

One of the phases of American government which is receiving especial study is the large number of independent local governmental units. Studies of political scientists have pointed out the inefficiencies resulting from excessive overlapping of functions. The movement for the consolidation of local governments and a reduction in the number of counties seems destined to make considerable progress. Natural trade areas and available lines of transportation will doubtless be important factors in influencing the size of future units for local government.

The trend toward consolidation of local governments and areas for special services is one which should receive the careful study of librarians. Experimentation with larger units does not have to wait on general governmental progress in this direction, as many states have enacted library legislation permitting contractual relations with other counties or with cities. The desirability of a regional experiment was recognized in setting up the demonstration program. Application was made to the Fund for aid in developing a tri-parish demonstration in Louisiana, but the projected plan did not materialize. Interest in a demonstration over a region composed of several parishes is still being maintained in that state. The assistance of the now firmly established Louisiana Library Commission would be an important factor in the success of a large unit project in that state. Several counties in South Carolina are also among the areas considered as especially favorable for regional demonstrations.

The section of eastern Tennessee centering around Knoxville has received study as a location for a large unit experiment. From Knoxville as a center, a circle having a radius of 40 miles includes ten counties and parts of six others. These sixteen counties form an area of 6,721 square miles and have a population of 450,000 (1930) and property assessed in 1932 at approximately \$260,000,000.²

The purpose of the remainder of this chapter will be to sketch briefly some of the library developments which seem to hold important implications for the extension of library service in the South

² Additional information is given in a "Survey of the Knoxville Region" made in 1933 by Ralph C. McDade and Helen Harris, which is available in typewritten form from the American Library Association, Chicago, or from the Lawson McGhee Library, Knoxville, Tennessee.

over large areas, that is, developments which look in general to regions larger than a city or a county. No effort is made to present an exhaustive description of regional problems or developments. The major purpose is to indicate certain regions in which significant progress is being made and to point out lines of development which are particularly amenable to planning on a regional basis.

THE SOUTH AS A REGION

Some of the important factors which characterize the South as a region have been pointed out in chapter i. Regardless of the numerous elements of homogeneity, it is apparent that the area is too large for development as a single region for general library service. However, certain specialized phases of a broad library program require planning on a scale and for an area larger than a single state. These special fields or functions of library service which should be considered for the southern area as a whole may be grouped under three types: (1) co-operative effort in building up and making available library materials necessary for the promotion of research; (2) co-operation in directing the professional training of public and school librarians; and (3) co-operative study of southern problems.³

Considerable progress has been made along each of these lines. A recent report⁴ summarizes the facilities for research in southern libraries. Specific lines for future development have been indicated, and definite steps are being taken to achieve the suggested recommendations.⁵ The report on library-school facilities in the South⁶ furnished the basis for the beginning of a South-wide plan for training public and school librarians. Existing library schools were

³ For more detailed discussions of some of these points see papers by Louis R. Wilson, "The Role of the Library in Higher Education," *School and Society*, XLII, No. 1079 (August 31, 1935), 273-82; and "New Objectives for Southern Libraries," *Bulletin of the American Library Association*, XXVIII, No. 12 (December, 1934), 845-57.

⁴ "Summary of Information on Southern Research Libraries," compiled by the American Library Association Committee on Resources of Southern Libraries (mimeographed report, 1935).

⁵ The Southern Regional Committee, under the chairmanship of Robert B. Downs, of the University of North Carolina, is actively at work on several projects in this connection.

⁶ American Library Association, Board of Education for Librarianship, *A Study of the Library School Situation in the Southern States* (Chicago: 1931).

strengthened, more provision was made for training school librarians, and additional schools were established. Co-operative study of problems of the entire area has been undertaken by the Southern Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools, by the Southeastern and Southwestern Library Associations, and by various committees of these organizations and of the American Library Association. The basic program in these three fields has been outlined and general objectives for the region have been agreed upon, so that further progress can now be made.

