary catalog, covering everything not fully covered by the 'name catalog'. Instead of giving book titles under each head, the number *refers* to all those titles simply and directly. The index may be made on any of the various dictionary plans, with all the advantages it may possess. To us, simplest seemed best. We give only short heads with brief indication in doubtful cases of viewpoint taken in assigning class numbers.

We therefore unite advantages of dictionary and class catalogs, not by mingling them and so losing much of simplicity of one and as much of excellence of the other, but by really using both, each with its own merits. Only one set of titles is needed, for our class numbers make this available for both catalogs.

Advantages

Shelves The system on the shelves is the simplest form of relative location. Many libraries have adopted it for shelf arrangement, where catalogs recently printed, or large investment in another plan, made it too expensive to change anything else.

Shelflist By simply printing the shelflist at any time an admirable subject class list is made for any topic on which there may be present interest, e.g. if a town contemplates a new water supply, interest is greatly stimulated, and everything about waterworks is wanted. The librarian has only to open his shelflist to 628.1 and 352.6 and print it. This great advantage is gained with but slight variation from the form found best in its regular use as a shelflist for examination of shelves to detect losses and misplacements.

Accession book Where shelf mark columns are used, tables of number of books added on each subject are readily made. A glance shows character, by subjects, of books added during any given period, for, wherever this class number occurs, it tells not only *where* the book is shelved but also *what* it is about.

Pamphlets These class numbers applied to pamphlets, whether cataloged or uncataloged, have proved specially satisfactory. Number is written on upper left corner, and pamphlets are shelved in pamphlet boxes side by side with books on same subject, or they may be kept in vertical files or on special shelves divided every 10 cm by perpendicular partitions, or, if preferred, each pamphlet may be put in exact place as if bound. Little expense is incurred, and yet entire pamphlet resources of the library on any subject can be produced almost instantly. The immense advantages of this class arrangement, both in economy and usefulness, will be appreciated by every keeper of a pamphlet collection. A name or author catalog is made on slips if time allows. The pamphlets themselves are the best subject catalog. Placing all material under its class number on regular shelves, has the great advantage of enabling anyone examining a subject to see all resources in 1 place, so far as possible.

Sale duplicates The same arrangement is admirable here. Duplicates are so constantly changing that a catalog can hardly be afforded and a subject arrangement on any other plan that this is difficult to maintain. Still, it is very important that there be some means of knowing what duplicates there are on any given subject. By simply penciling class numbers on books

and arranging these numerically, it is possible to give the information more quickly, cheaply and satisfactorily than in any other way.

Charging system Class numbers may be used for charging with the following advantages. Minute statistics of circulation can be made by simply counting charges and entering the number for each class on a report sheet. If filing is done by call numbers, as either a primary or a secondary consideration, whereabouts of any book lent or amount of use of any subject is quickly found, file gives an up-to-date record of all books lent in any subject, e.g. cards filed under 52 show for Astronomy or those under 822 for English drama just how many and what books are out and who has them. Such a circulation table, always at hand, and with no extra expense or labor, since it is a natural part of the system, is highly prized by all interested in character of general use of the library, while it can by trifling labor be converted into a permanent record by entering on a report sheet. If a reader's card is used, character of the individual's reading is here shown and never before has so much attention as now been given to educating readers' tastes.

Subject references For these it has peculiar advantages. Many users are undertaking analyses and cross references to an extent hitherto thought wholly or almost impossible. These few figures tell as clearly as a long heading exactly what the reference is, while gain in ease of use is even greater than in time and space saved in recording. The clearness and directness of the method aid wonderfully in this work. References to transactions, or chapters in essays, may be made in the most compact and usable form.

Recataloging or reclassifying When Amherst College in 1873 first adopted this plan and began to recatalog its library, it was found (as in hundreds of cases since) entirely practicable to change to the new system gradually, as means allowed, without interfering in any appreciable degree with circulation. Methods employed for thus changing without interrupting use must vary according to different conditions. The essential feature is enough distinction between old and new call numbers to be easily recognized by attendants. If old call numbers consist wholly of figures, the initial letter of the Cutter author numbers furnishes this requisite. All numbers of figures only are then recognized as old, and all numbers containing a letter as in the new system.

Adaptability The system is so flexible that it adapts itself to almost any circumstances. It may be used with proportionate results in almost any one of its applications without the others. It may be applied to pamphlets alone, bringing order out of chaos, and solving this vexatious and vexing prob-

lem, or it may be used for catalogs, leaving shelf arrangement as before, or it may be applied to shelves, while the catalog is dictionary or any other type

Arabic numerals Arabic numerals can be written and found quicker and with less danger of confusion or mistake than any other symbols. Therefore roman numerals, capitals and small letters, and similar symbols found in most classification systems are entirely discarded, and by exclusive use of arabic numerals throughout shelves and indexes, catalogs and other records, there is secured the greatest accuracy, economy and convenience. This advantage is especially prominent in comparison with systems where author's name or the title must be written, in calling for or charging books and in making references.

Endowment of special departments Another great advantage is peculiar adaptability to special endowments. One specially interested in any subject can often be induced to endow that subject, thus providing for buying each year all the best publications.

If John Doe is specially interested in opera, the library says 'Give us \$1000 as endowment of 782, and we will call it the Doe Library of Dramatic Music'. There will be found every book, pamphlet, newspaper clipping, or manuscript that the library has or can get on this subject. Gifts from others will be placed in the Doe Library, the donor's name being given on the bookplate, and for generations to come every person interested in opera will be grateful for your foundation'. In this way 782 is assigned to John Doe, and his pride is stimulated in developing it. If another man with larger means and interest will endow the whole subject of music 780, there is no difficulty or impropriety in including 782, the Doe Dramatic Music Library, as the 2d section of 780, the Roe Music Library.

This is one of the most promising fields for development, for almost every library has among its readers some specially interested, who if properly approached would endow some topic, even if a small one, and this relative location, with its definite number expressing just the ground covered, may be of great service in working up these special endowments.

