

**CONTRIBUTIONS OF
ASA DON DICKINSON
(1876-1960)
FIRST AMERICAN LIBRARY PIONEER
IN BRITISH INDIA**

Presented by
DR. MURARI LAL NAGAR

INTERNATIONAL LIBRARY CENTER
Columbia, MO
1990

A SPECTRUM OF ALPHA
America's Library Promotional
Heritage in Asia

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Prefatory

By "Contributions" we mean both the "work" as well as the "works"-- Dickinson's "professional achievements" as well as his "writings" in the field of America's Contribution to the Development of Library Service in India.

The prefatory material generally precedes. We have put it as an "Epilogue" at the end. The "Why" of this has been explained here and there.

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Asa Don Dickinson: Some Biographical Data

Mr. Asa Don Dickinson,¹ Librarian of the University of Pennsylvania, U.S.A. who came to India in 1915 to organize the Punjab University Library on the Dewey Decimal System has retired from the profession on August 31, 1944. (He was 68 then). Mr. Dickinson who was in the Punjab for almost a year did memorable work. He invited librarians from all over the province to join a class for library training started by him--the first of its kind in our country. Great was the response made to his clarion call. For the help and guidance of the would-be librarians he with the assistance of Mrs. Dickinson and the late Mr. Mukand Lal Bhatia, the then Assistant University Librarian, wrote a *Library Primer* which was the first book of its kind in India. The other provinces and universities in India also realized the value and importance of modern and scientific library methods and soon fell into line with the Punjab in the matter of the re-organizing of their libraries.

Mr. Dickinson was born in Detroit in 1876 and educated in Brooklyn Latin School, Columbia Law School, and the New York State Library School at Albany. His first professional service began in 1903 in the famous old Montague Branch of the Brooklyn Public Library, whether he came fresh from Albany, overflowing with the enthusiasm of his own buoyant nature and the contagious missionary zeal of Melvil Dewey and Mrs. Mary Salome Fairchild but above all with a saving sense of humor.

After three years in Brooklyn he served a year as librarian of Union College, three at the Leavenworth, Kan., Public Library, and two at Washington State College. From 1912 to 1918 he followed his bent for writing as a member of the editorial staff of Doubleday Page and Co.

In 1918 he entered the A.L.A. War Service, first as dispatch agent in Hoboken and later in Paris. His years of service were years of upbuilding, broadening, and expanding, so far as available funds made possible.

In 1931 he took the charge of the Brooklyn College Library. Under his administration the growth of the library in books and their use was immediate and rapid, constrained only by the bounds of rented floor space. In 1937 the College library assumed its place at the head of the main quadrangle on the new campus in a building which he designed. In his words:

"The new library building has been planned to house this small collection of very busy books--the annual circulation is nearly half a million volumes--serving a large number of especially hard-working earnest young men and women, none of whom live upon the campus. The bookstack, accordingly, is small, the public rooms large, the capacity of the former is 88,000 volumes; that of the latter, 1100 readers.

His democratic administration of this busy library has made him beloved of staff, students, and faculty alike. He is never too busy to interview a student and to put his signature on a card of introduction for those who want to go beyond local resources to the New York Public Library. President Harry D. Gideonse, of Brooklyn College, speaking at a tea in honor of Professor Dickinson given by his colleagues, said: "Professor Dickinson was not only a good builder in the original development of our library in our new buildings here in Flatbush, but he brought to the Campus an urbane and broad viewpoint and he became one of the human pillars on which a young college and a young faculty could rely for strength and for perspective. Every inch *a gentleman and a scholar in the best traditional sense of the term*, [with a biased anti-Indian mind], he was an influence in the building of the type of tradition that should be the unique contribution of a large liberal arts college." --Extracts from *College and Research Libraries* September, 1944.

Some Additional Biographical Data

Asa Don Dickinson, librarian and editor, was born in Detroit, Michigan, son of Asa De Zeng and Harriet Sprague (Hyde) Dickinson and a descendant of Gideon Dickinson of Nottinghamshire, England, and Stonington, Conn. He began the study of law at Columbia Law School, but deciding to adopt the profession of librarian, attended the New York State Library School, Albany, in 1902-03. He was on the staff of the Brooklyn Public

Library for three years during which he organized the department for the blind and had charge successively of one or two of the small branch libraries. Thereafter he was librarian at Union College Library, Schenectady, New York, 1906-07; the Leavenworth (Kansas) Free Public Library, 1907-10, and the Washington State College Library, 1910-12. He was on the editorial staff of Doubleday, Page and Co., publishers, New York, for six years excepting one year, when he went to Lahore, India, to organize the library of the University of the Punjab for the government of India. He enlisted for the World War in 1917 and served two months at the reserve officers' training camp, Madison Barracks, New York, but was rejected because of impaired eye-sight. He was identified with the war service of the American Library Association, collecting books for the American soldiers in France, under his direction 1,000,000 books were shipped from Hoboken to France. He then went across and distributed them to the troops from the American Library Association Warehouse in Paris. Since 1919 he has been librarian of the University of Pennsylvania library, with the exception that of May 1931 and which has been endorsed by the *Subscription Books Bulletin* of the A.L.A. He is the author of the *Punjab Library Primer* (1917); *One Thousand Best Books* (1924); and *Best Books of Our Times* (1928). The last two volumes, having promptly gone out of print, were reissued this Spring by H. W. Wilson Company. While with the Doubleday, Page and Company he edited or compiled *Children's Books of Christmas Stories* (1913); *Europe at War* (1914); *The Kaiser* (1914); *Children's Book of Thanksgiving Stories* (1916); *Stories of Achievement* (6 vols., 1916); *Children's Book of Patriotic Stories* (1917); *Waifs and Strays by O Henry* (1917); and *Children's Second Book of Patriotic Stories* (1918). In 1921-1922 he revised the *Pocket University* (26 vols.) for Doubleday, Page and Company. He was president of the Pennsylvania Library Club from 1925-1926 and is a member of the American Library Association, American Library Institute, the Order of Founders and Patriots and Lenape Club. He finds his chief recreation in travel, tramping and books, and he has lectured on library, literary and travel topics. He has talked over the radio a good deal on bookish subjects. During the past winter he represented the University in this way on five occasions through the medium of WCAU.²

