

EDITORIALS

Cracks in the Shining Armor

A great deal of blood and sweat remain to be shed before the Wesleyan tyranny is finally upset in the United States, but it must be manifest that the brethren are far less secure today than they used to be, and that they lose security day by day. When the Wonder Boy entered the White House they were at the apogee of their power. Functioning through their trusted agencies, the Anti-Saloon League, the Ku Klux Klan and the more venal and degraded section of the Republican party, they had put him there, and had every reason to believe that he would not forget it. Their bishops, led by the puissant Cannon, dodged in and out of the Executive Mansion, and were full of a brisk and confident busyness. They ran both gangs of mountebanks on Capitol Hill, and their hooks were on the judiciary. In brief, the Methodist millennium seemed about to dawn. Never in history had a passel of holy men held a firmer grip upon a free Republic.

The dream lasted two years, or rather less. The events of the Tuesday following the first Monday of last November dissipated it with a bang. All over the country, save in the two lobes, South and Middle West, of the Bible Belt, there was a huge uprising against the saints, and even in the Bible Belt there were sputters of revolt. Tom Heflin went to the block in Alabama and Henry J. Allen in Kansas; and in Ohio, the very citadel and cesspool of the Anti-Saloon League, its whole panel

of serfs was rejected, and a file of wets marched into office. The Democratic party, nationally speaking, became openly and even bombastically wet, and the Republican party began to seep up a stealthy dampness. It was a sad day for the soul-savers, as it was a day of prayer and soul-searching for their chief beneficiary, the Great Engineer. As I write, it appears likely that he will stick a while longer, but it is already pretty plain that if he doesn't do some limber jumping by 1932 he will come to grief.

The consolations that the theologians wrested from the wreck were mainly illusory. Their victory in Pennsylvania, where they supported the Rooseveltian whoop-de-doodle, Pinchot, was really no victory at all, but a colossal defeat. Dr. Hoover, in 1928, carried the State by 987,796; Pinchot, in 1930, carried it by less than 100,000. The difference is tremendous. Moreover, it was not the archangels who saved Pinchot, but the abandoned and atrocious Mellon machine; without its aid in the Pittsburgh region he would have been soundly trounced. He resumes office completely hog-tied, and will be unable to reward the brethren with the kind of sport they pant for. Pennsylvania will remain safely wet; unless all signs fail, indeed, it will soon be the wettest State in the whole constellation. If this is victory, then it would be interesting to hear the Wesleyan metaphysicians define defeat.

Nor is there any solace for them in the fact that they retain control of the lame-duck Congress, and will have a paper ma-

jority in the new one. Many of their kept statesmen got through by margins as narrow as Pinchot's, and all of them are perfectly competent to notice which way the wind is blowing. They will be far less resolute in the faith than they used to be, and far more accessible to argumentation. There was a time when they voted docilely as Wayne B. Wheeler signalled from the gallery, but now they will have to be shown. Not a few of them, in fact, began to hedge before election day, led by the beauteous Ma McCormick of Chicago. Many more will retreat to cover at the first roll-call. The rogues and vagabonds who were brought into politics by Prohibition are not in the trade for their health. They are an unprincipled band, and they will sell out the Anti-Saloon League to the wets, once they are sure that the consideration is sound, as readily as a Prohibition agent takes a bribe from a saloonkeeper. Thus the Wesleyans will perish by their own petard. They filled Congress with serfs, and now the serfs prepare to betray them to their foes.

In their passing there is little cause for regret. Despite Dr. Hoover's historic encomium, Prohibition was never really noble in motive. Its chief propagandists, at all stages of the uproar, have been ignorant, blatant and thoroughly ignoble fellows. No man born or reared as what is called a gentleman has ever been numbered among them. In the South they emerged unanimously from the poor white trash, and in the Middle West they came from the bleaker farms, full of grasshoppers and fleas. There was never any genuine altruism in them; what they sought was not an improvement in living among us, but simply a chance to harass and oppress their betters. They were willing to bring in any evil, including even a vast

increase in drunkenness, in order to get the power that they craved. They carried on their campaign unfairly, dishonestly and brutally. Wherever they alighted they radiated a stench, especially the ecclesiastics among them. That they are now on the run is good news for every American who respects himself and his country. It will be a better place to live in when Prohibition is got rid of and forgotten. The thing is an evangel both witless and dishonorable, preached by jackals to jackasses.



The Boons of Civilization

"What we call progress," said Havelock Ellis, "is the exchange of one nuisance for another nuisance." The thought is so obvious that it must occur now and then even to the secretary of the Greater Zenith Booster League. There may be persons who actually enjoy the sound of the telephone bell, but if they exist I can only say that I have never met them. It is highly probable that the telephone, as it stands today, represents more sheer brain power than any other human invention. A truly immense ingenuity has gone into perfecting it, and it is as far beyond its progenitor of 1900 as the *Europa* is beyond Fulton's *Clermont*. But all the while no one has ever thought of improving the tone of its bell. The sound remains intolerably harsh and shrill, even when efforts are made to damp it. With very little trouble it might be made deep, sonorous and even soothing. But the telephone engineers let it remain as it was at the start, and millions of people suffer under its assault at every hour of the day.

