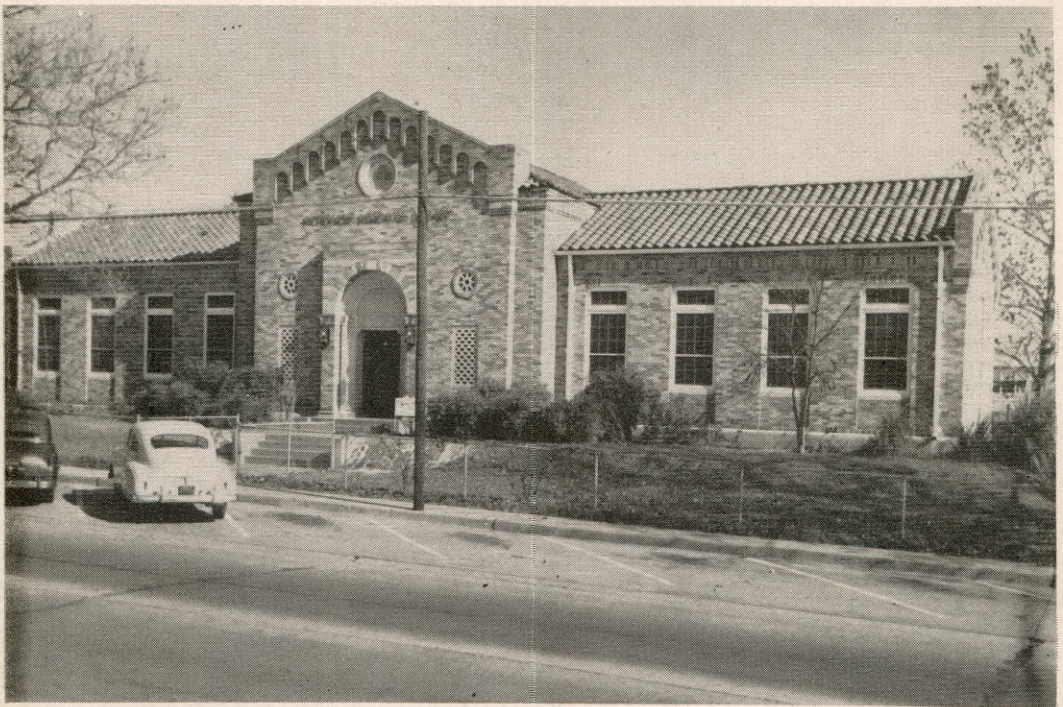


Texas Libraries



Nicholson Memorial Library, Longview

VOLUME 18 - NUMBER 2 - FEBRUARY 1956

Texas State Library

1160

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Historical
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"The Commission shall control and administer the State Library . . . Mark historic sites and houses and secure their preservation . . . Maintain for the use and information of the members of the Legislature, the heads of the several State departments and other citizens a section of the State Library for legislative reference and information" and to "give the members of the Legislature such aid and assistance in the drafting of bills and resolutions as may be asked . . . Collect materials relating to the history of Texas and the adjoining States, preserve, classify, and publish the manuscript archives and such other matters as it may deem proper, diffuse knowledge in regard to the history of Texas . . . Aid and encourage libraries and give advice to such persons as contemplate the establishment of public libraries, conduct library institutes and encourage library associations . . . Establish and maintain in the State Library a records administration division which shall manage all public records of the State with the consent and co-operation of the heads of the various departments and institutions."
—From Texas statutes.

Texas Libraries

VOLUME 18, NUMBER 2, FEBRUARY 1956

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Books - Our Democratic Stronghold

by

John L. McMahon

This title, "Books—Our Democratic Stronghold" evokes a picture of an embattled democracy whose ramparts and weapons are books used to resist the attack of those who would destroy the citadel. The picture is not an untrue one because, in the last analysis, it is in the war of ideas between those who are the protagonists of the democratic idea and those who oppose it—and their name is legion—that the main issue of our times must be resolved. It is the central thesis of this paper that books—expressed and written ideas—are the instruments of defense and offense by which democracy is both maintained and strengthened.

Let us begin by showing that ideas find their reflection in action and are not mere vaporizings of the fretful mind, and then it can be demonstrated that the ideas of those who advance the concept of the dignity and worth of the person, and his right to share in the decisions which vitally affect him, do influence both our people and our political and social institutions. W. F. Willoughby, in the preface to one of his works in political science, stated his belief in the relationship between political theory and action. Writing at the time of the bombing of London, which he personally experienced, he admitted that the pilot of the bombing

plane above him was the one immediately responsible for the threat to his life, but, to him, the real culprit was not the bomber, or his military superior, or the head of the government who had provoked the war. He recognized that the responsible agent was the political idealist, George Hegel, who taught that the State is a real person whose will is the manifestation of perfect rationality. To Willoughby the true cause of the bombing lay in the modern totalitarian doctrine of Hegel, whose ideas had been incorporated in the fundamental nature of the German state.