Khurshid discusses, in brief, on p. 182 of his work the library assignment of Dickinson:

Another American librarian to have a library assignment in Lahore was Melvil Dewey's pupil, Asa Don Dickinson, who was trained at Albany (1902-03). He was commissioned in 1915 to organize the Panjab University Library. Starting his library career at the Brooklyn Public Library, Dickinson was Librarian of the Union College in 1906, and of the Leavenworth (Kansas) Free Public Library in 1907, and of Washington State College in 1910. Before going to India he served on the editorial staff of the Doubleday, Page and Company. He is famous for his Best Books Series. *Lj* 56 (September 1931): 703. Asa Don Dickinson (1876-1960) died in 1960.

On His Majesty's Service Only (I)³

One morning last June <1915> my mail contained an envelope with the above words across the top in big, black letters. It was an invitation to come to Lahore, India, organize the Panjab university library, and teach modern library methods to as many of the librarians of the Panjab as could be gathered together.

It took time to send the credentials 10,000 miles, and there was a chance to "read up" India a bit before the cable which was our actual summons arrived in August. Meanwhile our friends were sending us newspaper accounts of the reported insurrection of the native Indians against the British Raj. One told of "fresh riots at Lahore, where the Indian cavalry is reported to have mutinied, and, after being joined by the soldiers and street gatherings, to have killed their officers and English civilians and to have pillaged and destroyed a number of hotels and houses." This was decidedly disquieting. Would His Majesty wish me to come and teach library science to his rebellious subjects amid the blackened ruins of his empire?⁴ Inquiry among Englishmen in New York was reassuring. "Is there any truth in these reports?" "Yes, probably. There is always unrest in India. Doubtless, thanks to a liberal use of German money,⁵ there is more than usual just now. But I shouldn't worry if

I were you. Go, if they send for you." This was the gist of their remarks. The university authorities did send for us, and we went,--in a White Star Line steamer by way of Gibraltar.

It was an unusual sort of Atlantic passage, with only ten or a dozen first cabin passengers, every one of whom had a definite reason for traveling abroad in war time. At Boston we picked up a thousand Italian reservists, for Italy had recently plunged into the melee. These Italians were a joyful lot, and did much to make the trip interesting. They sang a great deal,--not *Funiculi funicula* or *Lucia*, alas! but rather about a certain "long way" that we all wot of, and about "waiting for the Robert E. Lee." If a sail were sighted by day or night they would stop playing mora and swarm up the rigging in hundreds howling like pirates. But mostly they played mora and told each other what they were going to do to the Austrians.

The ship's library steward was possessed of one of the most admirable library spirits that ever walked. His cockney accent was atrocious, but he knew his books and studied his readers zealously, using his best endeavors to bring the right man and the right book together. Everybody, from the captain down, took his advice in choosing a book. But he had one bad habit. (Library apprentices please note.) From time to time he would retire to some secret place, powder his nose, oil his hair, and return to his duties so fragrant that the olfactories of his readers were seriously perturbed.

The German submarines were supposed to be "after" us, so black paper was pasted over all our portholes, the life-boats were kept swung out, and each passenger and member of the crew knew what to do and where to go in case it would be necessary to take to the boats. But we had no adventures. At Ponta Delgada in the Azores, however, we lay alongside two less fortunate ships. One of these had taken refuge there because a bomb had set her cargo ablaze; the other was the ill-fated Ancona.

On approaching Gibraltar we passed several hospital ships, with gigantic red crosses blazoned on their sides. These were laden with wounded from the Dardanelles. The British aeroplane patrol was much in evidence in this vicinity. One marvels how the submarines now in the Mediterranean ever managed to get there. The curious old town of Gibraltar swarmed with men in khaki who had been sent there from the front for a few days of rest. For the first time we saw and heard the boyish little Tommies enjoying themselves to the tune of Tiperary.

My faculty for finding the library in a strange town by the simple method of following my nose did not fail, and as usual this pleased me and amused my companion. The public library, a subscription affair, clings to the side of the cliff like a swallow's nest. One climbs to it up a narrow alley that is half crevice and half ladder.

We stayed two days in Gibraltar waiting for the P. & O. Steamer which was to take us to Bombay. She was a day late for she had been turned back in the Channel till a stray German submarine could be disposed of. The Mongolia carried us safely to Marseilles, where we found three things of interest; Monte Cristo's Chateau d'If; the new uniforms of the *French pioupious* (*vide* "Trilby"); and the *Bouillabaisse*, --see Thackeray's ballad, the best piece of verse he ever did.

The Gulf of Lyons justified its reputation for unpleasantness, but we soon recovered sufficiently to eat sardines off the coast of Sardinia and to think as we passed Corsica, of that other emperor who brought havoc upon Europe a century ago. Then we entered the *Mare Tyrrhenum* with its schoolboy memories of Aeneas and Odysseus; and a day or two later, just at sunset, we steamed into the harbor of Port Said and saw "the East" for the first time.

The sight of Charlie Chaplin's picture on the streets of Port Said was a bit disillusioning, but the swarm of howling Arabs who coaled the ship convinced us that the East is still the East. If more evidence had been needed it was furnished by the Arab boatmen who before sunrise next morning were diving through three fathoms of water in search of stray pieces of coal that had tumbled off the coal barges the night before.