The telephone, I believe, is the greatest boon to bores ever invented. It has set their ancient art upon a new level of efficiency

and enabled them to penetrate the last strongholds of privacy. All of the devices that have been put into service against them have failed. I point, for example, to that of having a private telephone number, not listed in the book. Obviously, there is nothing here to daunt a bore of authentic gifts. Obtaining private telephone numbers is of the elemental essence of his craft. Such things are swapped by bores as automatically as New Yorkers swap the addresses of speakeasies. Thus the poor victim of their professional passion is beset quite as much as if he had his telephone number limned upon the sky in smoke. But meanwhile his friends forget it at critical moments and he misses much pleasant gossip and many an opportunity for vinous relaxation.

It is not only hard to imagine a world without telephones; it becomes downright impossible. They have become as necessary to the human race, at least in the United States, as window glass, newspapers or bicarbonate of soda. Every now and then one hears of a man who has moved to some remote village to get rid of them, and there proposes to meditate and invite his soul in the manner of the Greek philosophers, but almost always it turns out that his meditations run in the direction of rosicrucianism, the Single Tax, farm relief, or some other such insanity. I have myself ordered my telephone taken out at least a dozen times, but every time I found urgent use for it before the man arrived, and so had to meet him with excuses and a drink. A telephone bigwig tells me that such orders come in at the rate of scores a day, but that none has ever been executed. I now have two telephones in my house, and am about to put in a third. In ten years, no doubt, there will be one in every room, as in hotels.

Despite all this, I remain opposed to the telephone theoretically, and continue to damn it. It is a great invention and of vast value to the human race, but I believe it has done me, personally, almost as much harm as good. How often a single call has blown up my whole evening's work, and so exacerbated my spirit and diminished my income! I am old enough to remember when telephones were very rare, and romantic enough to believe that I was happier then. But at worst I get more out of them than I get out of any of the other current wonders: for example, the radio, the phonograph, the electric light, the movie, and the automobile. I am perhaps the first American ever to give up automobiling, formally and honestly. I sold my car so long ago as 1919, and have never regretted it. When I must move about in a city too large for comfortable walking I employ a taxicab, which is cheaper, safer and far less trouble than a private car. When I travel further I resort to the Pullman, by long odds the best conveyance yet invented by man. The radio, I admit, has potentialities, but they will remain in abeyance so long as the air is laden and debauched by jazz, idiotic harangues by frauds who do not know what they are talking about, and the horrible garglings of ninth-rate singers. As for the phonograph, I'll begin to believe in it wholeheartedly the moment one of the companies produces a good record of the Brahms sextette in B flat, opus 18. I have searched all the catalogues for it, but so far in vain.

Of all the great inventions of modern times the one that has given me most comfort and joy is one that is seldom heard of, to wit, the thermostat. I was amazed, some time ago, to hear that it was invented at least a generation ago. I first heard of it during the war, when some kind friend

suggested that I throw out the coal furnace that was making steam in my house and put in a gas furnace. Naturally enough, I hesitated, for the human mind is so constituted. But the day I finally succumbed must remain ever memorable in my annals, for it saw me move at one leap from an inferno into a sort of paradise. Everyone will recall how bad the coal was in those heroic days. The patriotic anthracite men loaded their culm-piles on cars, and sold them to householders all over the East. Not a furnace-man was in practise in my neighborhood: all of them were working in the shipyards at \$15 a day. So I had to shovel coal myself, and not only shovel coal, but sift ashes. It was a truly dreadful experience. Worse, my house was always either too hot or too cold. When a few pieces of actual coal appeared in the mass of slate the temperature leaped up to 85 degrees, but most of the time it was between 45 and 50.

The thermostat changed all that, and in an instant. I simply set it at 68 degrees, and then went on about my business. Whenever the temperature in the house went up to 70 it automatically turned off the gas under the furnace in the cellar, and there was an immediate return to 68. And if the mercury, keeping on, dropped to 66, then the gas went on again, and the temperature was soon 68 once more. It would take the limber, vibrant, air-cooled tongue of a Rabbi Stephen S. Wise, nay, of a William Jennings Bryan, to describe my relief and comfort. I began to feel like a man liberated from the death-house. I was never too hot or too cold. I had no coal to heave, no ashes to sift. My house became so clean that I could wear a shirt five days. I began to feel like work, and rapidly turned out a series of imperishable contributions to the national letters. My temper improved

so vastly that my family began to suspect senile changes. Moreover, my cellar became as clean as the rest of the house, and as roomy as a barn. I enlarged my wine-room by 1000 cubic metres. I put in a cedar closet big enough to hold my immense wardrobe. I added a vault for papers, a carpenter shop, and a praying chamber.

