

BIBLIOGRAPHY

New Methods Vastly Increase Usefulness of Libraries

Books Otherwise Practically Unobtainable Distributed In Microfilm Form; Reading Machine Now Available

THE NON-PROFIT Bibliofilm Service, which copies research materials on microfilm, is now operating in three Washington libraries, those of the U. S. Department of Agriculture, the Army Medical Library, and the Library of Congress, it has been announced by Cuthbert Lee, newly-appointed Director of the American Documentation Institute.

Scholars and libraries desiring to have printed or manuscript material in these libraries may have this copying done on standard 35-millimeter microfilm. This service costs only a little more than a cent a page. The microfilm is read with a special reading machine which costs less than a typewriter. Copying is also furnished in the form of photoprints, readable with the unaided eye, at about ten cents per page.

Thousands of Services

"Bibliofilm Service began in 1934 and the volume of material copied for scholars has doubled each year," Mr. Lee explained. "Some 2500 scholars have been served with approximately 7000 items, totalling hundreds of thousands of pages. Through the vision of Miss Claribel R. Barnett, Librarian of the United States Department of Agriculture, that library was put in the front rank in its ability to supply this up-to-date service, with the essential cooperation and inventive genius of Dr. Ather-ton Seidell of the National Institute of Health, and of Lt. R. H. Draeger, M. C., U.S.N., Naval Medical School, and the organizing ability of Watson Davis, Director of Science Service.

"In the early stages adequate mechanisms had to be invented and constructed, and this pioneer development was likewise a cooperation, between Science Service, the Chemical Foundation, the Rockefeller Foundation, the U. S. Navy, the Department of Agriculture Library, the Bureau of the Census, the Works Progress Administration and the Library of Congress.

"No copying at low cost was possible until an adequate automatic camera was

created, equipped with a carriage which would adjust automatically to bring both pages of an opened book in the same flat plane, and operated by simple touch of an electric button, permitting work to be run through with speed and accuracy. The result was the building at a cost of several thousand dollars of the special Draeger copying camera installed in the Bibliofilm laboratories, where two more advanced Draegers are being constructed. For use by the individual and libraries an adequate reading machine at a reasonable price was also needed, and that was developed. It has been turned over to commercial manufacture, as American Documentation Institute and its Bibliofilm Service do not engage in the sale of mechanisms."

Mr. Lee also told how editors of learned journals can lessen the strain on their budgets by making use of the Auxiliary Publication Service operated by American Documentation Institute, which makes available microfilm and photoprints of typescript and illustrative material deposited with American Documentation Institute.

Fifty Societies Interested

Those engaged in scholarly and scientific work and other research may obtain full details about this non-profit service by writing to Bibliofilm Service, care of U. S. Department of Agriculture Library, Washington, D. C.

Fifty national scientific and scholarly societies, councils and other organizations have nominated members of the American Documentation Institute, which was organized last year to operate Bibliofilm Service and perform other functions in the field of documentation needed by scholarly and scientific societies.

Mr. Lee is a graduate of Harvard and he was formerly a special assistant to Ambassador Francis during the World War. He resigned to serve in France in a staff corps of the army and as liaison officer on the Peace Commission. Re-

cently he has engaged in banking and publishing activities.

He became familiar with research and library problems as the author of several works of scholarships, notably a history of the early American portrait painters published by Yale University, and the standard manual of personal trust administration used in 44 states.

As director Mr. Lee will have direct charge of the operating activities of the American Documentation Institute, which include microfilming in the Department of Agriculture Library, the Library of Congress and the Army Medical Library, and the distribution of research results through the medium of microfilm in cooperation with scientific and scholarly journals.

Science News Letter, March 12, 1938

PHYSIOLOGY

Large Gland in Chest Seen Responsible for Virility

AFRESH clue to the mystery of the thymus gland, with an important practical relationship to male virility, appears in research reported by Drs. J. Gershon-Cohen, Harry Shay and Samuel S. Fels of the Fels Foundation and Drs. Theodore and David Meranze of Mt. Sinai Hospital, Philadelphia. (*Science*, Jan. 7)

The thymus is the large gland situated in the chest. So far, no one has discovered what its function is. Thymus glands of animals are sometimes called sweetbreads. In humans the glands tend to grow smaller with age and large glands have been held responsible for sudden and otherwise inexplicable deaths of infants. X-ray treatments of large glands in babies have been given in the hope of preventing the so-called thymus deaths. Here seems to lie the important practical aspect of the Philadelphia doctors' research, although they do not call attention to it in their scientific report.

When they X-rayed the thymus glands of infant rats, they found a striking decrease in the weight of the sex glands with almost complete disappearance of the germ cells and loss of reproductive ability. When these thymus X-rayed males were mated to either X-rayed or normal females, no offspring were produced. The pituitary glands of the X-rayed males showed the typical picture of pituitary glands in castrated animals.

No such changes were found in the sex glands of the females after X-ray treatment of the thymus. Both sexes, however, showed a general slowing up