TENNESSEE STATE PLAN

In 1933 a law was enacted creating the Tennessee Educational Commission, empowered by the legislature to make a study of public education in the state and to report its findings and recommendations to the governor⁷ and the general assembly in 1935. Facts regarding school and public library facilities in Tennessee are briefly summarized in one chapter of Part I of the report. Among the findings are: In 1933-34 the boards of education appropriated no funds for library purposes in 89 per cent of the white elementary schools of the state; 80 per cent of Tennessee's white two-year high schools have libraries of less than 400 volumes; 27 per cent of the white four-year high schools have libraries of less than 700 volumes; libraries for Negro schools are even more poorly equipped than those of white schools; and approximately one and two-thirds millions of the population do not have public library service.

The data gathered by the Commission led to the formulation of four statements as a basis for recommendations. These were: (1) many counties are too small and too poor to maintain public library service; (2) experience in Tennessee and other states indicates that public library service can be most economically and effectively provided for an area with a large population; (3) approximately ten large library systems, covering the whole state, could give better service for the same per capita expenditure than is possible under the present system; (4) the state should take such steps as will pro-

⁷ *Report of the Tennessee Educational Commission: Part I, Facts Regarding Public Education and Resulting Problems* (1934); Part II, *Recommendations Affecting Public Education in Tennessee* (1934).

vide for all of its citizens necessary reading and research facilities through the establishment of a state-wide system of public libraries.⁸ It was recommended that the facilities for remedying these deficiencies be provided through the establishment of the following program:

- a) Responsibility for libraries should be placed in the State Board of Education.
- b) A division in the State Department of Education charged with the administration of library service throughout the state.
- c) Division of the state into approximately ten regions in each of which a large and adequate central library should be established with necessary branches in each community.
- d) Establishment in connection with each regional library of the necessary book truck service to carry books to the branch libraries.
- e) An appropriation of at least twenty-five cents per person in the state to be made annually for library services. The money should be distributed and extended throughout the state under the direction of the State Board of Education. (This amount ultimately should be increased to fifty cents per person.)⁹

A minimum annual appropriation of approximately \$650,000 would be necessary to carry out the program recommended by the Commission. Because of a fundamental difference of opinion in the legislature with respect to methods of taxation for state revenue, educational leaders found it inadvisable to introduce the educational reorganization bill which embraced the library plan.¹⁰

PUBLIC LIBRARIES IN CALIFORNIA

The development of public libraries in California has been little short of phenomenal, practically all of it having been achieved since 1875. The extensive provision of libraries includes the following: 146 city libraries, 46 county libraries, 443 libraries in educational institutions of high-school grade and above, 67 law libraries, 58 county teachers' libraries, 6 library-district and 4 union high-school district libraries, 72 miscellaneous institutional libraries, 51 association and society libraries, and 17 subscription libraries. There are

⁸ *Ibid.*, Part II, p. 71.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 72. See also an article by Mary U. Rothbrock, "The Tennessee Library Plan," *Library Journal*, Vol. LX, No. 9 (May 1, 1935), 373-75.

¹⁰ *Bulletin of the American Library Association*, XXIX, No. 8 (August, 1935), 497.

4,406 branches and deposit stations in connection with the foregoing.¹¹

The major part of the public library service is rendered by the State Library, county libraries, and city libraries. Table XLIX shows that libraries of these three types have more than 11,500,000 books and an annual income of over \$4,000,000 for the year ending June 30, 1934. Of major interest to this report, however, is the system of county libraries.

TABLE XLIX
NUMBER OF BOOKS AND INCOME OF CERTAIN CALIFORNIA
PUBLIC LIBRARIES FOR THE YEAR ENDING
JUNE 30, 1934*

	Number of Books, Etc. †	Income for 1933-34 ‡
State Library.....	330,563	\$ 130,444.55§
45 county libraries 	5,457,541	1,326,340.46
44 city libraries¶.....	5,865,927	2,625,119.80
Total.....	11,654,031	\$4,081,904.81

* Adapted from *News Notes of California Libraries*, Annual Statistics Number, Vol. XXIX, No. 4 (October, 1934).

† Books, pamphlets, maps, globes, charts, music records, etc., are included.

‡ For the year ending June 30, 1934. Balances from the previous year are not included. Income for Marin County was not reported.

§ This is one-half of the biennial appropriation for 1933-35.

|| San Francisco city and county are coterminous; the data are included with those of city libraries. Four counties contract with other libraries for service, two of these having contracts with city libraries; the number of books is included with the figures for the city libraries, but the income received by the latter from county contracts has been deducted and is included only in income for county libraries.