For all these boons and usufructs I was indebted to the inventor of the thermostat, a simple device but incomparable. I'd print his name here, but unfortunately I forgot it. He was one of the great benefactors of humanity. I wouldn't swap him for a dozen Marconis, a regiment of Bells, or a whole army corps of Edisons. Edison's life-work, like his garrulous and nonsensical talk, has been mainly a curse to humanity: he has greatly augmented its stock of damned nuisances. But the man who devised the thermostat, at all events in my private opinion, was a hero comparable to Shakespeare, Michelangelo or Beethoven.



The Lowing Hind

Of the current effort to relieve the bankrupt farmer by appointing commissions and making speeches at least this may be said: that it will leave him worse off than he was before, and so hasten his final ruin. That ruin, I believe, would be a good thing for all of us, including even the farmer. As things stand, he is trying to perform a prodigy fit for Hercules, and with the weapons of a midget. Farming, in the modern world, takes a great deal more skill than he has got, and a great deal more intelligence and enterprise, and a great deal more capital. He is on all fours with a village smith who essayed to make steel bridge-girders under his spreading chestnut tree. He'll be better off and we'll

be better off when the mortgage sharks rid him of his farm at last, and he goes to work as a wage slave for his betters, *i.e.*, for men of normal intelligence. Food will be cheaper and more abundant. Wheat will sell for fifty cents a bushel and beef for twenty cents a pound. As for the farmer himself, he will be housed decently and eat decently, and after eight hours' work a day he will have time and energy left for the radio, cross-word puzzles, and dancing with arms and legs.

The notion that farming is carried on anywhere in the United States in a truly competent and rational manner is a delusion. The best farm ever heard of, compared to the worst steel plant, presents a gross burlesque of every canon of efficient operation. If a farmer confined himself strictly to the business of raising, say, wheat he would have to work only thirty days a year. That farmers work harder than that now is obvious, but they do so only by wasting their time upon trivial and highly unprofitable jobs. Consider, for example, the production of milk and butter on the average American farm. It is all consumed on the premises, and the common assumption is that it costs the farmer nothing. But the truth is that the milk he actually uses probably costs him thirty cents a quart and the butter a dollar a pound. Think of the capital outlay represented by his two miserable cows, and then think of the cost of feeding and housing them, and the labor cost of caring for them! The net product is simply the amount of milk and butter that one family can consume. What is left over is wasted—or fed to the hogs. It is immensely expensive feed for hogs, and it helps to keep up the price of pork.

The self-contained farm had an excuse for existence a century ago, or maybe even

a quarter of a century ago, but today it is an anachronism. Good roads spread everywhere, and the way is open to specialization in farming. If one farmer in every township produced all the milk its people needed he could sell it at a profit for no more than a fourth of what it costs his neighbors now. So with hog meat. So even with hay and feed. At least two-thirds of the average farmer's time is devoted to raising things that cost him three or four times as much as they are worth. He is in the position of a householder who went out with pick and shovel to mine his own coal, losing two or three days' remunerative work for every ton. He is almost in the position of a householder who set up a retort in his cellar and essayed to make his own gas. He is so stupid that he not only expects such childish operations to pay their way, but even to yield him a profit. He deserves no such profit, whether from the poor consumer or from the public till. If the typical American farmer got only one meal a day and had to go naked he would still be grossly overpaid.

The rational reorganization of farming, of course, would leave him with a lot of time on his hands. If it takes him only thirty days' labor, as his own boss, to raise and harvest a crop of wheat, it would probably take him no more than twenty days as a trained workman, with a competent boss over him. But that is no objection to taking his farm from him and making a workman of him. The same boss who forced him to produce wheat for fifty cents a bushel would find something else for him to do, once it was in the elevator, and if not on the farm, then in some nearby town.

There is absolutely no reason why farmers should snore through the Winter in idleness, as most of them do now. The

roads that I have mentioned would take them to town quickly enough, once they were dispossessed of their snoring places and prodded into industry. It is as silly for farmers to own their farms as it would be for sailors to own their ships. Both belong to the lowest grade of labor, and are far too stupid to be trusted with the care of valuable property and the production of useful goods.