Summary To sum up its claims. It is by far most inexpensive, easily understood, remembered and used, practical rather than theoretic, brief and familiar in nomenclature, susceptible of partial and gradual adoption without confusion, convenient for arranging pamphlets, sale duplicates, and notes, and for indexing, and in keeping statistics and checks for books off shelves, a satisfactory adaptation of card catalog principle to shelves. It

shelves books compactly, uses simple and few symbols, can be expanded, without limit and without confusion or wasted labor, both in catalogs and on shelves or in catalogs alone, checks thoroughly and conveniently against mistakes, admits readily numerous cross references, is unchangeable in its call numbers, and so gives them in all places where needed, in its Index affords an answer to the greatest objection to class catalogs, and was the 1st satisfactory union of the advantages of class and dictionary systems.

Suggestions to users

Hold book in right hand and turn with left, then both class numbers and index heads show most plainly on left margins and reference is quicker when eye follows left pages only

Numeration In thinking or speaking of class numbers, to avoid confusion always divide at the decimal point, and name it; e.g. read 942.27 'nine forty-two, point twenty-seven', never 'ninety-four two twenty-seven'. If 'point' were omitted, the ear might readily interpret 270.2 (two seventy, two) as 272, while 'two seventy, point two' can never be misunderstood.

Plan of book

Tables First page shows 10 classes into which all topics are divided. Next page shows 9 divisions of each of these 10 classes, in a birdseye view of the whole scheme on a single page. Then follows a synoptic view of 10 pages, one for each class, showing the 9 sections of each division of each class.

Following these synopses is the complete classification, which repeats in proper order, classes, divisions and sections, with all subsections. For convenience of users, who thus get fuller and clearer ideas of the field which each number covers, synonymous terms, examples, brief notes, dates and various catchwords are often added to main heads. Therefore all references to numbers should be looked up in the full tables of subsections, using summaries only when a merely synoptic view is wished.

Index Next an alphabetic index of all heads refers by class number to exact place of each in Tables. This Index includes also, as far as found, all synonyms or alternative names for heads, and any other entries likely to help a reader find his subject more readily. Even a user who knows just

where to turn to his subject in the Tables, may, by consulting the Index, be put on the track of valuable matter which he might otherwise overlook

Use of Tables and Index

Familiarity with Classification Get a general knowledge of the scheme by learning the 10 main classes [you will soon know the 100 divisions also without special study], so that you can tell to what subject a given number belongs from its 1st figure, without referring to Tables. Specific knowledge of minute divisions will come gradually, but rapidly, from use. Assign numbers by using Tables alone, and then always verify your result by the Index. Thus you will more rapidly acquire knowledge of the Classification and facility in its use. To do this, decide first to which of the 10 classes the subject belongs, next, take that class as if there were no other, and decide to which of its 10 divisions the subject belongs, then, in the same way, select section and subsection, thus running down your topic in its grooves, which become 10-fold narrower at each step. As a check against error, even though familiar with the scheme, use Index freely.

Subject of a book To find this out, consult

1 **Title**, since it is generally chosen to show what the book is about but as many titles are vague or misleading never class from title alone but always examine also

2 **Contents table**, which is best guide to true subject. If there is no contents table read

3 **Headings of chapters**, or marginal topics

4 **Preface**. Unless already certain, glance through this to catch author's viewpoint and verify impressions gained from title and contents

5 **Reference books**. If preceding means fail, consult reliable bibliographies, class and annotated catalogs, biographic dictionaries, histories of literature, encyclopedias, reviews etc for information about character of book

6 **Subject matter**. If 5 shorter methods above fail, examine subject matter of book itself, and if still in doubt, to avoid mistakes, put aside on an 'under consideration' shelf till you can examine more thoroughly or consult

7 **Specialists**. Experts are usually glad to examine any new books in their departments, enough to class them, i.e. to define their true subject and relations. Old ones they know where to put already

Be specially careful when dealing with flexible terms, e.g. child welfare

ful subsections should always be used. Where short numbers are imperative, give full class number on another part of the bookplate, not to be used in chaining, but as a guide to contents. Thus when a classifier has once examined a book and found out just what it is about, he records it to benefit others.

Bilding numbers

Jeografic divisions In dividing by countries according to note 'Divided like 930-999', found so often in Tables, add only the number following initial 9, for this 9 means not locality but simply class 9, History. e.g. 942 history of England, analyzed is 9 history, 42 England (4 Europe 2 England). If geology of England is wanted, add to 55 (geology number) 42 (number for England) and you have 5542. History of N.Y. state is 9747, of which 747 is locality number, 353 9747, number for N.Y. state administration, is built by adding to number for state administration 3539 number for N.Y. state, 747.

Languaj and literature In 890, where directed to divide like 490, note that 890, Minor literatures, and 490, Minor languages, correspond exactly, so that only figures following 49 are to be added to 89 to build a minor literature number, e.g. Polish language is 49185, adding 185 to 89, Minor literatures, gives 89185 Polish literature. In brief, to form literature from filology numbers substitute 8 for 1st figure, 4, e.g. Sanskrit language 4912, Sanskrit literature 8912. Under 490, the filologic divisions (dictionaries, grammar etc.), and under 890 the form divisions (poetry, drama etc.) should be used only when class number represents a *specific* language or literature, e.g. 4917 Russian, but *not* 497 North American awaiting further division by language.

If directed to 'divide like main classification', as in 016, number for required subject is added exactly as it stands in Tables. e.g. bibliography of Polish poetry, 016 891851.

Combining numbers in a way not printed in Tables must be done with great care, or confusion results. Many users, fascinated with the possibilities of the system, make combinations more ingenious than useful. e.g. 'The horse's foot and how to shoe it' was once marked 636 1682, i.e. blacksmithing number, 682 added to horse number, 636 1. Horseshoeing is now in Tables as 682 1, while 636 168 means American ponies.

Often a classifier adds a figure to show some distinction. It seems short and desirable, but later he may find he has shut himself off from using

sum other division greatly preferred For his personal additions, letters or other symbols not numbers should be used Every added symbol must be clearly written in Tables and Index Never trust memory for decisions.