¶ City libraries holding less than 20,000 books, etc., are not included.

Important features provided in the county library law of 1911 include the following: (1) establishment of the library as a county department by vote of the county supervisors; (2) tax support not to exceed one mill on a dollar; (3) flexible provision for county service by contract with another county or with a city library; (4) permissive arrangement whereby established city libraries may join the county library; (5) contract provision whereby the county library may operate the county law library, the teachers' professional library, and may render service to school districts; (6) certification of

¹¹ California State Library, Sacramento, *News Notes of California Libraries*, XXIX, No. 4 (October, 1934), 141.

county librarians by a state board of library examiners and election by the board of supervisors from a list of certified persons without regard to residence in the county or citizenship in the state; (7) a graded service with nominations made by the librarian and dismissal by the supervisors only for cause; (8) supervision by the State Librarian and an annual meeting of all county librarians for discussion of professional problems. Six of the forty-six counties having county libraries have been organized under special home-rule charters. Although in these instances the provisions of the general law have been modified in various ways and the connection with the State Library is less direct, co-operation with the State Library is general and very effective.

An important provision in connection with No. 5 of the foregoing statement is the requirement of the State School Code that a school district not administered by a city board of education should provide an annual minimum of \$25 per teacher for library materials. Many districts have provided as much as \$40-\$50 per teacher. In 1933-34, 2,379 school districts turned over these funds for administration by the county libraries. Another important provision of the School Code is that which requires state certification of all persons employed more than two hours per day in school library service.

The State Library, with its close connection with the individual counties in the county library system, constitutes an important feature of the whole. Except in the cases noted above, the State Library not only exercises general supervision over the county libraries but also lends books directly to them and renders many other specialized types of services. The county libraries largely depend upon it and other facilities available to it for filling requests for the more expensive and rare books and for material of a specialized and technical nature. The union catalog, built up over a long period of years in co-operation with county and other libraries, is an invaluable aid in this connection. The State Library has been a division under the State Department of Education only since 1927; close co-operation with the schools has been a long-term policy.¹²

¹² For further description of country libraries, including those of California, New Jersey, and other states, see C. B. Joeckel, *The Government of the American Public Library*, pp. 264-71.

NEW JERSEY PUBLIC LIBRARY COMMISSION AND
COUNTY LIBRARIES

The most important agencies for the provision of general library service in New Jersey include the State Library, the Public Library Commission, municipal libraries, county libraries, and libraries of educational institutions. State agencies which are most significant in this survey of facilities for library extension are the Public Library Commission and the county libraries.

The membership of the Public Library Commission is composed of five citizens appointed from the state at large and, as ex officio members, the State Librarian and the State Commissioner of Education; the secretary is the professional administrator and directs the varied activities. The Commission acts as a central bureau for the libraries of the state for library information, interpretation of library law, and advice and assistance on all professional matters; it co-operates with all state departments and agencies in matters that include reading and library service; it supervises school libraries and administers a state fund for purchasing school library books; it operates a system of traveling libraries for rural communities and small towns without local libraries; it aids in the establishment of municipal and county libraries where the taxpayers and governing bodies feel they are able to support them; it aids local organizations in devising means of establishing and supporting libraries; it lends books to, and does reference and bibliographical work for, individuals and organizations in communities without library service; it lends books for special use to libraries and acts as an interloan agency for libraries of the state, making books of one library available to all; it publishes a quarterly bulletin of libraries and book news and advice. The Commission at one time operated a training school for librarians, and continues to give library training courses at various places in the state.¹³ The training school is now operated, under the direction of the Commission, in connection with the State Teachers College at Hillwood Lakes.

Voluntary co-operation is the basis of the scheme which, in prac-

tice, has many of the desirable features of a state-wide system. The book collection of the Commission features non-fiction. Books purchased for the year 1933-34 consisted of 25 per cent in the field of useful arts, 20 per cent in sociology and government, 18 per cent in history and travel, 17 per cent in biography, and only 0.1 per cent in fiction. A union catalog of all new non-fiction purchased in the county libraries and some of the larger city libraries facilitates the filling of special requests from libraries and individuals. During 1933-34, 82,431 books were lent as special loans by the Commission, and 181,452 sent out in traveling libraries.