Getting rid of farmers would not only reduce the cost of living by at least a half; it would also improve the politics of the country, and have a good effect upon religion. As things stand, the farmer is always on the verge of bankruptcy, and so he hates everyone who is having a better time. Prohibition is almost wholly a metaphysic of farmers; so is Methodism. Turn the hind into a wage slave, and he will respond quickly to the better security. The city proletariat, though it is made up largely of fugitives from the farms, is de-

void of moral passion. It not only likes to have a good time itself; it is willing to see its betters have an even better time. I believe that farmers would adopt the same philosophy, once they were properly fed and insured against the sheriff. A few rounds of decent city hooch would cure them of Prohibition, and the movies and tabloids would soon purge their minds of the Wesleyan balderdash.

Thus I look forward to their ruin with agreeable sentiments. It will make living cheaper in the United States, and very much pleasanter. The country has been run from the farms long enough: the business becomes an indecorum, verging almost upon the obscene. We'll all be better off when the men who raise wheat and hogs punch time-clocks, and knock off work at 5 P.M., and begin to accumulate wardrobes, and go in for betting on the races, home brewing, and miniature golf.

H. L. M.

FREE BOOKS

BY MATTHEW PAXTON

A FEW municipal tax-supported libraries were in existence in the United States a hundred years ago and so far back as 1848 the General Court of Massachusetts authorized the city of Boston to raise \$5000 a year for a public library. Three years later the power of the city to tax its people in order to circulate books was extended to the entire State. Yet as late as 1876, when more than a hundred librarians came together to form the American Library Association, only fourteen were from free public libraries.

The idea that government should take from property-owners money with which to buy books for readers was actively opposed by more than one enlightened man of the past century. Goldwin Smith declared that the community did not owe its people free books any more than it owed them free clothing, and Herbert Spencer shared this view. Even as the century drew to a close the library system of America had not set into its present mold of free tax-supported libraries. In 1890 there were 3804 libraries in this country. One-fourth of them belonged to schools and only an eighth of them offered the free distribution of books.

Germany, which made its start toward public libraries in the nineties, has developed a system under which the government directs their organization and operation through local inspectors. Had some determined reformer worked for such a plan our own libraries might be car-

ried on now with Federal appropriation and regulation. Or they might have achieved a civic status without municipal control as a public charity and received their funds from begging campaigns as a part of a Community Chest. The push that sent them into the arms of city councils was given by Andrew Carnegie.

Carnegie's father belonged to a group of damask-weavers in Scotland that pooled their books and listened to one read while the others worked, the reader receiving the same pay as the others. Their collection became the first circulating library in Dunfermline, and it was there that Carnegie the son established his first library in 1881. His formal schooling ended at thirteen, when he became a telegraph messenger in Allegheny, Pa. But the great event in his education was ahead of him, according to his own account. One day he read in the *Pittsburgh Dispatch* that Colonel James Anderson of Allegheny had turned his library of 400 volumes into a Library Institute, and that the owner would give them out on Saturday afternoons to working boys with a trade.

This chance, Andrew realized, was not for him. He was only a messenger, not a working boy with a trade. Yet, resolved not to be deprived of books, he wrote straightway his first communication to the press. He pleaded for the right to read even though he was only a messenger, and his letter was signed A Working Boy Without a Trade. His argument was un-

answerable and he was admitted to the colonel's library on equal terms with the others. He wrote long afterward:

Every day of toil, and even long hours of night service were lightened by the book I carried about with me and read in intervals that would be snatched from duty. And the whole future was made bright by the thought that when Saturday came a new volume could be obtained. In this way I became familiar with Macaulay's essays and his history, and with Bancroft's "History of the United States," which I studied with more care than any other book I had then read. Lamb's essays were my special delight, but I had at this time no knowledge of the greatest master of all, Shakespeare, beyond selected pieces in the text-books. To Colonel Anderson I owe a taste for literature which I would not exchange for all the millions that were ever amassed by man.

Carnegie's first gifts to libraries in the United States came during the years of his great battle with organized labor. While his partner sent a regiment of Pinkerton detectives to break a strike, he wrote the checks which provided reading-rooms for the sons of the strikers.

The first Carnegie library on this continent was opened in Allegheny in 1890, a gray granite Romanesque building with a memorial to Colonel Anderson in front. It contained space for 75,000 books, a concert-hall and an art gallery. Under the deed of gift the community was required to furnish the site and bind itself to an annual maintenance charge of 10% of the cost of the building.

The announcement of his offer of similar libraries to other towns on the same terms sent a thrill through the land, but towns, it turned out, could levy taxes only so far as power was given them to do so by the States. In order to enable them to accept the Carnegie offer, the States hastened to pass laws which made municipal

tax-supported libraries possible. In not a single instance did they reserve the right to manage the libraries, with the result that all the public libraries that have come into existence since then are tax-supported and under municipal control.

II

There are, of course, different types of management. In a few States library boards are elected by the citizens, but in most of them a board of trustees for the library is appointed by the mayor or city council. In some cities the board of education acts also as the library board. Cities which have adopted the city manager form often place the librarian directly under the city manager. In California and Montana county librarians are appointed and controlled by the county boards. The annual levy for libraries varies from half a mill in Arkansas to five mills in Iowa and Nebraska.

