

PRACTICAL CHARACTER OF THE LIBRARIES

By DR. R. P. BIGELOW

Libraries are established for the two-fold purpose of culture and information. Culture has been defined by President Woodrow Wilson as, "The intimate and sensitive appreciation of moral, intellectual, and aesthetic values."

As a means of culture at the Institute may be mentioned first the collection of books on English literature to be found in the General Library. This includes sets of the principal classical works in the language and many other works of interest and value.

For the appreciation of intellectual and moral values, the study of history and biography is important. Books of this character are found also in the General Library, together with a number of interesting books of travel. Considerable importance should be attributed also to the current literature as found in the best periodicals published in this country and abroad. A good collection of these will be found upon the periodical shelves in the General Library where they are easy of access to all students.

This includes, not only periodicals published in the English language, but also several in French, German, Italian, and Spanish. When one has completed a course of instruction in a foreign language, and then has no occasion to use it for some time, one finds when it becomes necessary to use it in professional work, that his knowledge of the subject has become very rusty. To prevent this, frequent reading of books or periodicals in foreign languages is desirable, and means are provided for this in the General Library. A more extensive collection of works in French and German literature will be found in the Library of Modern Languages in Room 20, Lowell.

While there are some books on Art and Aesthetics in the General Library, most of the material on this subject is to be found in the Architectural Library, 30 Pierce Building. Here is brought together a really fine collection of books in Architecture and Art, and the history of these subjects. These books, of course, are primarily for the use of the students in Course IV but others may find here much of interest.

Books on social questions, government, and the history of the United States are kept in the Library of History and Economics, Room 40, Rogers. These will be of special value to any one who is interested in the relations of man with his fellow beings and the problems which are created by the association of persons into states and municipalities.

Wide and accurate information is an essential basis for the appreciation of moral and intellectual values, as it is for professional attainment. The greater part of the Libraries of the Institute is devoted to information.

One desiring to know something of any particular subject will naturally seek books in the Library of the Department which has to do with that particular subject; for example, in the Engineering Library, Room 40, Engineering A, books are to be found on Civil, Sanitary, and Mechanical Engineering; books on Electrical Engineering are to be found in the Library of the Electrical Engineering Department, 3 Lowell; books of Chemistry in the Chemical Library, etc. But there are other subjects with which our books deal, which are not indicated by the names of the Library; for example, there is being formed a collection of books on Aeronautics in the Library of Naval Architecture; Radiotelegraphy and Radiotelephony are treated by books to be found in the Physical Library, and if one were interested in Forestry, the place to find books on this subject is not the Biological Department, but the Engineering Library.

If any one is in doubt as to where to look for books on any particular subject, there is one central source of information which is not used as much as it might be, and that is the catalogue in the General Library. This is a general catalogue of all the books in the Libraries of the Institute, and from it may be obtained information as to the location of any particular book or books on various subjects. During office hours, there is always a Library Assistant at the desk who is glad to answer questions or to help any one to obtain information.

One of the most difficult things in

connection with the use of the Libraries is to find the information which is contained in the periodicals. This, of course, is not to be obtained from the Library catalogues, but must be sought in other sources. Fortunately, these are plentiful.

For engineering subjects, we have the "Engineering Index," both monthly, annual, and combined in five-year volumes; the "Repertorium der Technischen Journal-Literatur," annual publication of the German Patent Office, which, in spite of its source and title, is perfectly easy to use by any one, though not familiar with the German language.

In the pure sciences and their applications we have the "International Catalogue of Scientific Literature" and many Jahresberichte and Zentralblatts too numerous to mention. Here again one unfamiliar with German should not be discouraged with the titles on the backs of the books.

In this connection may be mentioned a number of similar sources of information which are kept in the General Library. "The Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature" covers a wide range of periodicals, some of which border on the professional and many of which contain references to scientific and technical subjects. Then there is the "Bibliographie der Deutschen Zeitschriften-Literatur" which gives very complete references to an incredible number of German periodicals and newspapers. The technical subjects of more popular interest, as for example, Water Supply, Sewerage, Electricity, Aeronautics, etc., will be found to be covered by very numerous references.

In closing it might be well to say a word in regard to the use of the catalogue. As most members of the Institute are aware, the books are arranged according to system of classification by subjects, the numbers on the backs of the books indicating their place on the shelves. The principal entry for every book, except periodical, is made in the catalogue under the name of the author. It is, therefore, always best in looking for the book to look for the name of the author in the catalogue. If this is unknown, then look under the subject. In some cases the exact titles of books are given. In this case, the entry may be found by looking under the first word of the title; but in most of the Departments, there are few of the books, except the periodicals and annual publications, which are entered under the first word of the title.

Another point that may be mentioned is that in the General Library there is a place set aside for the works of officers and graduates of the Institute, which is sadly incomplete, owing no doubt, to the fact that few know of its existence. The Librarian will be pleased to accept and record any contributions of original works received from those who have graduated from the Institute, and these, if properly kept, would form an interesting and valuable collection.

PROSPECT AND STATUS OF INSTITUTE ATHLETICS

Continued from page 81.

is now existing. The greater the interest taken in under-graduate competition, the more successful will we also be in "Varsity" lines.

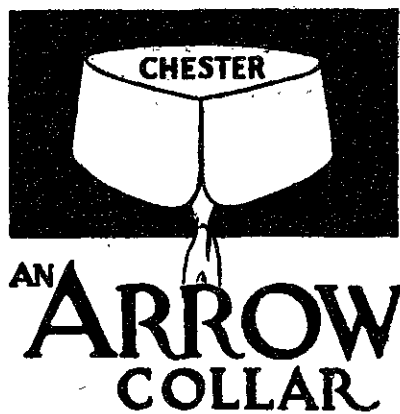
The only sport for exercise which might be newly undertaken at the Institute is Hand Ball, and the Advisory Council are now considering this matter and hope to see its way clear to put up at least one or two courts.

The matter of compulsory gymnasium work has certainly accomplished good results and a closer affiliation between the gymnastic and athletic work would, I think, create more interest on the part of participants. From what I have learned from observation and also from reports of the gymnastic instructors, there is an absolute necessity that instruction to young men entering the Institute be given, particularly as to their physical health and welfare.

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