Book numbers

The call number of a book (number by which it is called for) generally consists of both class and book numbers The same class number applies to all books on same subject, the book number distinguishes each individual work from all others in that class, and is the same for all volumes or copies of same work When a specific volume is wanted the number for that volume must be added to class and book numbers to complete the call number. Most important methods of assigning book numbers are

Author numbers Invention of translation systems by which a name is represented by its initial, with remaining letters translated into numbers. e.g. Freeman, F85, has led most libraries to arrange books under each class number alphabetically by authors, or in local history by towns, or in individual biography and bibliography by biographers and bibliographers This keeps together all works by same author or on same town or same biography, etc. and even in large classes enables one to find any book readily without consulting catalogs One great advantage is that same author has same book number in every subject, i.e. figures are 'significant' like our class numbers, and translate themselves into names Great practical mnemonic convenience results from this form of book number. Most widely used of these translation systems is C. A. Cutter's, known as 'Cutter numbers', published by Library Bureau.

Special author tables A 2d method, for authors having special numbers, e.g. Shakespeare, 822.33, or Milton, 821.47, is uniform use for such authors, of book numbers A-N, with O-Z assigned on basis of their individual works, as illustrated under 'Special author tables', on pages following Relative Index.

Time numbers A 3d arrangement of books under class numbers is chronological by date of 1st publication Its advantage is in presenting historic development of subject, the book written earliest being on the left, the latest work on the right, and then of any given book it is evident that all those on the left were written before it, all those on the right after it In science and useful arts this has special value, while in literature author arrangement is better W. S. Biscoe's translation system of dates gives a more compact and satisfactory mark for year than date written in full (For full

explanations and table see 'Biscoe time numbers', on pages following Relativ Index)

Accession order A 4th arrangement simpler but otherwise less desirable, is in accession order, 1st book put in a class being numbered 1, and 2d 2, the 3d 3

It is entirely practicable to use 2, 3 or all 4 of these methods at same time in same library, one peculiarity of the system being the ease with which it may be adapted to almost any special circumstances. The advantages of the chronological numbering are most marked in science and useful arts, the alphabetic is best in classes where names of authors or subjects outrank dates, and special author numbers in cases where class number already indicates author, so corresponding indication in book number would be useless duplication, while the old accession-order plan is good in special collections which must be kept separate and are no longer added to, since here the extreme simplicity of 1, 2, 3 order is secured with no sacrifice. It is still better, if this last method is used, to adopt A, B, C, instead of 1, 2, 3, as 26 instead of 9 books may be marked with 1 character, and chiefly because it is highly desirable that each book number begin with a letter, which can not be mistaken for end of class number if written on same line, e.g. 1st book under 513, if numbered 1, might be so written as to confuze with subsection 513 1, but 513A could not be misinterpreted. If figures are used, take care to write them as a fraction or with separating dash, e.g. 513 or 513-1

1

Variations practicable in adjusting to special local requirements

Some users assume that adopting Decimal Classification and Relativ Index carries with it other parts of the system used by the author at Amherst, Wellesley or Columbia colleges or in New York State Library. In fact, the plan in each differs somewhat from all the others, and many of the thousands of public and private libraries now using it have adopted still other variations, for special constituency, circumstances and resources of each library must be considered in deciding what is best for it. This decision should be made by one familiar, not only with the library and its needs, but also with all methods of any merit and with comparative ease and cost of introducing them into any given library.

Cautions Having decided to adopt this system in its *decimal* form as worked out and printed, determine whether to adopt certain variations,

noted in 1-5 below as practicable, and in some cases useful and desirable. The inexperienced user is very likely to feel entirely competent, without reading more than a single page of the Tables, regardless of its bearings on hundreds of other places, and without so much as looking at the author's explanations, to institute a series of 'improvements'. Experience shows that nothing could be more disastrous. It seems a simple matter to put a topic a line higher or lower, but in some cases this may affect over 100 Index entries, and there is no possible way to be sure of correcting them except by examining each of 43,000 heads. Proposed changes, carefully studied out and submitted as improvements, are frequently shown by our old records to have been adopted and used in the exact form proposed till unforeseen considerations forced us to change to the form as printed. Even after years of experience one is not safe in pronouncing on an apparent improvement without consulting voluminous records of previous experiments.

Even some who have used the system longest have been misled into adopting changes which on trial they were compelled to reject, going back to original form at cost and confusion of 2 changes. In so apparently simple a thing as introducing subdivisions on blank numbers, mistakes are often made, and when too late to correct them the makers regret their neglect to consult the editor and secure advice and cooperation of those most familiar with the manifold interrelations. Even were the independent divisions equally good, they do not agree with those which will later be printed in Tables and Index, so that every copy of the printed scheme will have to be corrected in manuscript before it is usable in that library. The only safe rule is to *make no changes or subdivisions* without submitting them to the editor, who will gladly advise on such matters without charge, not on ground of any superior wisdom, nor even because of larger experience in this special work, but because in this way only can it be learned if corresponding subdivisions have been already assigned somewhat differently.

A user who adopts printed form avoids criticism sure to be aimed at any possible scheme. The moment he makes 1 'improvement' he must defend all his heads or alter them to suit each critic. Much time is saved by saying that the scheme is used as printed, and blunders are the author's, not the user's. A list of changes made by others without consultation was written for this caution, but is omitted lest it seem invidious. It illustrates how easy it is for able men to make what no one questions after explanation to have been outright blunders, in 'improving and adding to' the

printed skeme We are always grateful for suggestions from anyone, and, having already spent so much time in efforts to improve this system for the common good of all users, invite cooperation of those interested in completing needed subdivisions and eliminating any errors that remain in either Tables or Index

Suggested variations

The following brief notes show the most important variations found practicable in the 'relative index and location system,' oftener called the Decimal Classification or 'Dewey system,' or oftentimes simply 'D C'

1 Letter or symbol notations for changes or additions To protect other users from confusion, the publishers insist, as entitled to by copyright that D C numbers shall not be printed with changed meanings or additions, without some clear indication of the fact in the number itself If reasons which led to adoption of form printed are not conclusive to another, we wish to remove any obstacles to his use of the system with such changes as shall satisfy him This can readily be done by using a letter or some other character than the 10 digits, to mark changes e g if you wish a different set of subdivisions under any number, make it out to suit, and letter it a, b, c, etc It will arrange in its exact place and exact order without difficulty, and no other user of the system will be confused by your forms In Index, cancel 1, 2, 3, etc you have discarded, and write in a, b, c, etc adopted Whenever you use our exact numbers, use also our exact and universal meanings for them as indexes For any additions or changes of your own, use letters or symbols of your own which can not be mistaken for ours, using, of course, our figures to the place where difference begins, e g if you want a new heading next to 551.34, Icebergs, it can not properly go as decimal 1 Mark it 551.34a, and it arranges as wished If you wish to change a head from one place to another, cancel it where it stands, and *leave that number blank* in Tables Then insert the head in its new place as above, as if it had never been in our Tables Unused decimals are often *already appropriated* for authorized subdivisions, tho they may not be printed till several editions later

This plan of introducing letters or other symbols wherever each user pleases, will give all needed freedom to the personal equation and desire for 'originality,' and meet all real wants for peculiar classification in peculiar cases

Fiction In some cases it is usually best to modify class numbers by letters as above In popular libraries half the circulation is often fiction. It

is a great saving to omit class number entirely and use merely book number, it being understood that *no* class number means 'fiction'. Some libraries go still further and for fiction omit book number as well as class number. Some even omit book numbers in other classes.