In St. Paul, Indianapolis and Kansas City the libraries are under the boards of education. In St. Paul there is also a library advisory board with powers of inspection and recommendation, consisting of one citizen from each of the twelve wards, the superintendent of schools, the principals of the four high-schools, and one teacher elected from the whole body of teachers. An objection offered by librarians to school board management is that the board members are engrossed in school affairs and take it for granted that the library is all right. However, some librarians say that more freedom of action and income is possible than under other plans.

Libraries under city manager government are found in Sacramento and Stockton, while in Duluth, where a commission form of government prevails, the library is under the supervision of the mayor. Boards of trustees are eliminated and the

librarian is like one of the heads of departments. One librarian under this plan found that better personnel resulted from the appointments of the city manager, while another found that the plan interfered with library management.

In most libraries the appointment of the librarian is at the pleasure of the board. In perhaps a fifth of them the appointment is for one year. In two-thirds the staff is appointed by the board with the help of the librarian. The New Jersey libraries are under civil service. But civil service is not popular with library managers. The examinations are said not to give a fair test of an applicant's ability. Papers are often graded by persons who are unfamiliar with libraries and personality is not considered. Some librarians, however, report that civil service tests provide an effective defense against political appointments.

Library service is fast becoming professionalized. Seven States require applicants to show some sort of certificate. In South Dakota four kinds of certificates are issued, for life, for five years, for three years, and for one year. Life certificates there and in other States require college training, library studies, and executive experience. In the larger libraries the salaries of the librarians range from \$2400 to \$10,000, the average being \$5000. The library worker is commonly well treated, working for seven or eight hours a day, and getting a vacation with part or full expenses for library association meetings.

Most libraries give the privilege of borrowing to all residents, and often the area of free service extends beyond the city limits. In some small towns all those who trade in the place may take books from the library. The applicant for a card usually gives two references and in half the libraries these references are considered

guarantors, although it is rare that a guarantor ever pays for a book lost by one he has recommended.

The reading-rooms are all free to the public but many have definite restrictions. "Free to all clean and orderly persons", one library announces. "Use of tobacco, all conversation, and conduct not consistent with quiet and orderly use of reading-rooms prohibited", is another announcement. "No person allowed to use tobacco, candy, nuts, lounge or sleep."

The Brookline, Mass., and Kansas City public libraries exclude students who bring their own books or other material for study. Readers must check their books on entering the New York Library unless it is shown that they are actually needed for use with library books. One library has a reading-room for men only.

Home use came into effect before the open shelf, but at the present time most small libraries are completely open shelf. In the larger libraries a third are entirely open shelf, a third mainly open shelf, and a third mainly closed shelf. Omaha, New Orleans and Somerville have open shelf libraries. Portland, Ore., has two-thirds of its books on open shelves. The Chicago Public Library estimates that fifty-one per cent of its circulation is from its open shelf collection of fifteen thousand volumes.

The open shelf plan is maintained at a cost of thousands of stolen books yearly. Great pains are taken in many libraries to prevent such thefts. Guards stand at the doors of the public libraries in New York, Detroit and Cleveland to examine books and check brief cases. Rare books in the Los Angeles and St. Louis libraries may be used only at a special table and under supervision. The New York Public Library has prosecuted sixty-five cases of theft and has obtained a conviction in every case.

III

The Syracuse Public Library in 1925 kept the following tabulation of the occupations of its borrowers:

Students in universities and schools	12,109
Stay at homes (housewives)	5,577
Teachers	1,804
Business men	1,514
Clerks	1,238
Stenographers	1,147
Laborers	1,091
Mechanics	799
Factory workers	592
Bookkeepers	516
Salesmen	509
Engineers	450
Nurses	388
Clergymen	204
Carpenters	194
Dressmakers	164
Lawyers	138
Physicians	127
Telephone operators	112

An assistant librarian of the St. Louis library kept a record several years ago of 100 readers of William James, of Carl Sandburg, and of Homer, Sophocles and Euripides in translation. He found no lawyer in the list, and there were few doctors or ministers. The readers of James included a trunk maker, a machinist, a stenographer, a saleswoman, a laundry laborer, a common laborer, a maintenance man in a soap factory, and a Negro salesman. The Sandburg readers included stenographers, a waitress, a beauty parlor manager, a department-store salesman, a musician and a painter. The readers of the Greek classics were a hairdresser, a drug-store clerk, a telephone operator and a railroad brakeman's wife.

Preachers and teachers are the aristocrats among the public library borrowers. They usually are allowed to keep books longer than others, and to take home a larger number. They also have free access

to the closed stacks. These aristocrats often are given cards of a different color showing that they belong to a higher order of reader. Portland, Ore. also puts the drummer on the preferred list, allowing him to keep books for three months. Seattle lends books for an indefinite period to sailors on cruises. Gary, Ind., does not charge fines on overdue books that are held out by ministers.