The Suez canal was guarded by Indian soldiers of King George,--a lonesome nightmare of service for the English officers, one of whom galloped his horse along the canal bank beside the ship for a couple of miles to enjoy the rare opportunity of a shouted chat with fellow countrymen. Somehow the sight of that stout-hearted beardless boy against a background of blistering desert gave one a clearer conception of what the British Empire means.

A day or two later came a chance to test British *sang froid* Everyone was at dinner. The lights of Suez glimmered through the portholes. A loud hum of conversation filled the air one moment but diminished rapidly the next as the light grew dim and the ship slowly but steadily settled over further and further to starboard, till the plates began to slide off the tables. Conversation ceased utterly but not a person rose in his place. It was just a case of watchful waiting to see what was going to happen. Everybody thought of German submarines of course and we Americans remembered what befell the Eastland at her dock in the Chicago river. But there was not the remotest suggestion of a panic, and presently, very slowly, the dimmed lights brightened and the ship climbed back to equilibrium. She had been aground on a mud bank but managed to slide off. It was a mere nothing, but the passengers did not know this and their nerve won the admiration of two Americans. <Mr. and Mrs. Dickinson?>

Library facilities on the Mongolia were not very admirable.⁶ Indeed, until a short time ago a rather large fee was charged to every passenger for the privilege of using the meagre "Officers' library," which was kept tightly locked up during the greater part of the day. This was our first hint of what were later to recognize as *the characteristic attitude of Englishmen toward books* as something to be respected and carefully safeguarded against casual contact with the common herd. "The first thing one knows <,> the books will be soiled or worn out!

My word!!⁷

At sundry ports we Americans were rigidly questioned and our passports scrutinized. We would not have been permitted to land at Bombay at all, had I not cabled ahead from Aden to the American consul for a landing permit. He vouched for our non-Germanism and graciously gave permission for us to set foot on "India's coral strand." His name is Carl Deichmann!⁸

We were met on the pier by Ranchod, who had been Mr. Borden's second butler in Baroda as he proudly informed us. Imagine a librarian with a second butler!⁹ He bore a letter from Mr. Kudalkar, Mr. Borden's successor, who advised us to be patient and speak slowly, for Ranchod knew English all right, *but not American*. The new language had no terrors for him, however, and we set off for Lahore on the weekly mail train that same afternoon. We were almost the only passengers and had a most comfortable journey. For the first time in my life on a train I sat down in a practicable bath-tub, turned on the water and took a bath. Night and day for forty hours we rolled steadily on with a minimum of stops and those brief ones, till we reached our destination,--Lahore. Then came the hotel--much better than we had anticipated, like the train. There was plenty of bedding, plenty of service, and civilized food. Decidedly the hardships of India in the "cold weather" have been over-estimated.

An early visit to the university showed us the face of an old friend--"Zamzammah," the big ancient gun of the Moguls which stands in front of the Wonder House, where Kim and his Lama left it. Visit it any hour and ten to one you will find some Kim-like urchin astride of it, exchanging compliments with a long-limbed Punjabi policeman or a passing bhisti (water-carrier). Bhisti, be it known, means "heavenly one," and these bare-legged benefactors are all good Mohammedans, whose state of future bliss is assured because of the service which they render to their thirsty fellows in this life. <a frivolous attempt to write!>

Our first call was upon the registrar of the university, who furnished instant proof of all that we had heard of the unstinted measure of Indian hospitality.¹⁰ He showed us the two departmental libraries housed in University hall, --the Persian-and-Arabic and the Sanskrit collections. Both are composed in great part of ancient

manuscripts and so appear very awe-inspiring to one from the Land of New Things. The Persian-and-Arabic library is classified according to the system evolved for this class of literature by the British Museum. It seems to be satisfactory and so will not be altered. They actually loan these museum treasures and the cumbrous old ledger system of charging is to make way for the Newark system; also we are to try to induce the puzzling and rebellious oriental names to comport themselves after the manner of Smiths and Joneses in the ranks of the dictionary catalog. The present Sanskrit classification satisfies nobody, so we have evolved a new one, upon the safe and sane basis of "eight ninety-one, point two," which we have yet to put in practice.

It seems natural and fitting for these unique manuscript treasures to be locked up in glass-fronted "almirahs," but it is less pleasant to find the general collection in the main library protected from thieves, insects and dust in the same way. Not so much as a dictionary can be consulted without the aid of a library attendant of some kind (*chuprasee, chowkidar, daftaree, or babu*) armed with a bunch of keys.¹¹ This swarm of servitors is something of a problem to a free-born American bibliothecary, who believes he has a perfect right to carry an armful of books about a room if he feels like it. The librarian must not so much as carry a key to unlock his library building! When the chief turns up for work in the morning, a dingy person drops his *hookah*, arises from his *charpai*, or stringbed, on the porch where he has spent the night, salaams solemnly, and unlocks the front door. It is both his duty and his privilege to do this, for he is the chowkidar or night-watchman. He is supposed to belong to the thieves' caste, and therefore to be specially qualified to protect the building from the attentions of his brethren. If he enters quickly, the chief will catch sight of a few male and female *mihtars* or sweepers, slinking away by a back door. They are *Sudras* (low caste folk), unworthy to be seen.¹² But the sweepers leave behind them two or three peons, clad in scarlet and gold, who sit about on the floor behind tables just where one is likely to stumble over them, till they are summoned to run errands about the room by the *daftarees*. These last are dignified official monitors, whose duty it is to wipe pens, fill ink wells, change blotters and stick on postage stamps for the learned library clerks or *babus*, who rejoice in B.A. degrees and love to copy letters in longhand and to make elaborate entries in several elephantine ledgers whenever a book is taken or returned to the library, or even consulted in the building.