An important feature of the work of the Commission is its co-operation in the establishment of county libraries. The county library law of 1920 provides for the establishment of a free county library by popular referendum, and maintenance from the proceeds of a property tax with a minimum rate of one-fifth of a mill. The State Commission gives financial assistance to the county libraries in proportion to the number of stations maintained and the number of schools served. During the first year of its establishment, these grants are twice as large as those to the older county libraries, and a special contribution is also made to the book fund. Eleven of the twenty-one counties in New Jersey have established county libraries for such parts of the county as do not maintain free public libraries.

New Jersey has many local endowed and municipal libraries. The plan of the Commission is to extend library service to the entire state by the organization of county libraries by combined service for two or more political units, or by extension service from the State Commission for those areas which are too small or not financially able to support local libraries. The county library is somewhat decentralized in operation and renders its major service to the smaller cities and rural areas, to schools, to organized libraries by making special loans and deposits of books, and by serving as a local unit in the co-operative state-wide service rendered by the Commission. The policy of the Commission emphasizes the local library by sending all books and other special requests of individuals to the county or local library if one is located in the area from which the request originated.

¹³ Summarized from *New Jersey Library Bulletin*, N.S., Vol. II (July, 1932), and from the New Jersey Library Commission, *Annual Report for the Year Ending June, 1934*.

FRASER VALLEY DEMONSTRATION LIBRARY

Like many recent library developments, the Fraser Valley project received its impetus from the recommendations of a survey of library facilities.¹⁴ Among the recommendations was "the desirability of a demonstration of a district library plan, using the principles of the county library system of Great Britain and of the United States."¹⁵ (It should be pointed out that British Columbia has no counties or townships and that most of the province is unorganized, as far as local government is concerned.)

Two outstanding features in the recommended program are: "(1) the use of a library district, created for this purpose, as a unit for rural library service; and (2) the provision of school library service as a part of a unified public library system."¹⁶ Three principles underlying adequate library programs for schools are indicated, as follows: "(1) supervision and guidance by a Supervisor of School Libraries on the staff of the Commission; (2) the provision for every school, as part of its equipment, of the school library meeting at least minimum standards . . . ; (3) the effective use of available public library service for supplementing the school's own library facilities and for carrying outside and beyond the school the love for reading and the habit of intelligent reading which should be developed within it."¹⁷

The Fraser Valley, where the first demonstration was begun, is located in the southwestern part of the province of British Columbia, just north of the state of Washington. Most of the population of this area is centered in incorporated places along the course of the river. The service area of the library includes approximately 1,600 square miles, has a population of around 45,000, and in 1932 had taxable property assessed at approximately \$55,000,000. The public libraries act of 1924 made no provision for the establishment of a special library district. The first five years of the program, beginning in 1930, were financed by a gift of \$100,000 from the Carnegie Corporation. Before the end of the demonstration period it was expected

¹⁴ British Columbia Public Library Commission, *British Columbia Library Survey* (Victoria, B.C., 1929).

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 29.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 24.

that the necessary legislation would be passed so that by 1935 the library would be publicly supported.¹⁸

The method of book distribution varies little from that which is fairly typical of the county libraries in the southern demonstration, and includes branches in the larger centers, sub-branches, deposit stations, and exchange of collections by means of a book van. The local communities supply quarters, heat, light, and general equipment for branches and stations; and custodians who receive remuneration are paid somewhat in proportion to the number of books issued. Deposit collections are changed approximately four times a year, and the book stock of the system is roughly apportioned to the different agencies on a per capita basis. The book van makes a fortnightly call at each agency, delivers special reserves (which number from 500 to 700 per week), and carries a book stock of from 1,000 to 1,200 volumes for direct circulation. The system of special requests and reserves has been stressed.

In the third year (1932) the Fraser Valley Demonstration Library circulated approximately 250,000 volumes, and had more than 16,000 registrants, or 35 per cent of the population. The circulation was 15 volumes per registered borrower, 5.2 volumes per capita for the total population; and each book circulated an average of 14.5 times.