Juvenils After fiction, great circulation makes juvenils a good place to economize, if they are kept separate, as is usually desirable in popular libraries. Books are classed as if for adults (except that a short number may be used) J being prefix to show their special character. This gives J alone as class number for juvenil fiction, J942 is a child's history of England. These books are arranged in a parallel library by themselves, so J942 comes between J941, juvenil history of Scotland, and J943, juvenil history of Germany.

The separate J library can at any time be abandoned by distributing J books among the regular classes, either ignoring J entirely, or preferably by putting all J books by themselves at end of each class number. In former case, if shorter numbers have been used for juvenils than for adults they should be extended to correspond, in latter case, numbers may either be extended and the books shelved at end of exact subdivision, or the shorter numbers may be retained and the books grouped at end of entire section, e.g. *all* juvenil works on English history may be kept under short number J942 and shelved after all adult works on English history, both 942 alone and 942 with subdivisions.

There are thus 3 methods. 1, to have a separate J library, 2, to have J books by themselves at end of each class number, 3, to have J books in alphabetic order among other books on same subject. In this last case J is useful only to call attention plainly to their juvenil character.

Unless shorter numbers are used for juvenils than for adults the same marking is used for all these plans, and one can be changed to another by simply distributing books the other way and telling attendants.

Biography For this large class, opinions differ as to best treatment. Beside the plan printed in Tables the following methods are widely used.

For *individual* biography, i.e. that relating to a single person (including books containing biographies of not more than 4 persons)

1 Put all biographies in one alphabet of names of *persons written about*, using 92 for class number, and indicating the subject or biographee by a Cutter book number, e.g. life of Grant, 92 G76. This is most compact for charging, and is preferred in popular libraries of large circulation. Instead of 92 for class number, B is often used, but is less desirable, since it has no logical place in a numeric arrangement on shelves and is sometimes confused with the author's initial in fiction.

2 Distribute biography as far as possible to subjects it illustrates, leaving, of course, under 920 the lives not bearing specially on any subject, e.g. all lives of musicians go under 780 and its subdivisions, life of Wagner being 782.2 instead of 927.82 as in Tables. When 9 is used to indicate history of a special subject, 92 may be used for its biography, e.g. 780.9 History of music, 780.92 Biography of musicians.

Collective biography may be classed in a single group under 920, or by subject under 920-928, as in Tables, or distributed throughout the classification according to 2d plan given above for individual biography, subarrangement with any of these methods being alphabetic by author.

Parallel libraries. This treatment of fiction, juvenils and biography illustrates the principle. Its other chief application is for language collections. Some libraries have a constituency not reading English, and so need a parallel library in Italian or Swedish, etc. This is most easily made by simply prefixing language initial to class number. If arranged in one series of subjects this initial is ignored, or all books in the special languages may be grouped under initial letters at end of each class number. The parallel library is made by simply putting together all books having same language initial and then arranging by class numbers. Initials used are F, French, G, German, I, Italian, Sp, Spanish, Sw, Swedish, Dn, Danish, Du, Dutch, N, Norwegian, W, Welsh, A, Arabic, etc. Where only 1 language is so marked in a given library, generally only 1 letter should be used, so as to avoid an extra letter in charging, e.g. S will answer for either Spanish or Swedish if used in only 1 sense. A prefix letter may, however, have been used with a different meaning, e.g. R for Reference, necessitating more than 1 letter for the language prefix, *even if only 1 language is represented by the initial*, e.g. Ru for Russian. This plan has proved very satisfactory in actual use.

Combining language and literature. Same principle can be applied also in combining each language with its literature, if it is preferred to abolish class Filology, and make it simply an appendix to Literature, e.g. using 82f for English filology and adding filology subdivisions, English dictionaries would become 82f3, English grammars 82f5, etc. arranged either just before or just after English literature, 820, 821, etc. and reverse would hold true if a filologist wished to abolish Literature and make it an appendix to Filology.

Reference library. To separate books most needed the best plan is to mark R before class numbers, and arrange books together as an R library. When books are to go into general collection again, draw a line thru this letter.

In same way it frequently happens that a general private library is given on condition that it be kept together, e.g. Phoenix library of Columbia University. This has P prefix to class number, and thus is a parallel library by itself. An initial is better than * or similar mark, for it helps memory and is just as brief. Same plan applies if the library has an 'inferno' for books not used without permits, or for distant rooms where books worth keeping but seldom called for can be arranged in a parallel storage library.

Still another provision is made in 080, 8 being regular number for general collections (as in 508, 520.8 etc.), for those special libraries which can not be separated because of binding or conditions of gift, but instead of the 3 figures in 080, a single letter, as described above, indicates the special collection, and it is easy to learn location of the few special collections of any one library.

Omission of initial O in the class 'General works' has been tried, e.g. 51 instead of 051 for an American periodical, but is not advised, for the eye gets so in the habit of reading as *Science* any number beginning with 5, that there is a mental hitch if, e.g. general periodicals are written 51, etc. instead of 051, etc. Another reason is that Institut International de Bibliographie regards as negligible a final 0 and uses the 1 and 2 figure numbers as we use those same numbers filled out by 0 to 3 figures, e.g. 1 for philosophy, like our 100, 22 for Bible, like our 220. Also in classification it sometimes happens that the first 2 figures are obvious at a glance, but time must be taken to determine the 3d. It is convenient to write these first figures, but if a mathematical book receives its first 2 figures (51), this unfinished number is likely to be confused with the 2-figure number 51. This danger may be largely avoided by writing the decimal point after a blank, e.g. 51 ., to show that a figure is omitted.