On His Majesty's Service Only (II)

The *daftaree*, or grown-up office-boys, have an interesting religious festival every spring, when many kinds of Hindu workers worship the tools by which they earn their living. They construct an altar on some handsome desk and decorate it with shining polished ink-wells, gayly colored blotters, festoons of red tape, etc. A Brahman is called in to officiate and after appropriate prayers there is an oblation of sweetmeats.

What an effective altar the library *daftarees* will make of Catalog and shelf-list cabinets hung with wreaths of white catalog cards, blue bibliography, yellow criticism and green biography cards! The noble large accession books and the "D.C." will have a place of honor. There will be garnishing of pens, pencils, dating-stamps, paper-cutters, erasers, Ballard and Niagara clips, and garlands of multum-in parvo binders and onionskin paper, while over all will be a powder of white confetti saved from the operations of the perforating stamp. I hope to get a photograph of that altar.

As supplies had not yet arrived, though ordered months before, the first thing to be done was to assemble as many as possible of the librarians of the Panjab for a short course of library training. About thirty men presented themselves,--mostly the librarians of the affiliated colleges of the university. There were old men and young ones,--Hindoos, Mohammedans, Sikhs and Christians.¹³ All knew some English. Their educational qualifications, as stated by themselves in writing, were varied: "Manager of a publishing house"; "English teacher"; "B.A."; "read up to M.A."; "matriculated"; "Shastri (honours in Sanskrit)"; "plucked matriculation"; "H.A. (honours in Arabic)"; "brought up at home"; etc. In order to ascertain without delay the average of their acquirements, I surprised them on the first day the class met with some written questions in history, literature

and general information. Most of the replies were well expressed though in an alien tongue, and if some of the answers move us to smile we should ask ourselves what sort of figure we would cut if examined and required to answer in an oriental tongue. My former students will forgive me, I trust, if I quote a few of the most amusing answers.

- Anonymous means a thing or work, whatever the case may be, which is passed with the general consent of a mob.
- Lay of the last minstrel--at first it was written by Carlyle and then was abridged by Wordsworth.
- Theodore Roosevelt was a great man. A.D.--After death of Christ (be peace on Him).
- Comedy--which begins with painful results but ends with cheerful results.
- Epic--which indicates painful and sorrowful substances.
- Robert Clive was the first man in Indian history who stood on his own feet, from the career of an ordinary sepoy to serve the troubled conditions of the English in 1756-1771 A.D.
- Heinrich Heine--from the name he appears to be a German.
- Philadelphia is the capital of the island of New Zealand on the east of U.S.A.
- Columbus was the first sailor who sailed to India.
- J. Pierpont Morgan,--a mathematical writer.

While referring to the subject of "English as she is spoke" in India, it may be worth while to preserve for posterity the final paragraphs of a voluminous epistle just received. It is a typical Babu petition. The writer is quite unknown to me, and I fear little can be done for him as the tenor of his request is drowned in the flood of his eloquence.

In the state of my present despondency and helplessness, I am constrained to approach your gracious self as the ruling gem of the race of my being in government and crave your most precious opinion for my future. I am emboldened to do so particularly because of the sympathetic, generous and merciful nature of your noble self and the confidence which I have in you of not refusing your noble patronage to promising although unfortunate youth. The first and foremost desire of mine that I may be taken under your gracious patronage and training for the science of which you are a master. I am willing to afford entire satisfaction as to my humble merits and good moral character and this can only be done if your goodself graciously condescends to allow me to receive my tuition and training in such a situation where I may remain constantly under your direct observation. I will gladly present myself at your kind feet if I am granted the honour, I beg to assure you that my object is not so much to gain "pay," as that of the fulfilment of my deep and sincere desire to learn something from your goodself and afterwards, if you will very kindly allow me to serve you obediently and faithfully. I have no desire to incur your displeasure, to take up my above statement for an exaggerated boast, but fearing God, I would forsooth humbly state that you will find the above wordings of mine quite true. As regards my character and family, it is enough to say that you may, if so desired, enquire into, through the local authorities of my town and district. I beg to assure you that only after a little training as regards the technical side of your science I shall make my future prosperous by your grace and God.

These are the outpourings of my innocent heart and I most humbly but earnestly pray that your gracious self may be pleased to give a chance to obtain training under your goodself and favour me with your valuable opinion and advice for me as to what course should I follow to obtain a training of the Library work directly under you....

In the end I beg to state that I have a mind to consign my life to your goodself if I am granted the honour of your kind patronage. I crave for a reply in your gracious self's own hand <hand?> on the subject and

hoping to be excused for this lengthy petition and praying to God for his choicest blessings upon you,

I beg to subscribe Sir
Your most obdt servant

Be peace on him!

The members of the class, one and all, showed a most zealous, commendable spirit. They were punctual in attendance and patient under dry discourse which was often prolonged into the second hour and sometimes into the third. Moreover, there was no text-book,--a serious matter indeed for Indian students whose forte is memorizing.¹⁴ There was joy in the ranks on the mornings when the blackboard was covered with explicit doctrine that could be transferred first to note-books, later to brain cells, and finally to examination papers. For we had examinations—four of them--and on their results were based the carefully graded certificates issued by the university in due form at the conclusion of the course.