Perhaps, an illustration drawn from the formative days of our own republic will show more clearly the effect of political ideas upon the fundamental character of our institutions. There can be no doubt that the actual experiences of the Colonists, separated from England as they were by three thousand miles of ocean, gave them both the opportunity and the need to develop organs and practices of government suitable to them alone. But one cannot overlook, either, the influences of political thinkers of the 17th and 18th centuries, and before, in shaping our democratic institutions. John Locke was as much the maker of our Declaration of Independence as were those in the Continental Congress who voted for its promulgation. It was he, who, in his "Two Treatises on Civil Government," gave the rational basis for the Revolution, and it was he who advanced the idea of limited government. A Frenchman, Mon-

Dr. McMahon is President of Our Lady of the Lake College in San Antonio. This paper was read by Dr. McMahon at the 1955 Conference of The Texas Library Association in Corpus Christi.

tesquieu, is responsible for the distinguishing characteristic of American government — the principle of the separation of powers with its resulting system of checks and balances. If any doubt should remain as to the affect of political ideas upon both men and their governmental institutions then Montesquieu's peculiar contribution should remove it. He studied the English government, compared it with the tyranny he found in France, and came to the conclusion that tyranny was avoided in England because the legislative power, the Parliament, and the executive power, the king, were separated; whereas, in France both powers were in the same hand, the king's. What Montesquieu did not perceive, and what we know today to be true, was that in England there was no less a union of the two powers than in France, because the newly arisen cabinet of ministry in England, the real executive, was both a creature of the parliament and responsible to it. When our Constitution was written Montesquieu was well and favorably known to its authors through his "Spirit of the Laws," and his misapprehension of the true structure of the English government became embodied in our Constitution as one of its most distinguishing characteristics. But whether we consider the idea of limited government, separate powers, the Higher Law, the natural law, popular sovereignty, or the right of revolution, we are faced with the inevitable conclusion that ideas do produce action, and in no field is this more apparent than in political life where political theory and ideas shape and influence the institutions and practices under which men live.

Here, however, we seemingly are faced with a dilemma from which there appears to be no escape. Ideas are of all kinds. Some we regard as good, others are evil. The very ideas that appear good to us may be regarded as evil by others and those that they accept as valid may be unorthodox to us. Certainly the political idealism of Kant, Fichte, Hegel, Nietzsche, and others contain powerful ideas that have been influential in shaping the course of world history. Who can deny the power, the appeal, and certainly the world wide influence of the *Communist Manifesto* or of *Das Kapital*? Against these ideas we express and disseminate our own. We counter the supremacy and omnipotence of the state with the Hebraic-Christian concept of man's dignified nature. We use the Declaration to express that fundamental truth and the idea that government is the creature and the servant of the people. Here in the United States we invoke the writings of Jefferson, the speeches of Lincoln, and the ideas of lesser known authors to express and validate our beliefs in the fundamental values, such as inviolable rights, popular republican government, and private property, which constitute the democratic way.

Which set of these contradictory and militantly opposed ideas is to prevail? Should both be given equal opportunity to be heard or to be read? Is it incumbent upon a free people to suppress those ideas, which, if given currency, may find their adoption by the few or the many and thus pose a threat to the existence of the state itself? We know, of course, that in the enemy's state there is suppression, there is censorship and that the fundamental political and eco-

nomic theory upon which the state has been established is safeguarded not only from military attack but also from the attack of those ideas which are hostile, and opposed, to the system. Are we to emulate the methods of those who would destroy us and who would have begun their act of destruction the moment we adopted their methods as our own? I think not.

Recently we has expressed in my own city a microcosm of this very difficulty. Well-intentioned citizens, and we must presume that they were, began an attack upon the holdings of the public library which threatened the freedom to read and although it was successfully resisted its dangerous influence continues to pervade the whole community. The book collections of both the public library and my own college were checked by self-appointed vigilantes to determine whether or not we had any books by Communists authors, by authors who were members of organizations appearing on the Attorney General's list of subversive organizations or the related House Committee. When confronted with the lists of subversive authors and titles the acting City Manager declared himself as favoring the burning of the books. In the midst of the controversy one councilman wanted to know where the library was located. And more to be deplored, the newly reconstituted Library Board gave aid and comfort to the censorship movement by the program of book selection, book exclusion, and book and magazine placement, which it adopted, and by its refusal to endorse the statement of the American Library Association regarding the freedom to read. Were it not for Mr. M. M. Harris, whom many of you know, and others as pas-

sionately committed to the cause of freedom as he, San Antonio today might well be in the continuing throes of a despicable and un-American censorship.

The protagonists of censorship remain, I am certain, unconvinced. They ask why we should allow books by known Communists and their sympathizers, books which criticize and would destroy, if they could, our American system of government, to remain on the shelves where all may read them. Have we not the same right and duty to defend ourselves in the realm of ideas as we have militarily?

The answers to these questions are not easy. No less an authority and disciple of freedom than Jefferson himself, when faced with the nomination of a professor of law at the University of Virginia, declared, "But there is one branch in which we are the best judges, in which heresies may be taught, of so interesting a character to our own state, and to the United States, as to make it a duty in us to lay down the principles which shall be taught. It is that of government It is our duty to guard against the dissemination of such principles among our youth, and the diffusion of that poison by a previous prescription of the texts to be followed in their discourse." Jefferson was referring to his arch-enemy, "federalism" in this quotation, but if we substitute "Communism" for "federalism" we can see that even the great apostle of freedom, at times, did not pursue a consistent course. If the advocate of censorship, book burning, and book branding doesn't find in this statement a defense by him who is our most often quoted authority on freedom, there is no place where it can be found.

This, however, was not characteristic of the true nature of Jefferson's thought. More consistent with the general body of his writings and his life itself is this statement made in 1820, about the University of Virginia, in language that can properly be applied to any university or library of our time. "This institution will be based on the illimitable freedom of the human mind. For here we are not afraid to follow truth wherever it may lead, nor to tolerate any error, so long as reason is left free to combat it."