2 Contractions for specialists The system is often used by specialists for very minute work, where decimals run out to 6 or more places. Theoretically it is better to write all these figures, thus showing relation to the universe of knowledge, but there is no practical gain to justify the labor if a great quantity of slips must be numbered. A specialist working on 'Swedish poetry of the age of Gustavus' can use a single letter instead of the full 839.715 and save 5 characters in numbering each note, or a dash may be written for all but the last figure, thus '-5'. A body of such notes can be inserted together in their place in an index at 839.715, with a colored card to mark the special groups, with little danger of confusion. Still a stickler for theoretic completeness will write a full index number for each separate slip.

3 Use of alfabet or cronology for final subdivisions While our plan is decimal as distinguisht from 'dictionary' we *always alfabet* whenever that is more useful Indeed, the main feature of our plan is its alfabetic Relativ Index Frequently in minute divisions it is economy to arrange alfabetically or by dates without using a translation system This is specially true in index rerums and notes of specialists After numbers have been used as far as that is the most useful form, then either the name chosen for hed or the year can be inserted at the end, e g towns in a givn state, individual birds or insects cuming under one number, names of men writn about in biogiafy, etc Sum may prefer to adopt this plan in places where we hav chosen a grouping, e g in chemistry, to put all metals in one alfabet under 546 3, insted of using numbers 546 3-99 If this change is wisht, a more complete one wil probably be better put all elements, metallic and nonmetallic, in 1 alfabet under 546 Such use of the alfabet cauzes no confuzion with the Index, as it simply subdivides more closely, unles, as in the case of 546 3, the alfabet replaces heds alreedy printed In this case cancel all subsections in the Tables by drawing a line obliquely thru heds discarded and mark in margin 'Alfabet by elements,' e g

546.3	Metals	Alfabet by elements
.31	Alkali group	
.32	Potassium	
.33	Sodium	
.34	Lithium	
.35	Rubidium	
.36	Caesium	

Then find each of these heds in Index and cancel all figures after 546 3, e g.

Potassium, inorganic chemistry, 546 3~~X~~
 Rubidium, " 546 3~~X~~

This plan has special value in this place, as new elements are discovered from time to time, and can readily be inserted in alfabetic place Still many chemists think it valuable to have similar metals grouped together for convenience of study, and to cover books written on the group as a whole, and also think it important to have a number for rejected elements because literature and references about them remain, and must be provided for

4 Broken order Another common and often desirable variation for shelf arrangement is to break sequence of numbers, to get most used books nearest delivery desk Theory keeps numbers in strict sequence,

but a hyer rule everywhere is 'sacrifice any theory for a substantial gain'. Practically there ar few libraries where it is not best to break order of clases. Often divisions ar best arranjed out of numeric place, e g 520 Astronomy may be wanted in a room accessibl at nyt, fiction, juvenils and biograpy ar always wanted near the delivery desk in a public library, and in strict order ar as likely to cum at the most distant point. Numberless local reazons may make a broken order desirabl. There need be no hesitation in adopting it if enuf is gaird, but there shud be charts clearly showing where each division starts, e.g. after 430 'Preceding 830', after 520 'In observatory', it being necessary to specify room for books entirely removed from jeneral library arrangement. The summary of 100 divisions is furnisht by Library Bureau, on celluloid charts, to show location. Opposit each division shud be markt its beginning on shelvs, and it is eazy to vary the order as much as desirabl, tho of course the nearer the divisions run in regular order, 000-999, the eazier it is for a stranjer to find his way about. Variations in order of sections ar les wize and seldom necessary, but if made, a wood or cardboard dummy in regular place shud hav markt on its side the actual location of any section removed.

This broken-order plan is best for bringing together filology and literature of each languaj without altering numbers or prefixing any letter. Let 420 be shelvd just ahed of 820, 430 ahed of 830, and so for all languages, making the jeneral note that all 400s ar shelvd just ahed of corresponding 800s, and remembering that after main languages 4 or more figures ar required to indicate languaj alone, so Portuguese filology goes between 868 and 869, Russian between 891.69 and 891 7, Bohemian between 891.85 and 891 86, etc

5 Pro and con division of topics It is very useful in many cases to separate books on a topic with strongly markt sides, so either set of views and arguments may be seen by itself. This has been dun in sum cases by subdivision, e g 337 Protection and free trade. In others it is equally useful, and can be indicated by an aded mark, e.g. 324 3 Woman suffraj. The number may be uzed for jeneral works, giving facts etc. and advocates and opponents may be separated by + and - for positiv and negativ, or by p and c, the initials for pro and con, which tho short, ar too long for a circulating library to uze in charging but may be disregarded for that purpose if book numbers ar so assynd as to distinguish. In reference libraries, on cards, etc. most wil prefer to write out *pro* and *con*, to mark the 2 groups. The order on shelvs is, of course, alfabetic, i e 324 3, 324 3c, 324 3p, or if + and - ar uzed, the uzual order is folld. +, -.

These 5 notes suggest the range of variations which may be made and illustrate D C adaptability to widely different conditions

Bibliographic modifications

After study of all other available systems the Decimal Classification was adopted in 1895 by the newly organized Institut International de Bibliographie (known as I I B) as best adapted for its projected universal subject bibliography to cover ultimately all subjects in all languages in all periods of the world's history

Determining factors were

- 1 Decimal Classification was of topics, independent of language or exact synonym by which expressed
- 2 Its notation was in itself the only international language, since it consisted solely of arabic numerals, used all over the world
- 3 Its decimal principle allowed indefinite intercalation

Overdetailed as the Classification already seemed to many librarians, lack of subdivision was the Institute's first difficulty and it urged us at once to enlarge the Tables. State Library duties at that time made concentration on this impossible, but we promised cooperation and criticism if I I B would draft required extensions. When its remarkably rapid work precluded even adequate criticism, it was authorized to publish its tables and assured that the American revision would vary from them as little as practicable. At Geneva in 1924 the harmonizing of the American and European editions was agreed on and to D C editor was delegated the very extensive work of checking the variant forms and recommending which should be kept, a work which is now well under way.