The Chicago Public Library has five different cards—a general card for the common borrower, on which five books may be taken out; a teacher's card which entitles the bearer to cart away fifteen books, including five of fiction; a music card entitling the borrower to one bound volume of music and five pieces of sheet music; a rental card limited to two volumes from the pay collection; and a children's card. But most libraries get along with one card for all purposes.

Many public libraries have pay collections, but as a rule, there are free duplicates of the pay books on the public shelves. The ratio in St. Louis is three pay copies to five free copies. The charge usually is five cents a week or two cents a day. The rental receipts are added to the general library fund. As soon as a book pays for itself it is transferred to a free shelf.

Carnegie early abandoned the practise of giving large central libraries to the big cities, and many of his later gifts were branch libraries. The plan of taking the books to the people has been extended to the point where the majority of the inhabitants of the cities are now within a short distance of a library. In Chicago most readers are within half a mile. The maximum distance is two miles in St. Paul, but in Washington it is five miles. The branch libraries are often preceded by what are called deposit stations or traveling

libraries, which consist of small collections placed for an indefinite period in a store, factory, club or school. Brooklyn has 1024 such traveling libraries. Chicago has thirty-nine branches, four sub-branches and eighty-eight deposit stations. Baltimore has twenty-five branches but no deposit stations. If a demand for a branch library arises in a neighborhood where a deposit station has been established, the branch follows as soon as funds are available. The Bridgeport library has two portable branch libraries which can be knocked down and set up in two or three days. These are used to test the demand for books in a certain locality before a permanent branch library is built.

No generalizations can be drawn from the circulation of the branch libraries concerning the reading habits of the different classes. What holds true in one city is contradicted in another. Berkeley's most successful branch is in the neighborhood of college students and people of leisure. In New Haven the least successful branch is among the well-to-do. Frequently the busiest branches are among industrial workers and intelligent foreigners. The children of foreigners do not ask for books in the mother tongue, though they sometimes borrow them for their parents.

The whole system of book circulation is being revolutionized, and the theory of free books carried to its extreme limit by the book wagon, which has been introduced in recent years. The book wagon consists of an automobile equipped to carry several hundred books. The New York Public Library wagon carries 200 adult and 200 juvenile books to thinly settled parts of Staten Island, making school stops once a week in the Winter and community stops weekly in the Summer. The cost of the car was \$850. It is manned by a library assistant who drives

it and a page. In 1925 the total circulation from the wagon was 5090, at a cost of thirty cents a volume.

The Cleveland book wagon serves outlying districts. Besides books it carries four metal chairs, a small table, two blankets to spread on the ground for the children to sit on during story hours, and a blue and yellow beach umbrella to be used as a sunshade and to attract attention. During the months of July and August it stops weekly at three parks and one playground, and there are also two sidewalk stops. It visits several orphanages, five fresh-air camps and four factories at noon or at the closing hour. The Dayton book wagon starts out with about 600 volumes and a relay truck meets it at remote stations with several hundred others. It pays a weekly visit to thirty-five stations. The circulation in 1926 was 85,850 volumes, with 3146 reference questions answered.

IV

Five American libraries have full-time publicity directors. Like their brothers of the corporations, they interview city editors, draw reporters into their net, furnish printed news, and arrange interviews with great men willing to further the cause of book circulation. The principal publicity effort of many libraries is the annual report, but most of the larger ones supplement this with regular announcements of new books. These are issued from once a year to once a week and cost from \$30 to \$5000 a year. The announcements of some of the larger libraries contain book talks. A few have given up the book list, and advertise only the books that they wish to push. Posters are largely used. The Somerville library has placed permanent signs in gold and black on street corners directing the way to the nearest branch.

Knoxville found that its best publicity campaign was a Library Week which the Chamber of Commerce sponsored. Another city got best results from a walking book. Only the legs of a small boy were visible underneath. While the book walked the circulation of the library increased 50% over the corresponding week of the previous year. The Stockton, Calif., library conducted a telephone campaign for new borrowers. Rochester finds the best publicity comes from placing branch libraries flush with the sidewalks and giving them plate-glass fronts.

In order to stimulate interest in books among children some libraries have reading contests. In Rochester children have been given certificates for reading ten books during the Summer from a graded list of twenty-five titles. It was found, however, that this failed to improve the type of reading or to cultivate a love for it. As long as certificates were offered the books were drawn out rapidly but circulation fell off as soon as the contest was over.

Another ingenious plan to stimulate good reading habits in the little ones was the ribbon arrangement of books, by which a shelf of serious reading was alternated with a shelf of breath-taking story books. It was thought that the child's eye might encounter and his hand take down one of the tomes of wise counsel just above his favorite Oz book. But the scheme has been abandoned in most libraries as without effect on the reading habits of children.