It seems to me that this statement expresses as perfectly as it can be expressed the democratic concept of freedom whether of reading, writing, or teaching. It posits the freedom of the mind and declares that error may be tolerated only because the mind of man is able to refute it and through reason to arrive at the truth. There can be no nobler concept of man's freedom than this, nor can there be a greater affirmation of the premise upon which democratic government rests—the freedom and capacity for truth of the human mind. President Eisenhower put the same thought in other words, when, in an address at Dartmouth College in 1953, he admonished his hearers not to join the book burners and declared that we had to fight Communism with something better and "not try to conceal the thinking of our own people. They are a part of America and even if they think ideas that are contrary to ours they have a right to have them, a right to record them, and a right to have them in places where they are accessible to others. It is unquestioned or it is not America."

What those who would limit our

freedom and the pursuit of truth too often fail to recognize is that this very freedom, this right to pursue the truth is as essential a part of American democracy—if not more so—as the privilege of the franchise itself. Without this basic freedom democracy would cease to be. We need have no fears that the ready accessibility of books of all kinds containing thoughts and ideas hostile to our own will undermine the foundations of the state or destroy our way of life. Even less will such availability attract converts to an opposing philosophy. Theories of state absolutism, or aristocratic government, of the divine right of kings, including the leadership principle, of various forms of property ownership and distribution different from our own have been with us since America was first colonized. They are to be found in practically every library in the land. Some of the authors have attempted to change us by simple persuasion; others, as Proudhon, have urged force to accomplish change, but our people have not only not accepted these theories and philosophies alien to our own but they have strengthened through their knowledge and understanding of these systems their faith and their conviction in the virtue of the democratic life. Who can doubt that the principles undergirding the whole American structure have not been firmed up by the knowledge that we have gained of the falsity, the weaknesses, and the imperfections of other ideologies, forms of government, and economic systems that are different from our own? He who would doubt the capacity of our people to make intelligent choices is not only a pessimist but

an unrealist, because he denies two hundred years of history. The American people, through reading, study, discussion and action have produced in political, economic and social life a system or way of life not only suited to their own needs but one which, without the sword, is emulated by more than half of the nations of the world. This, it seems to me, is the test by which our faith in the ability of the people to make correct judgments is vindicated. True it is that at times wrong choices and bad judgments have been made, but the long perspective of history shows that, given accurate information, our people will choose freedom and the concomitants of democracy every time. A prime function of our libraries is to make this information available. He who would restrict the sources of knowledge, who would brand or label books as dangerous to minds other than his own, who would select only those controversial books which meet his own predilections, is not only undemocratic himself—for he has denied the basic premise of democratic belief—but he has lost his faith in the people who, better than he, know that in the conflict of ideas, it is the truth that in the long run will gain and merit acceptance.

There is another aspect in which those who would circumscribe our freedoms to read, to write, to teach commit a most grievous error. To them our Constitution is as a document given from Mt. Sanai, fixed and immutable. Yet there is nothing more characteristic or commendable in our fundamental law than its ability to meet the new challenges of an ever changing society. How are these changes accomplished? It is by an informed

and educated people who by reading, discussion, and experiment adopt those needed changes in our political life, whether by formal amendment, or statutory law, or custom, that are required for the commonweal. When our right to know, to study, to compare is denied or restricted we are powerless to effect the changes that may be necessary for survival itself. Professor Micklejohn in an article in the American Association of University Professors' *Bulletin* aptly put it this way,

"We have become timid and defensive. Unlike our forefathers, we Americans now regard the basic problems of government as having been solved for us by our ancestors. And our chief concern is to protect that ancestral heritage from attacks, domestic and foreign. What we now demand of men's minds, therefore, is not the independence which creates insight but the conformity which destroys it. As the owners of a great tradition, we seek, not to produce but to enjoy, not to cultivate but to defend, not to explore but to exploit. By force, by compulsion, we now drive each other into giving to freedom the slavish, timid loyalty, which does not dare to ask what, with the passing of time, a changing freedom has become." Censors should ponder that statement for a long time before they inhibit the reading of the American people under the guise of a spurious Americanism. They may preserve the form of our democratic institutions but they will have destroyed the spirit of democracy and its characteristic genius.

There is one other subject to which I wish to advert before I

(Continued on page 35)

NOTABLE BOOKS OF 1955

The Public Libraries Division of the American Library Association has issued its annual list of "Notable Books" which includes 46 titles. The 1955 list was presented at the ALA Midwinter Meeting at the Edgewater Beach Hotel, Chicago, by the Notable Books Council for distribution on Wednesday, February 1.

Mildred W. Sandoe, personnel director, Public Library, Cincinnati, Ohio, who is President of the division, said of the list:

"When we hear so often that mediocrity reigns supreme . . . that whether we realize it or not we are subject to the 'tyranny of the average' . . . librarians are offering to each other, and to their patrons, an increasingly important service as they call attention to books that are truly notable. Unhampered by commercial restrictions and striving to recognize intellectual integrity, members of the Notable Books Council and the participating libraries have endeavored to select wisely and well. This year, for the first time, the former Notable Books Committee of five was expanded into a Notable Books Council of twelve."