Obviously, bibliographic and general library use are so different that in some cases what is clearly best for real needs of scholarly specialists, where any symbols can be used on index cards, would be quite impracticable for a public library, which must have symbols that can be marked on the back of books, readily used by the unskilled public in writing call slips, and rapidly handled by low-priced runners and young clerks. This difficulty can, however, often be obviated by allowing alternative forms.

I I B has devised and uses ingenious symbols, expressing many interrelations and greatly increasing numbering capacity. But these new symbols are thought by many too complex for ordinary shelf or catalog use, though 25 years use by I I B with unskilled clerks has proved that this objection is more fear than result of fair trial. They are given here broadly for personal notes of specialists and other close classifiers, to whom their vast prac-

tical advantages will strongly appeal, and as a key to notation on I I B bibliographic cards. Elaborate details and explanations are in *Classification décimale*, Brussels, 1905, of which a new edition is announced for 1927. Obviously these symbols allow subdivision of the same number in many different ways without confusion.

The most important of these devices are *3 Relation syn* and *6 Place syn* and their use in libraries where they have been tried has proved that it is entirely practicable, even for marking books.

The wide and ever-growing range of application of certain subjects makes it impossible to subdivide satisfactorily by assigning definite numbers, but use of colon to show relation between 2 subjects provides an automatic method which can be used with any subject for unlimited subdivision (For illustration see note under 150 Sykology.)

Use of () round a local number provides an automatic method of local subdivision for any subject, as there may be need in an individual library, while the symbol shows instantly the *local* nature of the subdivision.

1 *Accretion syn* + This simplest of symbols, equivalent to 'and', indicates exactly what it suggests, that the article so numbered treats of all subject numbers connected by +, e.g. 637+614 32 a work concerning dairies and also on inspection of dairy products.

2 *Coupling syn* - This is used for coupling to a subject a series of subdivisions common to a group of subjects, as 400 Filology (e.g. 45-3 Italian dictionary, 45-4 Italian synonyms, 45-5 Italian grammar, 46-3 Spanish dictionary, 46-4 Spanish synonyms, 46-5 Spanish grammar), 800 Literature (85-3 Italian fiction, 85-4 Italian essays, 85-5 Italian oratory, 86-3 Spanish fiction, 86-4 Spanish essays, 86-5 Spanish oratory), 546 Inorganic chemistry (546 51-3 Oxids of lead, 546.51-4 Sulfid of lead, 546 51-5 Chlorid of lead, 546 56-3 Oxids of copper, 546 56-4 Sulfid of copper, 546 56-5 Chlorid of copper, 546 57-3 Oxids of silver, 546 57-4 Sulfid of silver, 546 57-5 Chlorid of silver) It should, however, be used only where such use is specifically mentioned in the Tables, as confusion would otherwise result. This syn is so similar to that commonly used for 'to and including' that when it is used with Institut meaning it is advisable to use word 'to' for the other meaning.

3 *Relation syn* This is most useful symbol of all, as it involves no change of number except omission of final 0 by those preferring shortest form. It indicates merely that subjects so connected are *considered in relation to each other*, thus affording means of expressing almost limitless

interrelations e.g. ethics in relation to fine arts is 17 7 (01, better, in full 170 700) Vice versa, art in its ethical aspect is 7 17 (01 700 170) order of numbers before and after colon depending on emphasis, 01 on subject with which they are to be arranged

4 Form syn (0) Form or generalities are expressed by a parenthetical number beginning with 0 This is further subdivided as follows

(0) Form symbol, e.g. 335 (0 843) means Socialism treated in form of a French novel

(00) Subdivisions peculiar to a subject, e.g. for history it means sources It is further subdivided and in some cases modified by a hybrid figure, e.g. 9(44) (001-3) means *Catalog of official sources of French history*, (001) meaning official sources and -3 meaning catalogs, indexes, lists etc

(01)-(09) are the same as our regular form numbers 01-09 Obviously we can not replace our long established simple form numbers by something so much more complex that it is impracticable for shelf use

5 Universality syn ∞ The mathematical syn of infinity is used with place and time syns to mean 'Without limitation' with place syn (see 6 below) it means 'including all places', e.g. 9 (∞) History of all countries, with time syn (see 8 below) it means 'covering all periods', e.g. 9 (∞) " ∞ " History of all countries at all times

6 Place syn (3)-(9) These replace our regular country subdivisions found in 930-999, but do not conflict, as I I B merely leaves D C 930-999 vacant, and writes History of France 9(44) instead of 944 Other auxiliary place numbers indicating general region, direction, geologic place, prehistoric time, etc are also provided in place curves

7 Language syn = This syn preceding language numbers as found in 400 Filology, indicates subdivision by language, e.g. 523 5=9185 means a work on meteors, in Polish, 91 85 being filology number for Polish language in 400

8 Time syn " " Numbers denoting time division are written in quotes I I B scheme gives an elaborate time-division system based on exact dates, e.g. "1922 12 11", meaning year 1922, 12th month, 11th day

9 General points of view syn 00 Each of the following numbers for point of view (except 005) has also a series of subdivisions

001 Speculative idea, purpose, plan etc.

002 Realization execution, construction etc

003 Economic industrial production, cost and sale prices, etc

004 Service and use workings, administration

- 005 Equipment and apparatus
- 006 Buildings and establishments details of organization and services
- 007 Special personnel

10 A to Z Alfabetic arrangement by name of person, place or thing is indicated according to circumstances by initial or whole name

Sequence of these symbols in class number may be varied by users to produce any special arrangement wished, but unless distinct notice of this is given, sequence is arbitrary in the following order.

() " " = . - A-Z

e.g. 9(44)"17"=2 History of France in 18th century, written in English

Other uses

Though this system was devised first for library catalog and shelf arrangement, 54 years have developed many new applications. Nearly every administrative department feels directly the great economy, and in every field of literary activity this classification has been found a great labor-saver, whose practical usefulness has exceeded the most sanguine hopes of its early friends.

Bookstores The plan is a great convenience to both dealers and customers, when applied to miscellaneous stock. Very often a much wanted book, especially if not recently published, is reported 'not in stock', when D C arrangement by subject would have revealed its place at once. Specialists often find on shelves books they would never have ordered, but are glad to buy after examination. Experience proves it profitable for a dealer to arrange his books so each person may find what he is interested in without examining entire stock.

