

be excluded from its publications, requiring them to be first sent to some prominent magazine devoted to the particular line. If others would do the same it would greatly simplify the work of naturalists.

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A SUGGESTION FOR AN INTERNATIONAL  
BIBLIOGRAPHIC EXCHANGE.

WE, in the United States, have long looked forward to the creation of a bibliographical institute in this country which will exercise supervision over all affairs coming within its scope. Two things are wanting: first, the requisite endowment, and, second, a wide and responsive spirit of cooperation. It is with the latter that this note will attempt briefly to deal. The writer recently suggested in the *Library Journal* (30: 857-858) that a bibliographic bulletin be issued by the Library of Congress to disseminate bibliographic intelligence, prevent duplication and incite cooperation. This would be an important step toward a solution of the problem, but there is yet another plan that seems also to give promise of immediate results.

Let the various historical and scientific societies adopt and distribute, in duplicate, a uniform blank calling for reports (titles and scope) of special bibliographies in preparation. Nearly every investigator is compiling a reference-list more or less extensive. The societies, upon receiving reports, should preserve the originals and transmit the duplicates, if of a scientific character, to the Smithsonian Institution of Washington, or, if not of scientific import, to the Library of Congress. The two last-named bodies could likewise distribute to their own clientele, single copies of a similar uniform blank. In fact, it might be well to have one of those two inaugurate the work, their formal blanks to be used as models by the societies, etc.

Example is better than precept. A plan analogous to that above described was successfully carried out by the librarian of the New England Historic Genealogical Society, 18 Somerset Street, Boston, Mass., who secured more than five hundred reports of

genealogies in preparation. These are preserved in Tengwall files, in strict alphabetic order by surnames, and data therefrom are promptly supplied to inquirers. If one society of restricted scope can accomplish so much, what might reasonably be expected as responses to a like invitation extended by the Library of Congress or the Smithsonian Institution, having all literature and the whole learned world upon which to draw? This knowledge of inedited collections is often necessary and important. It is characteristic of our national impatience that we are not content with published material. Like the Athenians of old, we seek constantly that which is new. Nor is this altogether unreasonable: history and science are making such rapid progress that if a student expects adequately to review any subject, he must, perforce, avail himself of the very latest researches, bibliographical included. Hence, a growing list of special bibliographies in preparation would be very useful and would aid greatly in that general diffusion of knowledge for which one of our oldest institutions so nobly stands!

The suggestion made is one involving a minimum of expense; in fact, the cost would be merely nominal, with probable returns of manifold value. Means would thus be afforded for opening intercommunication between those interested in any subject. In this good work it must not be forgotten that the *London Notes and Queries* has quietly but unquestionably become the chief factor.

The Carnegie Institution of Washington, as well as many universities and colleges, could collaborate with the proposed exchange, to their mutual advantage. In this simple plan, therefore, seems to lie the possible development of universal cooperation or at least a nearer approximation thereto than has yet been manifested. A reviewer in the *Library Journal* (30: 428) commented on the extreme difficulty of arousing cooperation in bibliographic work, but is there not now within our power a way to gain even that desideratum?

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