Mrs. Florence S. Craig, director of adult education, Cuyahoga County Public Library, Cleveland, Ohio, Chairman of the Council, said:

"The books were chosen for these factors: sincerity and honesty of presentation, factual correctness, literary excellence, contribution to man's understanding of himself and the times in which he lives.

"Omitted were new editions, condensations, compilations and titles that were parts of older and

larger works.

"Fifty-five libraries participated in the project during 1955."

Following is the list:

- Allen, G. W., *Solitary Singer*, Macmillan.
- Anderson, Erica, *World of Albert Schweitzer*, Harper.
- Barth, Alan, *Government by Investigation*, Kiking.
- Bates, Marston, *Prevalence of People*, Scribner.
- Bishop, J. A., *The Day Lincoln Was Shot*, Harper.
- Bourliere, Francois, *Mammals of the World, Their Life and Habits*, Knopf.
- Bowles, Chester, *New Dimensions of Peace*, Harper.
- Bridgeman, William, *The Lonely Sky*, Henry Holt.
- Burrows, Millar, *Dead Sea Scrolls*, Viking.
- Carson, Rachel, *The Edge of the Sea*, Houghton Mifflin.
- Chase, Gilbert, *America's Music From the Pilgrims to the Present*, McGraw-Hill.
- Chase, M. E., *Life and Language in the Old Testament*, W. W. Norton.
- Clifford, J. L., *Young Sam Johnson*, McGraw-Hill.
- Davenport, R. W., *The Dignity of Man*, Harper.
- De Santillana, George, *The Crime of Galileo*, University of Chicago.
- De Voto, Bernard, *The Easy Chair*, Houghton Mifflin.
- Fine, Benjamin, *1,000,000 Delinquents*, World.
- Fromm, Erich, *The Sane Society*, Rinehart.
- Goodenough, E. R., *Toward a Mature Faith*, Prentice-Hall.

- Gunther, John, *Inside Africa*, Harper.
- Hachiya, Michihiko, *Hiroshima Diary*, University of North Carolina Press.
- Hanson, Lawrence, *Noble Savage*, Random.
- Herber, Will, *Protestant, Catholic, Jew*, Doubleday.
- Hoyle, Fred, *Frontiers of Astronomy*, Harper.
- Irvine, William, *Apes Angels and Victorians*, McGraw-Hill.
- Jackson, R. H., *The Supreme Court in the American System of Government*, Harvard University Press.
- Life Magazine, *The World We Live In*, Simon and Schuster.
- Lindbergh, A. M., *Gift from the Sea*, Pantheon.
- Luethy, Herbert, *Frances Against Herself*, Frederick A. Praeger.
- MacGowan, Kenneth, *The Living Stage*, Prentice-Hall.
- Markandaya, Kamala (pseud.) *Nectar in a Sieve*, John Day.
- Millar, G. R., *Crossbowman's Story of the First Exploration of the Amazon*, Knopf.
- New York (City Museum of Modern Art), *The Family of Man*, Simon and Schuster.
- Niebuhr, Reinhold, *The Self and the Dramas of History*, Scribner.
- Oldenbourg, Zoe, *The Cornerstone*, Pantheon.
- Peterson, R. T., *Wild America*, Houghton Mifflin.
- Phillips, Wendell, *Qataban and Sheba*, Harcourt.
- Reischauer, E. O., *Wanted: an Asian Policy*, Knopf.
- Tenzing, Norgay, *Tiger of the Snows*, G. P. Putnam's Sons.
- Trilling, Lionel, *The Opposing Self*, Viking.
- Tunnard, Christopher, *American Skyline*, Houghton Mifflin.
- Van der Post, Laurens, *The Dark Eye in Africa*, William Morrow.
- Walker, R. L., *China Under Communism*, Yale University Press.
- Weeks, Edward, *The Open Heart*, Little Brown.
- West, Rebecca, *A Train of Powder*, Viking.
- White, Walter, *How Far the Promised Land?* Viking.

Libraries Over the State

On Saturday, December 10, **BONHAM** Speaker of the House Sam Rayburn officially broke ground for the Rayburn Library which will be located at the west end of Fifth Street in Bonham. The library will cost almost \$500,000 and will house the books and manuscripts of the man who has been Speaker of the House longer than any other man. Also attending the ground breaking ceremonies were Mr. Rayburn's three sisters, Governor Ernest McFarland of Arizona, and city and county officials.

The original handwritten **DALLAS** manuscript of the childrens book, "Cara Crewe" by Frances Hodgson Burnett, has recently been

given to the Dallas Public Library by Mrs. Harry E. Stewart. The handsomely bound manuscript was written in London in the late 1880's. This manuscript and a few other rare volumes form the nucleus of a rare book collection the library hopes to assemble.

The Giddings Public **GIDDINGS** Library has moved into new quarters in the former Lee County Vocational Building. The Giddings Study Club, sponsor of the library, and city employees cooperated in re-decorating the library rooms and building shelves and magazine racks.

The annual conference of **HOUSTON** District V, Texas Library Association was held at the

M. D. Anderson Library, University of Houston on December 3. Miss Elenora Alexander, Director of libraries of the Houston Public Schools, presided over the session; and Col. Richard Jones, Assistant Superintendent in charge of personnel, Houston Independent School District made the principal address.