Office files A great file of papers is like a library in miniature. Experience the world over proves that while alphabetic and numeric systems are invaluable for many purposes, complete usefulness demands close clasping as material grows. The best plan is to combine simplicity of numeric and utility of class as in this Decimal Classification and Relative Index used by most libraries. The simplest possible printed index of 43,000 heads tells instantly by what number to mark or to find any paper. Insurance is marked 368. This means: class 3, Sociology, division 6, Associations and institutions, section 8, Insurance. Fire insurance is 1st subdivision, so every paper about fire insurance is marked 368 1 and goes in the drawer in numeric order, where it can instantly be found through the printed Index.

54 years use in a score of countries has proved this numeric system, with

its Relative Index, a marvelous labor-saving Classification is a necessity if all material on any given subject is to be readily found. The labor of making one's own classification is usually prohibitive, if well done. By adopting the scheme in general use by libraries this labor is saved and numbers are in harmony with those of thousands of other catalogs and indexes in which the same number has the same meaning, for, as pointed out at a recent international congress, these numbers are the only international language of perfectly definite meaning among all civilized nations, and also cheapest and quickest in application.

A successful man is usually a classifier and chartmaker. This applies as much to modern business as to science or libraries. Higher education differs from elementary in studying not mere facts, but their *relations to all other facts*. Alex. Bain wisely said 'to learn to classify is in itself an education'. The man of much business or affairs must study every problem in its manifold relations, i.e. must classify and make charts of his results. Without these he is like a sailor in strange waters, sooner or later shipwrecked unless he uses charts to find safe channels as well as to avoid rocks and shoals. A large business or work unclassified or uncharted is not a worthy organization but mere material from which a clever brain may construct one. It differs in efficiency from the ideal as a mob of men differs from a well-disciplined army. Piles of brick and mortar are not a temple any more than heaps of type are Shakespeare's works, though if 'classified' and set, each in its relation to the rest, the transformation is brought about.

Scrapbooks The plan has proved the best for keeping newspaper clippings. Use manila sheets of uniform size (we find 20x25cm best). Write class number of subject in usual place on page, and mount clippings on sheets as in a common scrapbook. These sheets are arranged numerically like a class card catalog, sheets of each class being further arranged, when desirable, under alphabetic subheads. When one sheet is full, insert another at the exact place. Thus perfect classification is kept up without blank sheets, and at smallest outlay of money and trouble. Scraps thus mounted are shelved either in manila pamphlet cases or in patent binders, or are kept in vertical files.

Index rerum These are best made on standard P size (7.5x12.5cm) cards or slips. Light weight catalog card stock is best for private indexes, etc. It costs only $\frac{2}{3}$ as much as heavy Bristol, takes only $\frac{2}{3}$ room, and handles easily.

Where durability and convenience of handling are less important than cheapness use common heavy writing paper. Novises often greatly di-

minish usefulness of the card system by using ordinary machine-cut cards or slips varying in height so much as to make quick and accurate manipulation impossible. Extreme variation to be tolerated is 1 mm or $\frac{1}{25}$ inch. This will be understood by placing a 7.4cm card between two 7.5cm cards. In rapid turning, fingers make a bridge across taller cards and miss the lower one entirely. Cards must be accurately cut or they lose half their value and in many cases necessitate recopying material at a cost 10-fold greater than to have thrown away imperfectly cut cards or slips at the outset.

Class number is written in upper left corner, any alphabetic subject heading follows at right, and notes fill card below. Cards are then filed in order of class numbers, the cards of each class being further arranged like scrap sheets, according to any alphabetic subheads.

Paper the size of scrap sheets, 20x25cm, arranged and stored the same way may be used instead of cards. This has the advantage of a full letter page in system at once, and holds over 5 times as much as card. While the system can be applied to slips or sheets of any size, there are literally hundreds of accessories and conveniences exactly adapted to these 2 sizes, which are used much more than all others combined, so it is folly to begin on another size, and lose the advantages of this uniformity. If intermediate sizes must be had, the best are Billet 10x15cm, Note 12.5x20cm, and Ms 15x25cm. Often users of some other size finally find it profitable to change to either P, 7.5x12.5, or to L, 20x25cm, even at cost of re-writing many notes.

After 50 years use of P size, countless millions of cards are in catalogs and indexes in scores of countries, so it would be quite impossible to change from 7.5x12.5cm. But recent study and experiments have shown that sheet or room proportions are most pleasing in ratio of 1 to square root of 2, or about 5 to 7, i.e. ratio of the side of an equal-side triangle to its hypotenuse. An immense practical advantage is that this is the only ratio where continuous halving gives always the same ideal proportion. This results in market economy in cutting sizes from large standard sheets. The favorite letter sheet is 19x27 cm. This fits most vertical and other files. We now use it instead of 20x25 and 15x25. Half this size is a pleasing small quarto, 13.5x19, and its quarter is a very convenient pocket size, 9.5x13.5cm. These replace our old Note and Billet sizes.

Note books are best in loose-leaf form. A much poorer method is to take a bound blank book, and assign class numbers in order, giving about the space it is thought each will require, and, when pages so assigned are full, note at bottom where rest of the material may be found. This has all objec-

tions of old fixt location as compared to relativ, and wil hardly be adopted by any person who has ever seen loos-leaf simplicitv and economv

Scores of devices for convenient handling and storing of these slips and sheets and of pamphlets ar manufactured The ful descriptiv and illustrated catalogs of Librai y Bueau giv details

Topical indexes Clas numbers ar uzed to index books red Simpl numbers take the place of a series of words, and results can be handld, ar- ranjed and found much quicker Such enties may be kept separate or combined with index rerums

Advantajes for making topical indexes of colected works, periodicals, transactions etc wil be evident to every indexer or libraiian These consolidated indexes may be ar ranjed together with the card catalog of the books or by themselvs, as seems best in each case

These ar only a few of the sistem's varid applications Eneuf hav been mentioend to show its wide adaptability to wants of libraiian, student and business man

This brief account has probably faild to meet sum objections which may be raizd and could eazily be anseid