The Fraser Valley Demonstration Library does not render a school-library service, but special service for schools has been provided. The most suitable material has been organized around subjects and topics of special interest to pupils at the various school levels. Lists of books are grouped into unit collections which may be secured on request by teachers. The book van has featured special trips with its entire collection made up of children's books.

One of the difficulties of the Fraser Demonstration Valley Library has been the large number of separate municipalities, as well as considerable unorganized territory, which make up the service area. The five-year demonstration financed by the Carnegie Corporation ended in 1934, making it necessary for the local area to take over the financial support of the library. At the plebiscite held in January of 1934, approximately 57 per cent of the 6,574 votes

¹⁸ Provision for Union Library districts was made in 1933; see *Statutes* 1933, chap. 33, Part IVa.

were cast in favor of public support for the library. In the working plan adopted, it was agreed that each district would raise funds in proportion to its population, based on approximately 40 cents per capita. The Union Library District created is administered by a board of management composed of one representative from each of the twenty or more districts contributing to the support of the library.

The director of the demonstration, out of the experience gained in the experiment, has listed certain conditions as a minimum basis for a regional service such as that of the Fraser Valley Demonstration Library.¹⁹ The most important of these criteria are: (1) a minimum of approximately 20,000 volumes quite independent of the number of people using it; (2) a minimum of from \$3,000 to \$4,000 for an annual book budget, and a total library budget of from \$15,000 to \$20,000; and (3) a minimum of from 40,000 to 50,000 people (to raise the necessary funds, based on approximately 40 cents per capita).

ENGLAND AND WALES

Two important developments in England and Wales which have particular significance for this study will be briefly mentioned.²⁰

County libraries.—A report made to the trustees of the Carnegie United Kingdom Trust²¹ pointed out that in 1911 approximately 79 per cent of the urban population of England and Wales lived in library areas, and only 19 towns out of a total of 222 with 30,000 inhabitants or more had failed to adopt the library act. In rural areas, however, library provision was almost negligible; it was estimated that only 2.5 per cent of the rural population enjoyed this privilege.

Acting upon the recommendation of Professor Adams, the trustees of the Carnegie Trust entered upon a program of county library development. The Public Libraries Act in force in 1915 made it pos-

¹⁹ Helen Gordon Stewart, "Advantages and Difficulties in the Administration of a Regional Library Unit," *Bulletin of the American Library Association*, XXVIII, No. 9 (September, 1934), 604-8.

²⁰ For an account of the historical development and present status of libraries, see John Minto, *A History of the Public Library Movement in Great Britain and Ireland* (London: George Allen & Unwin, Ltd., 1932).

²¹ W. G. S. Adams, *A Report on Library Provision and Policy to the Carnegie U.K. Trustees* (Edinburgh: Neill, 1915).

sible for parishes within a county to provide general public library facilities, but gave no such authority to the county council. Consequently, the Carnegie Trust offered grants to cover the cost of the initial establishment of county libraries and their maintenance during the experimental period before the necessary legislation could be secured. The Public Libraries Act of 1919 empowered the county councils in England and Wales to establish libraries within their areas and to levy a rate for their support.

By 1926, 57 of the 62 county councils had adopted the Act. Of the remaining five, one county has entered into an arrangement with a public library for the supply of books to 92 centers in the county, and a second, London County, including the city of London and all metropolitan boroughs, had adopted earlier acts. In the seven-year period, more than 12,000,000 people were brought within the area of this new public library service. Almost one-third of the population of England and Wales in 1926 was served by county libraries. In the establishment of this county library program the Carnegie United Kingdom Trust played the important rôle of stimulator, and between 1919 and 1927 contributed approximately \$2,000,000 to its support.²²

Regional and national libraries.—A report²³ made to Parliament in 1927 summarized the history of library development in England and Wales and made recommendations for extending and completing such provisions. One of the most important recommendations outlines a national system of co-operation of which the principal elements are:

- (1) the co-operation, on financial terms varying according to the circumstances, between neighboring libraries, whether they be borough, urban district, or county libraries;
- (2) the grouping of public libraries around regional centers, which would generally be the great urban libraries;
- (3) a federation of special libraries pooling their resources in the service of research;
- (4) acting as center of the whole system, a Central Library.²⁴

²² Public Libraries Committee, *Report on Public Libraries in England and Wales* (London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1927).