On December 3, District VI, **KILGORE** Texas Library Association held its annual conference in Kilgore. The meeting was attended by approximately 60 librarians. District VI officers for 1956 will be Mrs. Marie Cortin, Henderson County Junior College librarian, chairman; Mrs. Ellen Bauman, Gladewater Public librarian, Vice-Chairman; Imogene Crim, Gay Elementary School librarian, Gladewater, Secretary-Treasurer; and John E. Burke,

East Texas State Teachers College, librarian, publicity chairman.

On November 28, in **SAN ANTONIO** spite of good publicity, the citizens of San Antonio rejected, by a margin of 1,843 votes, a bond issue for the San Antonio Public Library which would have provided a total of \$240,000, of which \$137,000 was to be expended for a southeast branch, \$83,000 for a west branch, and \$20,000 for sites for two other branch libraries which were to have been constructed later.

The San Antonio Public Library system has been aided by only one bond issue during its 50 years, the one for \$500,000 in 1929 that built the present main library and five branches. A bond proposal for \$150,000 for enlarging the main library failed in 1945.

Our Public Libraries —

The Nicholson Memorial Library of Longview

Mrs. Hilma P. Harral, Librarian

Though-provoking addresses by Dr. Willis M. Tate, President of Southern Methodist University, Dr. Eugene B. Hawk, Dean Emeritus of the Perkins School of Theology of S.M.U., and Gregg County Judge Earl Sharp highlighted ceremonies at the Nicholson Memorial Library in Longview on Thursday afternoon, October 27, 1955, at which portraits of Mr. and Mrs. Walter R. Nicholson and their son, the late Ronald Nicholson, were unveiled. These lovely portraits, painted by the noted Dallas artist, Vitor Lallier, commemorate the 23rd anniversary of the presentation of the library building to the people of Gregg County by Mr. and Mrs. Nicholson in memory of their son, Ronald.

The foresight and generosity of Mr. and Mrs. Nicholson in provid-

ing Longview with a beautiful and servicable library building has meant much to the city in the years of its greatest growth. In 1932, they recognized the need of the rapidly expanding oil boom town for more spacious quarters into which to move the popular Gregg County Library established in 1930 by the Longview Women's Chamber of Commerce. Mr. and Mrs. Nicholson decided to give a memorial library to Gregg County dedicated to their son, Ronald, who passed away in 1921 at the age of 12. The stately Romanesque style building of light face brick was formally opened to the public November 19, 1932. after an impressive dedication the preceding afternoon. The 2,500 volumes which comprised the old Gregg County Library had been trans-



Mrs. Harral at Charging Desk

ferred to the new building and Mr. and Mrs. Nicholson provided \$1,000 for the purchase of new books.

The popularity of the new library was proved in May of 1933 when the people of Longview voted to contribute to the support of the library with city funds. In October of 1944, recognizing the part which its libraries were playing in Gregg County, the voters asked the County Commission to name the Nicholson Memorial Library, the Kilgore Public Library, and the Gladewater Public Library and their branches to serve as the Gregg County Library and to appropriate an annual sum to be divided among the libraries for use in addition to their regular bud-

gets. The splendid cooperation of city and county officials has done much toward providing adequate library service in the small county of Gregg.

The traditional charm of the exterior of the building is carried through in the quietly friendly interior decorations which contrast pale textured walls with dark woodwork, striking ceiling beams, and decorative ironwork light fixtures and accessories. The entrance and charging foyer and the adult stack room immediately behind it are done in light carnation pink with accents of coral rose. On each side of this, painted in a restful seafoam green, are the Adult Reading Room with its attractive fireplace with the por-



Teen-Age Room

raits of Mr. and Mrs. Nicholson on each side and the Children's Reading Room where the late Ronald Nicholson's portrait is hung. The office and the processing and periodical room are to the rear of the reading rooms. The Teen Age Reading Room is reached by the stairs on each side of the entrance. Adding to the continuing usefulness and comfort of the building are the fluorescent lighting system, installed several years ago, and the summer-winter air-conditioning unit added during the spring of 1955.

The industrial growth of East Texas and Longview has brought to the library discriminating and sometimes demanding readers, many of them associated with the

oil industry, Texas Eastman Chemical Company, Mid-Valley Pipe Line Company, Lone Star Steel Plant, the Risistol Hat Factory, R. G. Le Tourneau, Inc., and the East Texas Chamber of Commerce. There are at present 8,327 members listed in the active file, and circulation for the past year reached 125,743 which was almost equally divided between adult and juvenile materials. The book stock of 24,028 books is about all that the bulging walls of the library can hold until more stack space is provided by adding to the building.

In addition to regular services, all new adult fiction and non-fiction books are placed on a 7-day shelf. A group of new adult and juvenile books is ready for circula-

tion each Monday morning and a newspaper article telling about these books is carried in the Sunday Longview paper. Western and Mystery stories are also placed on separate shelves for the convenience of readers.

Reference services are especially strong, being under the direction of Miss Celeste Widney who has had over thirty years of school and public library experience. Much adult reference work is done, with all possible assistance being given in planning club programs and reserving books during the club year. Students from Kilgore College and Le Tourneau Technical Institute are assisted with their assignments, and much reference work

is done by Longview Senior and Junior High School students as well as students from nearby high schools such as White Oak, Pine Tree, Judson, Spring Hill, and Hallsville. The periodical files of over 150 magazines and newspapers are popular for both reference and entertainment reading, and all magazines may be checked out except the current issues and bound copies. The library also has a file of the Longview News from 1933 to the present. Short reference questions are answered over the telephone, and books may be renewed by phone. Of interest to teachers has been the picture file, with mounted pictures filed by subject available for circulation.