Tho much elaborated and in sum few points alterd, the essential caracter of the plan has remaind unchanjed from the fist Revision and expansion constantly in progress involv many new interrelations As ex- tensiv advance testing of new skemes is not always posibl, practical ap- plications ar sure to develop unnotist faults Clasifyers ar therfore askt to uze new tables criticaly and report defects of any kind, with proposed remedies and any needed subdivisions, also any heds needed for the Index All such criticizms ar a decided help and favor

Aknowlejments

The labor on Clasification and Index has been wholly beyond apprecia- tion of any who hav never attempted a similar task

In his varid reading, correspondance and conversation on the subject, the author has doutless recieved many sugestions and gaind ideas which it is now imposibl for him specificaly to aknowlej The *Nuovo sistema di catalogo bibliografico generale* of Natale Battezzati of Milan, adopted by the Italian publishers in 1871, tho he copid nothing from it, more

than any other single system stimulated his study of the problem. The plan of the St Louis Public School Library and that of the Apprentices' Library of New York, which in sum respects resembled his own, were not seen till all essential features were decided on, though not given to the public. In filling the 9 classes of the scheme, the inverted Baconian arrangement of the St Louis Library was followed. The author has no wish to claim original invention for any part of his system where another has been before him, and would gladly make specific acknowledgment of every aid and suggestion were it in his power. Though at its start a little book, it came not forth except by grievous labor.

Much valuable aid has been rendered by specialists, who have assisted greatly in developing tables. Among these are many well-known scholars, and to all most cordial acknowledgment is made. Without such assistance, the present development could not have been attained, for many minds were necessary to supply technical and special learning absolutely essential in filling minute heads. Indeed, in many subjects the author's share has been limited to modification necessary for technical adjustment to his scheme, of material prepared by specialists. To many prominent librarians we are indebted for valuable suggestions and appreciative criticism. While these friends are in no way responsible for any remaining imperfections, they should have credit for many improvements made in these 54 years of revision, during the first 3 of which the scheme was kept in manuscript, that its many details might be subjected to actual trial, and modified where improvement was found practicable.

We are under deep obligation to Institut International de Bibliographie for its great volume of valuable work, covering almost the whole range of subjects, and also for its advice and criticism during progress of our own expansions. To Dr C W Andrews, John Creiar Librarian, Chicago, and to American Library Association classification committee, of which for past 10 years he has been chairman, we are greatly indebted for interest and advice.

W S Biscoe From first publication to the present, the most extended and valued assistance has come from my college classmate, associate and friend, Walter Stanley Biscoe, my first assistant in Amherst College Library, in charge of which he succeeded me, resigning to accept again in 1883 the place next me in Columbia College Library, and again resigning in 1889 to become librarian in charge of classification and catalogs in New York State Library. This book is witness to the rare unselfishness with

which he has given time taken from rest and recreation to this work, in which he shared my interest and faith.

May Seymour Except a year in charge of classification in the Osterhout Library she was with me 34 years, from her entrance to the 1st Library School class in 1887 till her death, June 14, 1921. At New York State Library, classification was her department till she was made director's assistant. For 32 years every item of work on new editions past through her hands. For each of editions 4-10 she did all editorial and much constructive work, secured expert cooperation, called attention to faults or omissions, and sought the best available compromise where doctors disagreed, devoting to this vast labor rare scholarly industry and a loyalty for which no words of thanks can be adequate. She shared my faith in its immense usefulness, did the hardest work, and deserves the gratitude of all who profit by this invaluable laborsaver. I often asked that her name appear on the title-page of the book to which she gave so much, but she persistently refused.

Her place as editor was taken by one of her own choosing, Dorcas Fellows, who more than anyone else had worked closely with Miss Seymour for 25 years, and who will give future editions the benefit of cumulative experience in which she so largely shared. D C users are congratulated that Miss Seymour's position is held by the one whom she herself chose as best adapted to carry on her work. For 5 years past her headquarters have been in New York State Library at Albany, which has long been regarded by many as D C's library home, but recent developments in relations of American Library Association, Library of Congress and Decimal Classification have resulted in an invitation from L C to D C to make its home henceforth at that Library, where, most appropriately, D C's services to American libraries, which is the chief factor in its work, will be coordinated with undertakings previously installed by the national library, extending still further the latter's already great services to the libraries of the country at large.

Future of D C

Miss Seymour had a steadily growing wish to make D C a permanent force for education, by greatly improving its full, short and outline editions, and by printing cheap special editions (indexes) for many prominent divisions, e.g. education, medicine, engineering, agriculture. As a

Decimal Classification

memorial to her, all copyrights and control of all editions have been given to Lake Placid Club Education Foundation, in establishing which she had been warmly and actively interested, and which was chartered by the University of the State of New York, Jan 26, 1922, with these objects

'as an educational institution, to restore to health and educational efficiency teachers, librarians and other educators of moderate means, who have become incapacitated by overwork, to establish, maintain and aid schools, libraries or other educational institutions, specially at Lake Placid, and to institute, organize or foster other movements to advance public welfare thru education, by means of the Foundation prizes, conferences, forums, addresses, guided reading, and similar agencies'

To this Foundation was at once given all voting stock and surplus of Lake Placid Co which owns the 10,000 acres and 391 buildings of Lake Placid Club, thus assuring permanent financial support, which has already been further increased by gifts and bequests from interested friends. Under Foundation auspices future editions of D C will be published, on absolute condition that entire receipts above necessary expenses be used forever solely for improving D C and extending its usefulness, thereby preventing possibility that the work should ever be made a source of either individual or institution profit. A committee on D C, consisting of the most interested Foundation trustees, in consultation with committees of American Library Association and Institut International de Bibliographie, will insure observance of the above condition.

D C has become an international labor-saver. It therefore justly belongs to its users as a whole. All who contribute to the steady improvement of future editions may know that they are helping to make still more useful a system which is so greatly helping steadily increasing thousands scattered all over the civilized world.

MELVIL DEWEY

LAKE PLACID CLUB N Y

Dec. 10, 1926

Previous editions have been dated Amherst College Library, June 10, 1876, Columbia College Library, Aug 10, 1885, and Aug 30, 1888, New York State Library, Dec. 25, 1890, Lake Placid Club, Apr 10, 1911, Apr 10, 1913, Oct. 1, 1915, Aug 11, 1919, and Aug 31, 1922.

Summaries