The selection of books for American public libraries is ordinarily made by the librarian. Where the board of trustees retains the privilege of selection it seldom does anything more than give formal sanction to the orders of the librarian. In at least two-thirds of the larger public libraries he (or she) is the final authority. In perhaps two-thirds of the smaller libraries

the boards retain an appearance of authority. One librarian says that a book committee has the power of selection but holds no regular meetings and delegates its authority to him. In another library the librarian submits suggestions to the library committee which usually approves the entire list.

In one library all new fiction is read by the members of the board. In another, each member receives a copy of a book list and checks the titles he considers worth while. In the Seattle library books are discussed at three weekly meetings by the librarian and the department heads. The Book Review Club of Greater Boston holds weekly meetings in the State House and offers its findings to libraries. Some libraries invite selected borrowers to report on books. Birmingham thus calls upon business specialists to report on technical business books.

Financial considerations operate to exclude many books. The book fund is never large enough to buy all the books desired. The choice is, in the main, selective rather than exclusive. Certain books are excluded because the librarian thinks they are not suited to a public library, but the primary aim of the public library is to serve as many readers as possible. The exclusions of the Somerville library may be taken as typical. It does not buy "text-books used in schools, colleges or professional schools; treatises upon highly specialized subjects, such as law and medicine; controversial and propagandist sectarian and partisan books; defamatory books of any sort; books that tend to offend the moral or religious sense of the community or to breed a bitter feeling; sectarian periodicals unless given to the library".

Public opinion as reflected in newspaper comment has found little fault with the

general policy of libraries with respect to the exclusion or restriction of books, although blue-nosed individuals have criticised libraries at various times for circulating even "The Vicar of Wakefield". No case has come to light where a city government has exercised or attempted a direct censorship of public library books. It is not the policy of most libraries generally to keep the adult from lewd books. Under the name of Erotica libraries classify unpurgated books and those which in the opinion of the librarians should have been expurgated. Where these books are locked up the chief reason often is to protect them from thieves. Experience has shown that those who like to read dirty books often take them from the shelves without leave and do not take the trouble to return them.

"We have tried both plans," one librarian writes. "Formerly we restricted such books and they were never read. Since the war we have put them on the open shelves with the result that many have disappeared for a time and some of them permanently".

The policy of the Chicago Public Library has been stated as follows:

In the case of novels written by reputable authors, published by respectable publishers, often printed serially in reputable magazines and sold by established dealers, it is both futile and unwarranted for a public library to undertake an *ex post facto* censorship for the use of persons of maturity and discretion. The same public opinion that supports authors and publishers in the production of such books operates to justify public libraries in making them available to that part of its public, possessed of maturity and discretion, that wishes to read them.

As a matter of fact we have come to the conclusion that most of the works of contemporary fiction which may be regarded as fraught with danger or offense contain within themselves a sufficient preventive against their wrongful use to make them much safer than they appear

to be. They do not often tell a good story in the elemental sense. There is little to attract the youthful and immature mind to their perusal unprompted. Their attenuated plots depicting the actions and reactions of groups of neurotic and unexciting personalities afford few thrills comprehensible to any not equipped with a complete psychology of experiences. In short, these books against which we are so sedulously seeking to protect a definite portion of our readers are for the most part inherently fool-proof in style, plot and treatment, and may be safely left to themselves with as little agitation and advertisement as possible. The average unsophisticated person will rarely get farther than page ten.

This library has only a small assortment of segregated books. These comprise the handful whose titles have been handed down through the generations as classics of pruriency which every schoolboy is tempted sooner or later to try to secure. The segregation is caused not by the character of the books, but their spurious ill-fame. Their evil repute has served to destroy their intrinsic character and has rendered them a nuisance among books and a vexation to librarians.

V

A survey of American public libraries made in 1926 under the direction of the American Library Association showed that in the larger municipal libraries the *per capita* expenditure ranged from \$1.51 for Brookline and \$1.33 for Cleveland to twenty cents for New Orleans. *Per capita* circulation in San Diego was 10.3 copies while in Baltimore it was 1.1. The expenditure of tax money a volume was twenty-nine cents in Dayton while in San Diego it was eight-tenths of a cent. The percentage of fiction to total circulation in Omaha was 78%; in Dayton it was 48%. The percentage of population registered as borrowers was 43.7% in Berkeley, and 14.5% in Boston. The circulation per registered borrower was 27.6% in Somerville,

while it was only 3.2% at the Pratt Institute Free Library of Brooklyn.