Adult Reading Room with Portraits of Donors

A small collection of phonograph records is also circulated with a small rental fee on each record taken.

The Genealogy Collection of the Capt. William Young Chapter of the D.A.R. is cataloged by the library and kept in special bookcases in the office for reference use. This group of almost 400 genealogical books, journals and magazines is added to regularly by the two D.A.R. chapters of Longview and is available to the general public for use in the library.

The Children's Room is in the expert care of Mrs. Claudine Orchard and offers books for the youngest through the 6th and 7th grades for pleasure reading and reference work. Many elementary school teachers bring their classes to tour the library and fill out membership cards for those children who are not already members. Teachers have the privilege of taking collections of books to be read in their classrooms and these are kept renewed until the children have finished reading them. The library cooperates with the schools by keeping a special shelf of stories, fair tales and poems on the elementary school reading lists to assist the children with their required reading. The six stereoscopes in carrying cases for home circulation have been kept busy by the young people who have 24 sets of slides on many different subjects and countries from which to choose.

The children's summer reading clubs have been very well received the last two years. Youngsters in grades one to six have been enthusiastic and also their parents who were much interested in having the children continue and improve their reading during vaca-

tion time. We were gratified that many teachers recommended the summer reading program to the parents of the children in their classes. The Book Worm Club this past summer registered 125 members and the Build Yourself a Library Club the previous year had 95 members. We were very proud that over a third of the club member read 35 books to qualify for their Book Worm pins this summer.

The fact that the library is on the same grounds as the Junior High School caused a great deal of crowding in the Children's Room during the 1940's. The solution was the opening in September of 1950 of a Teen Age Reading Room upstairs in what had originally been a small auditorium. The room was completely redecorated and equipped with shelving and furniture. A duplicate card catalog listing the books in the Teen Age Reading Room was typed and a charging desk with a file for all of the Teen Age books checked out was set up. Books suitable for the 7th through the 12th grades were transferred from the Children's Room and the adult sections and marked Teen Age on the spine and on the book pockets. Miss Opal Smith, our Teen Age and General Circulation assistant, has charge of the "thundering herd" of young people enjoying books and each other during the school months. This room is open during all of the library hours in the summer and books are charged at the main charging desk. Our "Teen-agers" have been very pleased to have their own room and books and magazines and reference volumes, and the change was well worth the effort involved.

One of the behind-the-scenes ac-

tivities of which we are very proud is our processing and mending department presided over by Mrs. Marianne Terry, who has had over fifteen years of experience in skillfully patching and mending and making old, worn books look like new. If our shelves present a respectable face to the world, it is mostly because of her tireless ministrations.

At present the library is open 51 hours a week and the schedule is as follows: Monday through Friday 9:30 a.m. till 7:00 p.m. and Saturday 9:30 a.m. till 1:00 p.m.

Since Mrs. Emma-Jeane Donald Floyd opened the library's doors in 1932, the following other head librarians have guided its affairs through the years—Mrs. Irene Davis, Mrs. Camilla Halliday Koford, Miss Ruth Sara Reese, and since 1948, Mrs. Hilma Pliskal Harral.

The reading room of the George Washington Carver Branch Library located in the attractive new Gregg County Colored Community Center is available to the colored citizens of Longview as well as any material from the Nicholson Memorial Library which might be needed.

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Books . . . from p. 27

conclude these remarks, which, while not germane to the central thesis, has some value for the librarian and the teacher. I refer to the books that we recommend to our your who would know and understand all of the elements that combine to make up our democratic or American way of life, the youth who are to man the democratic ramparts. As one who has taught American government to college students I am tempted to

list the documents, the authors, the titles, that make up the outside readings in a course on American government. Such a list would include the Declaration, the Constitution, the Virginia and New Jersey plans of Union, the Federalist papers, certain of Lincoln's speeches, the more important decisions, especially the earlier ones, of the Supreme Court of the United States, biographies such as Beveridge's *Life of Marshall*; commentaries such as those of Bryce, Laske, and Brogan on all various aspects of our political institutions; and contemporary American writers, as Douglas, Lippman, and others, who give new insight into old problems and who apply old principles to new problems. Such a list, however, would defeat the very purpose for which it was created if these were the only readings by which we sought to develop the democrat. For, if the central burden of these remarks has any real validity it is in the fact that all ideas, in our case, political ideas, have a right to be heard so that we may determine where truth is and how it can prevail. The student who would know our institutions and who doesn't know Aristotle will not know the nature of the state itself. And so it is with all of the great minds of the past, whether of Greece or Rome, or of the Middle Ages, or of the centuries immediately preceding our own. We are the heirs of the great thought of all the past centuries and it is in our libraries that the great minds are waiting to speak to us. The student needs, too, to have available to him the ideas and practices of systems different from ours so that he may compare them with our own, evaluate them, reject that which is

false and accept that which is consistent with our view and valuable to us. I know as well as you that much of the reading in our libraries is for self-vocational improvement, that much of it is in fiction, including the cult of the murder mysteries, that much of it is simply ephemeral and evanescent. But I know, too, that just as in times past, so there are today, seriously-minded, loyal and effective, men and women who through their constant endeavor, through wide and serious reading

and study, are making their substantial contribution to our democratic stronghold.