On His Majesty's Service Only (III)

Just before the final tests, when all were keenly interested and none were unhappy, the Panjab library association was formed amid much enthusiasm. Its first meeting was a social entertainment tendered to the "Professor" and his gracious assistant, the instructress in library handwriting <Mrs. Dickinson>. There were flowers, fruit and sweetmeats for everybody, and garlands of marigolds for the delighted guests of honor. After all were duly refreshed and photographed (see frontispiece) came the most enjoyable feature of all--Mr. Beni Prasad's graceful speech,--which concluded the festivities with great *eclat*.

The library buildings of the Punjab, so far as I have seen them, were not constructed for library use. So they are not well adapted to their purpose. It is a common practice to house the college library in heaven-kissing "almirahs" around the walls of the lofty and imposing assembly hall. The books help to give this apartment an academic air, but this plan of arrangement has no other advantage. The cases are kept locked for the room is practically free of access as the open street. There are no facilities for study. The librarian is usually a cross between a turnkey and a clerk. During the few hours when he is in attendance he has ample leisure, but semi-occasionally a student or professor is successful in proving his right to consult a book. It is then no small matter to find out whether the library possesses the book desired. This being ascertained, comes the herculean task of finding where it is. The next puzzle is to find the right key to the "almirah." And when the precious jewel is finally entrusted with fear and trembling to the borrower, who is always regarded with suspicion, the librarian spends a half-hour in making elaborate duplicate entries of the transaction in the ponderous tomes which grace his desk.¹⁵

But the librarians of India are backward only because no better ways are known to them. The educational authorities are alive to the desirability of improving methods and the librarians are eager to learn. The western visitor is grieved only at the depth and prevalence of the conviction that books must be jealously guarded and that the average reader must be assumed to have felonious designs till he proves his innocence.

However inconvenient the library buildings may be, some of them are interesting for other reasons. I shall mention only two of those visited. Both are in Lahore.

The Punjab public library (in some ways the most modern and best administered collection I have seen) is housed in a quaint structure that dates from the days of the Moguls, 300 years ago. It was built in a grove of palms as a garden pavilion by Wazir Khan, a minister of the Emperor Shah Jehan.

The Archives building is best known as the Tomb of Anarkali. This Anarkali (pomegranate blossom), a favorite wife of Akbar, was indiscreet enough to smile at the emperor's son and successor, Jehangir. The old gentleman

caught her at it and promptly had her buried alive. When Jehangir became emperor he built this splendid memorial to contain her sarcophagus, a solid block of pure marble, held by some authorities to be one of the finest pieces of carving in the world.

Thus far the course of lectures has consumed nearly all our time and energy, and a trip to St. Stephens college, Delhi, has been our only field work outside Lahore. We enjoyed it greatly for it afforded an opportunity to see something of the tourists' India. The fort at Delhi contains the *Diwan-i-Am* (Hall of public audience) where the jewelled Peacock Throne used to stand, and the wondrously beautiful *Diwan-i-Khas* (Hall of private audience) with its much quoted inscription, "If there be a paradise on earth, it is this, it is this, it is this." All around and underneath the present Delhi are ancient ruined cities by the score, some of them, like Indraprastha, dating back thousands of years to the heroic age when the Vedas and the Mahabharata ¹⁶ were current literature. Agra and the Taj Mahal are only an hour or so from Delhi. It is not for me to attempt to describe the latter, but perhaps I may be permitted to make a sober statement of fact in regard to it. *It is the most beautiful thing I have ever seen or ever expect to see.*

The *mofussil* (provincial) colleges are availing themselves of the present opportunity for library improvement in a very encouraging way. Beside sending their librarians to attend the lectures at the university, many are allowing them time to assist in the practical work of reorganizing the university library. This work is now well started, but we are hampered by lack of supplies. Ordered many months ago, they have not yet arrived,¹⁷ and we are beginning to suspect the submarines in the Mediterranean of being responsible for our disappointment. If they do not soon appear, I shall have to take to the road and accept invitations to visit and plan the re-organization of outlying libraries at Khalsa college at Amritsar, the Agricultural college at Lyallpur, the Gordon Mission college at Rawalpindi, and the Prince of Wales college at Jummoo. The last two will be specially interesting. Rawalpindi is up near the frontier post of Peshawur, beyond which are the untamable Afghans and the Khyber Pass; while Jummoo is within sight of what Kim's lama used to sigh for--"the Hills and snow upon the Hills"--the Roof of the World.

Asa Don
Dickinson

UNLOCK THE BOOKS ¹⁸

By Asa Don Dickinson

"Some very interesting letters have come back to this office from Asa Don Dickinson, who has gone out to India to organize the library of Lahore University on modern American lines. Concerning this particular work he writes in his most recent letter":

'Our immediate task of reorganizing the University Library is well in hand. Some budding librarians are receiving *practical training* in the process. Several of the affiliated colleges have ordered up-to-date supplies from home. By the time these arrive my *apprentices* will consider themselves pukka librarians. It will then be my pleasant task to 'plant' each in a position, going with him to his new surroundings and helping him plan the organization of his library.

'After four months' observation I would describe the average Punjab library as a place where books are kept locked up, the average Punjab librarian as a book gaoler or turnkey. This condition of affairs is doubtless a survival from a day comparatively recent here, when books were manuscript--precious jewels some of them that had been polished and embellished with the loving labor of a life time. To-day books are impersonal things, in India as elsewhere, turned out in millions by machinery, mere bricks for use in construction and enlarging the social edifices of modern civilization. How absurd to treat these commonplace utensils like the rare and precious specimens of a museum!

I have so far preached this doctrine to Indian librarians with but indifferent success. Though hospitable to most Western ideas and ideals of library management, they are all for keeping books safe. Having them used interests them little. There are to-day thousands of books crumbling into dust in the *almirahs* of Punjab libraries that have not been touched for half a century. Their leaves have not even been cut.