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 105.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 209-10.

The Carnegie Trust provided financial assistance for furthering the plan recommended. Quotations from a recent article²⁵ indicate the progress made since 1927:

The Public Library Service of this country has been revolutionized within the last seven years. . . . It is a change not of constitution nor of legal enactments but of spirit. . . . In 1927 the library service consisted of a number of unrelated units. The organization was entirely local. Each municipality and each county was a law to itself. Apart from a federation of University Libraries, which had inaugurated a useful service of mutual loans, there was no organized co-operation. Not unnaturally, each library authority considered that it was responsible only for its own area, and that its service should be confined to its own rate-payers. The result was that the quality of the service available for the individual student depended on the area in which he lived. A rate-payer of Manchester, Liverpool or Birmingham had at his disposal all the resources of a first-class municipal library. An inhabitant of Little Peddington had the use of such as Little Peddington could afford to buy and of the quality which commended itself to the town council of that borough.

Now all that is changed. The gist of the 1927 *Report* was to convert a congeries of local services into a national service; and, with a minimum of legislation and without the slightest infringement of local autonomy, this has been done. Entirely by the good will of the local authorities, co-operation has been instituted for isolation. In accordance with the recommendations of the Departmental Committee, the libraries of the country have been linked together, first into a series of regional groups, which now cover nearly the whole kingdom, with a strong library as the center of each, and finally by the creation of a National Central Library which co-ordinates and assists the whole work, and binds it into a single unity. . . . The desirability of co-operation, and of a central library as its basis, had long been recognized by progressive librarians.

It can now be said with almost absolute truth that every inhabitant of England and Wales has a local library of some sort at his disposal, to which he is entitled to apply for any books he needs. Such a right would not be of much value to a serious student who happens to live in a small town or village, with recourse only to a stock of 6,000 to 8,000 volumes, of which more than half is fiction; and that might easily have been the position of many a student until recently, but now he is a citizen of a vastly greater community. . . . All these previously isolated library authorities will shortly be brigaded into Regional systems, each embracing a county or a group of counties. Eight such systems already exist, covering the whole of England and Wales with the exception of the south-western counties from Oxfordshire to Devon. And behind all, and in intimate relation with all, stands the National Central Library, with its own stock of about 115,000 volumes, but able through its Outlier Libraries to draw

²⁵ "Modern Library," *Times Literary Supplement* (London), March 28, 1935, pp. 181-82.

upon nearly 6,000,000 more, including many highly select and specialized collections. . . . With all this machinery at his service, it will be hard if the student does not find a considerable portion of his needs satisfied; and in point of fact a very large percentage of the applications are successfully answered.

In order to implement this comprehensive, all-embracing system still further, and to provide information concerning the best methods of insuring its greatest effectiveness even in fairly minute operation, the British Library Association has issued, in mid-August, through a committee of its County Library Section, a *County Libraries Manual*.²⁶

The steps recognized by the committee as having been most fruitful in bringing about this almost complete coverage in England have been: (1) the stimulation of county library establishment through the Carnegie United Kingdom Trust; (2) the passage, by Parliament, of a comparatively simple, yet adequate, library law which removed all limitations as to tax rates for libraries and placed responsibility for the establishment and support of service upon the county council, with administrative responsibility delegated to its educational committee; (3) the extension of county service to small municipal libraries within the county on the basis of a differential rate to cover the cost of more extensive service; (4) the co-operation of the County Library Section of the British Library Association, the National Central Library, and the Carnegie United Kingdom Trust in continuous studies, and frequent conferences concerning the movement; and, more recently, (5) the provision of funds by the Carnegie United Kingdom Trust for the compilation of union catalogs to tie together the resources of the separate municipal, county, and institutional libraries into seven or eight major regional libraries, with the National Central Library supplementing and extending the resources of all. Willingness on the part of small municipal libraries to give up something of their local autonomy and of institutional libraries to permit their resources to be used for serious study by students in other areas, and a genuine devotion to the ideal of service through books rather than immediate, local ownership, characterized the whole undertaking, and merit serious consideration throughout the southern states.

²⁶ Edited by A. S. Cooke (London: Library Association), 1935.