In conclusion, I repeat that ideas are weapons in the conflict between freedom and slavery; they lead directly to action, and in the conflict those ideas prevail which lead to truth. We need have no fear of the people's ability, when given the opportunity, to make the wise and intelligent and free choices that have so long sustained us.

Texas History

General Council of the Provisional Government of Texas to the People of Mexico

The people of Texas have taken up arms in defense of their rights and liberties, menaced by the attacks of military despotism, and to sustain the republican principles of the Constitution of 1824. The Mexican nation ought to be fully informed on this subject, in order to correct the falsehoods circulated by the centralists, who have attempted to calumniate the Texans, by giving to the revolution here a character very different from the true one, and painting it in the blackest colors.

Texas has solemnly declared her principles in the declaration of the 7th of November last, made by her representatives, and has called God to witness the sincerity and purity of her intentions. The people of Texas could not have acted in any other manner, and every freeman would have done the same, who appreciates his own dignity and was

able to resist slavery.

Texas was left without any government, owing to the imprisonment and dispersion of the executive and legislative authorities of the state, by the military centralists, and everything was rapidly falling into anarchy and ruin. It certainly was not the fault of the Texans, that this state of things existed; they were living in peace, when the revolutionary flame reached their homes. Their situation may be compared to that of a peaceful village, that is suddenly appalled by a furious hurricane, which menaces ruin and death, from which the inhabitants seek safety by any means in their power, without acting in any manner censurable for the impending danger, nor trying to shield themselves from its effects.

The truth is, that a storm which originated elsewhere threatened to involve them in its desolating ravages. They wish to save themselves, as they have a right to do,

From Houston Telegraph and Texas Register, January 9, 1836

by the law of nature. Faithful to their paths they wish to defend the Constitution, and for this, their enemies have declared a war of extermination against them, and are trying to deceive the liberal Mexicans with false reports, that their objects are different from those expressed in the before mentioned declaration. God knows this to be a malicious calumny, circulated for the purpose of consolidating centralism, by trying to unite the federalists in its ranks, against their friends the Texians.

Very dearly, indeed, have the homes of the Texians been acquired in this country, which, but a short time since, was a wilderness infested by hostile Indians. It is just and natural that they should wish to preserve them, in conformity with the guarantees of the federal compact under which they were acquired. It is equally so that they should obey the first law which God has stamped upon the heart of man, civilized or savage, which is self-preservation.

The Texians have, therefore, taken up arms in defence of their constitutional rights, in fulfillment of their duties to the Mexican confederation, and of the most sacred obligations to themselves.

They have organized a provisional local government, to provide for their security, as a part of the Mexican confederation, should it be again re-established.

Can it be possible that the whole nation will declare war against us, because we wish to comply with

our obligations, in favor of the Constitution, and because we wish to defend the rights which God has given to man, and which the Mexican nation has solemnly guaranteed to us? No, it cannot be believed. The free Mexicans are not unjust, and they will take part in our favor.

To arms, then, patriotic Mexicans. The Texians, although a young people, invite and call you to the contest which it is the duty of all to sustain against the perjured centralists. Separate, as we have done, from the central government, and declare war against it. Let us sustain the federal compact, restore the federal system, and firmly establish the liberties and happiness of our country. In this great work, you will receive aid and assistance from the Texians, so far as their limited resources will permit, as they have offered in the second article of their declaration.

JAMES W. ROBINSON,
Lieutenant-Governor and
ex-officio President of the
General Council.

William Menifee,
Claiborne West,
J. D. Clements,
Wyatt Hanks,
Henry Millard,
Daniel Parker,
Ira Westover,
L. Ayers,
R. R. Royall.

E. M. Pease,
Secretary of General Council.

Let us assume that entertainment is the sole end of reading; even so, I think you would hold that no mental employment is so broadening to the sympathies or so enlightening to the understanding. Other pursuits belong not to all times, all ages, all conditions; but this gives stimulus to our youth and diversion to our old age; this adds a charm to success, and offers a haven of consolation to failure. Through the night-watches, or all our journeyings, and in our hours of ease, it is our unflinching companion.

—Cicero

GREAT BOOKS OF THE WESTERN WORLD

The Texas State Library has recently received one of the 1600 sets of Great Books of the Western World. This 54-volume work, including the unique idea-index the Syntopicon, produced by the Encyclopaedia Britannica in collaboration with the University of Chicago, is being distributed, under a grant from Old Dominion Foundation, to selected libraries throughout the country. The distribution climaxes a long project of the special ALA Great Books Selection Committee which was appointed for this purpose by the ALA Executive Board.

The project was initiated by the mailing of questionnaires on September 1, 1955 to approximately 30,000 libraries including public, college and university, junior college, high school, and State library agencies. In addition to these libraries any library in the U. S. was also invited to make application for a set if they did not receive an application form. From the several thousand that applied, 1600 were selected to receive the sets.

This set of Great Books of the Western World contains 54 vol-

umes encompassing 443 works by 73 authors from Homer to the 20th century. Editorial preparation of the set occupied 100 scholars for eight years at a cost of approximately \$2,000,000.

The set contains whole works, not excerpts, and for 21 of the 74 authors, all their works. It represents the only publication in English, or the only edition aside from rare or expensive printings, of the key works by Aristotle, Hippocrates, Galen, Euclid, Archimedes, Ptolemy, Copernicus, Galileo, Harvey, Descartes, Pascal, Newton, Montesquieu, Kant, Lavoisier, Fourier, Faraday and Freud.