'Suggestions to unlock the almirahs, to open wide their doors, to invite readers to use their contents, are met with dismay or with smiles and shrugs.

"'You don't know Indian students.'

"'The dust-storms!'

"'The insects!'

"'The heat!'

"'The dampness'

'One is strongly tempted to reply with another exclamation, "Rubbish!" In America too we have book-thieves and dust and book-worms and heat and wet. I believe that air--even Indian air--is good for books, for I have compared books that have stood for ten years in the open with those that have been dead and buried in glass coffins for the same length of time. The condition of the emancipated books compares very favorably with that of those which have remained *purdah*. I am exhorting Indian librarians to unlock the books,--to let them be worn out by the human association which is their only excuse for being--rather than as at present become a prey to worms and mould. They think me radical when I say, 'Place the books on open shelves and then, --*take care of them*. Arrange the library rooms so that the librarian may oversee his charges. Place his desk close to the single combined exit and entrance, and tell him to be unobtrusively, inoffensively vigilant. This is a faculty which may be cultivated.

'In season and out I urge the people here to keep the books on open shelves, and go over them periodically. One of the first things the Western librarian notices about the Indian libraries is the number of nondescript persons under pay but with ample leisure who are squatting about the floor in secluded nooks just where the unwary visitor is most likely to stub his toe against them. Every Indian library is blessed with at least one of these interesting ornaments. Suppose he were given an hour's exercise each day with a dust-cloth. He should be able to attend to two hundred books a day or one thousand a week, allowing him two days in each week in which to recuperate. This means that in a library of 13,000 volumes each book would receive attention four times a year. There is no doubt at all that under these conditions the books would thrive better than when shut away behind glass doors, often with dampness and insects for company.

'In Indian libraries books are too apt to be hoarded and readers neglected. They do not appear to realize here that readers can get along without books surprisingly well, while books without readers are a pitiable spectacle, all too common in Indian libraries.

'Here is my golden rule for oriental librarians: *Make no library regulation except for the purpose of increasing the usefulness of the books, and remember that no book is useful except it be in the hands of a reader*. It is a common mistake here to deny a book to A on Monday on the bare chance that Professor B may possibly want it on Tuesday or Wednesday.

'The educational people are surprised to learn that it is the usual practice among American colleges and university libraries for professors to draw as many books as they require and keep them as long as they have use for them, with the understanding that all books are subject to recall should a definite need for them arise at the library. And they are shocked when I tell them that graduates and undergraduates enjoy much the same privileges as professors except that they are usually required to return books within a definite period.

'It is quite a new idea to place the burden of proof upon the librarian who would refuse to loan a book rather than

upon the student who wishes to borrow it.

"The evils of text-book instruction in India are quite generally recognized and the sight of innumerable grown men in the parks on a Sunday getting their lessons by rote is to Western eyes one of the strangest phenomena of Indian life. One deplors the silly misuse of time, while admiring the studious diligence of these men. How well they must know their subject as reflected by a single mind, but how craven-spirited to be content to accept as gospel any one man's thought!¹⁹ It is a characteristic of the Indian student to desire to sit at the feet of one trusted and beloved master,--a lovable characteristic, but a dangerous one, which is being too surely fostered by shutting the student away from all but a single text-book. If he were encouraged to browse in the history alcoves and among the different schools of political and economic thought, how much broader would he become, and how much less probably would he be led astray by the shallow sophistries of the demagogue and the mischievous half-truths of the seditious pamphlet.

"Let me confess that a year ago I knew next to nothing about India, but supposed vaguely that England's dominion was if anything advantageous to herself rather than to India. To-day, having read many books on Indian topics by men of all sorts,²⁰ and having considered them against a background of general reading, I know well that India's fortunate hour was that which saw the rise of the British raj. Reflecting on this personal experience, I am urging the authorities to give the young Indian a similar opportunity for broad reading of the best books, feeling sure that he will reach a similar conclusion, for he is an eager student and no fool."²¹

"Memoirs" 1915/16

By Asa Don Dickinson²²

The morning after our arrival I reported at the University of the Punjab. This is one of the eight similar institutions in what was British India. In all of them English was then and still (1949) is the language of instruction; but classical Sanskrit, Persian and Arabic were emphasized in the curriculum even as Latin and Greek are, or have been until recently, important in American higher education. Each of these universities is affiliated with and supervises about a score of colleges in its neighborhood. These are under various auspices--missionary, Hindu, Mohammedan or governmental. Each university in those days was nominally headed by a Chancellor, who was always the Lieutenant-Governor and ruler of the province; the Viceroy being the Governor-General of all India. The real chief executive of the university was he whose title was *Vice-Chancellor*. (I have just described the organization as it existed in 1915. Great and important changes must have occurred since India became independent.

At the University of the Punjab the Vice-Chancellor was then Dr. J. C. R. Ewing, an American missionary, who was also the veteran "Principal" of Forman Christian College in Lahore, an important institution supported by American Presbyterians. Dr. Ewing was a kindly, genial man of immense intelligence and integrity. During several decades of residence he had acquired, through prayerful effort, more knowledge and understanding of India, its inhabitants and its rulers than were possessed by any other man in the Punjab.²³ This was <"fully" before, correction> recognized by both the British raj and the people whom he governed. They all trusted Dr. Ewing absolutely. So when discord arose he was often called upon, as the proven friend of all parties, to say the kindly word of wisdom which would act as oil on troubled waters.

Dr. Ewing was out of town on the day I called to report for duty, so I sought out his next in command, Dr. A. C. Woolner, who was the Registrar. This was a happy accident, for Professor Woolner, every inch a Briton, had for once harbored misgivings of Dr. Ewing's good judgment in calling a fellow-American to help them put their libraries in order. After Dr. Woolner and I had had a long talk and each had asked and answered many questions, I outlined my plans and requested his assistance, if he approved them, in carrying them into effect.