The essential difference between the municipal library such as Carnegie made almost universal and the few public libraries that are under private direction is that in the Carnegie library emphasis is laid on circulation. The other type subordinates circulation to special collections for scholars. The gift collections that form an important part of the privately managed public libraries are of great value. But gifts made to municipal libraries contain at least fifty per cent of worthless or out of date material. Some of it is given away to smaller libraries or jails. Much of it is sold as waste paper. Gifts of money are received by public libraries but these do not constitute any considerable part of their support.

The total spent by Carnegie and his Corporation for libraries in the United States and Canada runs to \$43,665,000, while the total for all countries is \$55,655,000. There are 432 buildings costing from \$10,000 to \$20,000 each, located in towns averaging 7862 in population, serving a population of 3,396,500. Fifty-two per cent of the 1463 buildings cost less than \$10,000 and are located in towns with an average population of 3385.

Taking into consideration the branch buildings built by Carnegie it has been estimated that 35,000,000 persons had access to his libraries on the basis of the 1920 census, while 23,825,500, or 22.5% of the population of the same census had access to non-Carnegie libraries. The Carnegie group formed 31% of the population. On the basis of these figures it is estimated that all the public libraries serve 52% of the population.

Thus it will be seen that through the investment of a little more than \$40,000,000

Carnegie stamped on a continent a library system. For even where he did not pay for the buildings, all of the public libraries that came after his first gifts followed his plan of city control. Once he wrote:

I think I am doing a lot for the morality of the country through my libraries. You know how much of the immorality and mischief is because of the idle hours of the boys and girls, especially in the rural regions, where time hangs heavy on their hands. Now they have hundreds of good books to read and pleasant reading rooms where they can go after school or after working hours.

Sometimes I like to sit here in the quiet about this time (five o'clock in the afternoon) and picture the thousands of school-boys sitting in those reading rooms, reading the books I put there. And you know sometimes, isn't it strange, I see myself a little fellow among them. The thing I enjoy the most about my books is that they work day and night. There isn't an hour of the day all over the world that thousands are not reading those books, and will always be reading them, and sometimes when I feel a little vain I say "and I am their teacher."

There is no way of knowing what would have been the result if Carnegie had established his libraries under private management and for the benefit primarily of students instead of making the maximum circulation of books his ideal. The American people have now accepted that ideal as their own. However they differ on other questions, they agree that the tax-supported library meets their needs and are willing to pay even for book wagons and stolen books. Their enthusiasm for the Carnegie plan was shown in Cleveland when they were asked to vote bonds for a \$2,000,000 courthouse and for a \$2,000,000 library building. An enormous majority voted for the new library, but the courthouse bond issue was defeated.

NOTES ON MARRIAGE

BY WILLIAM F. OGBURN

THE subject of marriage and the family is always a signal for extreme statement. That the family is the foundation of society is the refrain from the pulpit. The radical on the other hand asks, "After the family, what?" or if he is inclined to dogmatism, as he often is, he may state emphatically, "Fifty years from now there will be no marriage." The liberal, last as is so often the case, follows with the query, "Is the family so bad, after all?" In the midst of so much conflict of opinion a few facts ought to be welcome. Facts are rarely developed systematically so as to give a well-rounded picture, but there are some very interesting data about the family on American soil that ought to give us something solid to hold on to in this whirlwind of prophecy.

In the first place, contrary to common opinion, marriage is increasing, for in 1890 55.3% of the adult American population (over 15 years old) were married and in 1920 59.9% were married. Each census period since 1890 has shown an increase in the percentage married. The trend surely doesn't point, then, to an abandonment of marriage in fifty years. Furthermore, we are marrying younger, despite the agitation against child marriages, despite the cautions of elders whose blood runs cooler, and despite the predictions of the anti-birth-controllers. In the tug of war between the biological age for marriage and the economic and social age for marriage, the natural urges seem to be winning.

It is interesting to observe that unmarried women just over 30 years old tend to report their ages at 30 or younger, a practice not evident among married women nor among men. This tendency is not noticeable at 25 years, hence we may conclude that 30 years is still *l'âge dangereux*. It is said that the term old maid has become obsolete because with the greater freedom of women the social conditions giving rise to the opprobrium that once attached to it have changed. They have changed so completely, it is said, that now the bachelor girl looks down upon the unhappy lot of her married sister. But the statistics I have quoted do not seem to indicate any such shift in social values.

There are several interesting pieces of statistical evidence indicating the differences in attitude of the two sexes toward marriage. The chances of marriage for either sex are dependent upon the supply of the other. For instance, in Detroit there are 127 males to 100 females and the percentage of females married is quite large, while in Cambridge, Mass., there are only 88 males to 100 females, and the percentage of females married is quite low. Thus the extent to which females are married depends on the supply of males. Similarly, we should expect in Detroit a small percentage of men married and in Cambridge a large percentage of married men. But such is not the case. The percentage of men married is very nearly the same in the two places. Why should this be? The inference