This set includes 1200 pages of original writing, including Dr. Hutchins' introductory volume, "The Great Conversation," and the 102 introductory essays in the Syntopicon by Dr. Adler. The Syntopicon is an idea index through which it is possible to trace 102 fundamental "Great Ideas" and their subordinate topics through volumes 4 to 54 of the set. The Syntopicon operates in the field of ideas as the dictionary does in the field of words and the encyclopaedia in the field of facts.

Bexar Library Club

Miss Zula Zon MacDonald

The Bexar Library Club had its beginning at the San Antonio Public Library. It was Miss Julia Grothaus, Librarian, who envis-

Miss MacDonald is librarian at the Hawthorne Junior High School in San Antonio. In 1955 she was chairman of the Publicity Committee of the Bexar Library Club.

sioned the advancement of librarianship through an organization of librarians from the various types of libraries in the San Antonio area. Accordingly, invitations to affiliate with such an organization were extended to librarians from the public library, the public schools, private schools, the army, college and university libraries,

special libraries, and to library science school students.

About thirty librarians responded, and in 1935, the first meeting was held in the auditorium of the Public Library, with Ferdinand Henke, Librarian of the Eighth Corps Area, as first president. At that time, Mr. and Mrs. Henke were the only librarians from the Armed Forces represented. After 1941, with the great military expansion, the number of these libraries increased, and today there are over thirty professional members from these libraries, as well as a large number of library assistants.

In 1955, our twentieth president was Miss Helen E. Fry, Staff Librarian, Fourth Army. During the three years that she has been a member, Miss Fry has stimulated professional thought and action, especially in the fields of public relations, publicity, and library administration. In 1953, during Mrs. Hannah T. Willitt's term as president, she moderated a public relations panel composed of prominent directors of public relations for businesses. Librarians immediately became aware of the importance of establishing and maintaining a planned public relations program. The next year, with Josephine Burton as president, Miss Fry conducted an all day workshop around the theme of "Public Relations and Publicity." So successful was this experiment that another was held on May 7, 1955 with "Work Simplification" as the theme.

From a mere handful in 1935 the club has grown to include, in 1955, over two hundred professional librarians and assistants. These members operate the one

hundred and four libraries in the San Antonio area.

The objectives of the club are to encourage and assist members in developing and advancing professionally; to build up and strengthen the recognition of the library profession; to promote the conviction that the library is an indispensable social and educational agency in the life of the community; to increase understanding among members of the various phases of library service; and to promote better understanding and use of library services by the citizens of the community.

The present constitution was framed and adopted in 1939-1940, during Miss Lola Rivers Thompson's term as president. A check list of bound periodicals in libraries in the County was begun in 1937 while Miss Mary B. Carver served as president. Early in 1938, the club met in New Braunfels to help celebrate Mrs. John Faust's gift of \$5000 to that city for their library building. An outstanding event of 1939 was Miss Edwin Sue Goree's talk on proposed legislation for state appropriation for public libraries.

Another highlight was a visit to San Antonio, in 1940, by Miss Nora E. Beust, Library Specialist from the United States Office of Education. She was guest speaker at a dinner given in her honor. In 1946, Miss Mattie Ruth Moore, Texas' first Director of School Libraries, discussed her plans for improving and extending school library services in the state.

On another occasion in 1945, a local author, Mrs. Winifred Thalmann Kupper, gave a very delightful account of "How a Greenhorn Writes a Book." The Toepper-

weins, author and artists publishers who own the Highland Press at Boerne, were guest speakers in the winter of 1947. In May of the same year, the Library Club was entertained with a barbecue at the Topperweins' lovely ranch studio near Boerne.

On several occasions the club has donated funds for books for the police ward at the Robert B. Green Hospital, and has contributed cash donations to the Help-A-Boy Camp.

The club has consistently worked to promote library service and to protect intellectual freedom. Various resolutions sent to proper civic officials urging that the right of freedom to read be respected are on record. Further evidence to support this objective was the panel discussion, open to the public, of the topic "What the San Antonio citizen can and should expect of his public library." This program was designed to enlighten and inform the citizens, not to decide any issues. Members of the panel included two professional librarians and two laymen.

Of the twenty presidents who have served the organization, eight were from the public school libraries: Mattie Brooks, Mary B. Carver, Grace B. Wright, Rix

Brown, Lynda McCutcheon, Elizabeth Cavanaugh, Josephine Burton, and Zula Zon MacDonald.

Five presidents were from the public and county libraries: Irene Francis, Gladys Hitchcock, Marie Perrenot, Coy Lee Barrier, and Hannah T. Willitt. There have been three from the college and university level: Lola R. Thompson, Mrs. Theresa R. Simms, and James O. Wallace. Mrs. Francis S. Henke from St. Mary's University Law Library was the fifteenth president. Three librarians from the Armed Forces Libraries have served as president: Ferdinand Henke, Frances Seaver, and Helen E. Fry.

Though far from complete, this history represents professional advancement of librarianship in Bexar area as Miss Grothaus visioned it. Bexar Library Club has stood the test of time. For twenty years now, the club has been working. Sometimes rather quietly, at other times actively. It has shown itself capable of rising to meet a challenge. All through the years, the meetings have been dominated with a spirit of friendliness and cooperation from all. The Armed Forces librarians have added zest and have made an outstanding contribution to this—our Bexar Library Club.