As it turned out, we heartily liked one another and I found I could always count on his co-operation.

Woolner was a spectacular Briton, strongly resembling Dr. Curtis in Rider Haggard's African novels.²⁴ He was tall, of fine physique, with regular features and a full, blond beard that swept augustly half way to his waist. (No wonder "She-Who-Must-Be-Obedied" fell in love with his prototype!) But his fine qualities were by no means all physical. He had achieved worldwide reputation as a scholar in Oriental languages.

Woolner took me to see the old "police bungalow" a stone's throw away which had been assigned to my use. They had expected me to live in it but readily concurred in my decision not to do so. It would have involved hiring furniture and engaging a staff of six to eight servants. This would have been foolish as my engagement was for only a single academic year. It was decided, however, that I should use the bungalow as a class-room and the University Library over the way as a laboratory. This plan worked out well. The old bungalow was glamorous. It looked the setting of many a Kipling²⁵ story. But in it we could hardly have slept well o' nights; for it was surly haunted by the tragedies which seem inevitable when white men settle among aliens, in a burning land, far from their own kind.²⁶

My job was a big one and my time was short, so Woolner at once directed the staff of the University Library and the librarians of the College Libraries, who were to be my students, to report to me a day or two later at the old police bungalow. This they did and for the first few minutes had a grand good time. The proceedings began with calling the roll. As I pronounced each name there were sly smiles and suppressed giggles. I asked each man when called, first, to stand up and be identified, and, second, to correct my pronunciation of his name. This threw each student in turn into a spasm of embarrassed deprecation, to the delight of his fellows. But there was worse to come. Roll call over, I passed out the papers for a general information test. Before I could teach it was necessary to find out what could reasonably be expected of my students.

This much they had in common! All were Indo-Aryans who could understand and speak simple English, and all but one or two were **Punjabis**. In age, however, they ranged from college boys of eighteen to dignified *pundits* of forty or more. The majority were Hindus but the sizable minority included many Musselmans, some Sikhs, and even a Jain and a Christian or two. The Hindus were of several sorts and castes, including a member of the enlightened Brahmo Somaj and a brace of holy Brahmins. As I now Recall²⁷ our associations I am astonished to note how well we all got along with one another. It was largely due, probably, to the greenness of the teacher and his almost complete unawareness of the points whereon friction might be expected. With courage born of ignorance, he marched straight ahead, looking neither to right or left for possible buried mines; and miraculously he encountered none <at all-(before correction)>.

Out of class, individual students welcomed opportunities proudly to explain to me the noble tenets of their particular religions and sought to amuse me by describing the laughable superstitions, manners and customs of the other fellows' creeds.²⁸ But these conferences were of a strictly private nature. In class they all avoided controversial matters, so we went along very happily together. It could even be said that the class developed a lively *esprit de corps*.

I have preserved memoranda recording some of the questions and answers of the information test mentioned above. It revealed <"pretty clearly"--deleted by Dickinson> the limitations of these university students. The American reader may be amused at the answers recorded, but before he laughs out loud let him ask himself what sort of figure he would cut if suddenly called upon to answer in an oriental tongue a score of questions mostly dealing with oriental matters <a logical statement! Discussed earlier.>

Our manner of life and work in the India of thirty <!> years ago is described in the lecture called "A Day in Lahore: Recollections of Kipling's India." Illustrated with scores of lantern slides from our own photographs. This talk was first delivered to the Philadelphia Geographical Society, and many times repeated before New

York audiences under the auspices of the Board of Education. Perhaps this is as good a place as any to insert it, in this screed.

A Day In Lahore

Rap-tap-tap! on the chamber door.... "Bath's ready, Sahib!"²⁹

Thus begins the day at half past four of a summer morning in Kim's city of Lahore, which as all Kipling³⁰ readers know is in the Punjab, Land of the Five Rivers, in northwest India. We are 1400 miles upcountry—as far from the port of Bombay as New York City is from North Dakota. Parting the mosquito curtains we gratefully receive the full force of the breeze from the electric fan hanging in the center of the vast room. The building we are in, which is now Nedou's Hotel, is little changed from the day when it housed the Club that was the scene of so many Kipling stories. The electric fan is the only novelty. In almost all Indian "stations" of any size, it has displaced the *punkah* <punkha?> which was kept in motion by a succession of drowsy coolies.

But Ranchod, our "bearer", is waiting to see that the bath is right before proceeding to lay out the snow-white, feather-weight raiment which helps to make a tropic sun endurable. Ranchod is a Baroda "boy" and, beside his native Mahrati <Marathi>, speaks Hindustani and a good deal of English, which make him very useful to a master who is "griffin," as they used to call the greenhorn in India. By the same token he should be a thieving villain--English-speaking servants have that reputation--but in fact he is honest, faithful, loyal and fleet of foot--altogether as good a servant as man could wish.

As one takes many baths in India, it may be worth while to describe the process. The bath-room is always vast, stony, lofty and innocent of plumbing. If hot or cold water is required, one cannot get it by turning on a faucet, nor yet by ringing a bell. There is no faucet and there is no bell. One lifts up one's voice and shouts "Boy" or "Bearer" as fancy dictates. The servant materializes, learns our wishes, and dashes into the compound bawling for the *bhisti*, or waterman, who soon or late comes grunting under the weight of sundry Standard Oil tins filled with water at something like the required temperature. If the water is hot, the tins will be sooty from the bonfire whereon they have been laboriously heated. (If you would know more of the possibilities of Indian bathrooms, read Kipling's Rikki-Tikki-Tavi.)

Standard Oil tins, by the way, have become an Indian institution. They are everywhere used for the bath water and for many other things; one sees them in railroad cars and bullock carts in the plains, and on the backs of pack ponies in the hills. Even in the Khyber Pass, if the tribesmen are quiet,--they are probably not--I doubt *not* there is a caravan of camels at this moment bearing Standard Oil into the vastnesses of Central Asia. In most of India, Prince Gautama, the Lord Buddha, Light of Asia, has almost ceased to be worshipped. The American traveller wonders whether John D. Rockefeller may not possibly in a century or two be deified as a latter-day Lucifer. Moreover, Hindu priests have discovered that Standard Oil tins hammered out flat make splendid sheathing for temple domes. The simple people often mistake the glittering new material for silver, and perhaps sometimes pay for it as such. Your holy Brahmin is now and then a sly dog.³¹

But we have strayed from our exaggerated dish-pan of tin tub. After splashing about to our heart's content, we leave it, noting that Ranchod, following the custom of the country, dumps its soapy contents on the floor, to find its own way out of doors through a plain, unvarnished hole in the wall--the same hole through which entered Rikki-Tikki-Tavi's enemy, the cobra.

Before we have finished dressing, *Ranchod* brings the *chota hazrai*³² or little breakfast, of toast, tea and fruit. It is now nearly half past five, but the sun is not yet so high as to be unbearable, so we elect to forego *burra hazrai* (big breakfast), don smoked glasses and the indispensable *topee*, or pith sun-helmet, and plunge into the dazzling out-of-doors, for a walk through the European settlement to the office.

Near the hotel, we pass a fine statue of Queen Victoria. She sits enshrined under an ornate white marble canopy in the best style of the Department of Public Works school of architecture. The natives call this statue "the great white queen," and there is a knot of country visitors about it, some of them salaaming and doing puja even as though this nice old grandmamma were the dread goddess Kali, the Destroyer, for whom Calcutta is named. It is absolutely true, though shamelessly bromidic to say that these people look as though they had stepped out of the pages of the Arabian Nights. We shall not attempt to describe their costumes, save with the swift generalization that the men usually wear skirts and women trousers. Turbans are of all shapes, sizes and colors, and from them the expert can discern each man's caste, religion and country. The new-comer soon learns to distinguish the stalwart, long <Here ends p. 295 of the original, but the beginning words of the next p. (296) have no relation with what precedes! Pages 296 and 297 are actually missing. Some more pages are missing subsequently!>

The pen-case, by the way, which the Lama presented to his newfound friend in exchange for a pair of spectacles, is still to be seen in the new museum a little way further down the street. At the museum entrance, near what R.K. calls the statue of a Bodhisat in meditation, still stands a stalwart Punjabi policeman, the same, let us hope, as he who was so outrageously accused of stealing the milk-woman's slippers. Across the way from the Museum we recognize another old friend--Zam-Zammah--the big gun, under whose shadow the bewildered Lama rested while his new *chela* ran to beg supper for them both in the bazar. Old Zam-Zammah is still a favorite playfellow with Chota Lal and the little Mussalman boys, and they (or their successors) are probably at this very moment clambering over him and peeping half terrified down his dreadful black muzzle.

But it is now six o'clock in the morning, and we are due at the University Library for our day's work.³³

The University of the Punjab, as already noted, is one of the eight great Universities of British India. Like the seven others it is a British institution which turns out each year some thousands of native A.B.'s, trained, in accordance with Lord Macaulay's famous advice, after the manners and standards of Europe and particularly, Great Britain. Many of the young graduates find places as engineers or clerks "under Government;" many others swell the already crowded ranks of the lawyers—Indians are notoriously fond <!> of litigation; a few become missionaries, doctors, or dentists; and the rest--and there are a goodly number left over--generally join the ranks of those who clamor for immediate Home Rule. Having all to gain and nothing to lose they occupy themselves in Fomenting³⁴ public disorder.³⁵

They remind one of the dangerous, freebooting, landless men of feudal days in Europe. One cannot blame them. A European education has unfitted them for the life of their fathers. They have become familiar in books, with the democratic institutions of England, and they want them transplanted bodily and at once to India, although few of the inhabitants are qualified by heredity, environment and education to live together amicably under such institutions <biased writing!>. On the contrary, India is afflicted with such a complicated system of cleavages, due to social, racial, linguistic, religious, and caste differences, as exists nowhere else on earth.³⁶ Many of the enthusiastic white-collar men, however, associating largely with others like themselves, fail to realize the deathlike grip of agelong social habits and forget the vast preponderance of illiteracy which prevails among India's teeming millions. Also they unjustly <mark the Defender!> blame the British for the continuance of this illiteracy, forgetting that to establish immediately common schools for all would involve the levying of such heavy taxes that the already undernourished Indian people could not possibly pay them <pro-British views>. More than a few of the young A.B. agitators are shrewd enough to see things as they actually are. These wish, nevertheless, to see the peasants and coolies endowed with the suffrage because of the dazzling opportunities for exploitation that would then be offered to so-called "young India."

One recalls Matthew Arnold's oft-quoted lines which describe India's attitude toward world events:

The East bowed low before the blast

In patient deep disdain;
 She heard the legions thunder past,
 Then plunged in thought again.

The first World War disturbed her reverie, as world crises have never done before. She remains <?> <correction not clear> discontented, stirring restlessly, blindly. Forswearing civil discord and strife, will she--can she--arise, gird her loins, and make reasoned action instead of metaphysical speculation her ideal? Can she learn to keep permanent peace and order in her own house, without the aid of a native despot, or foreign power? That remains to be seen. She has never done it yet, through all the tens of centuries in her history.³⁷

The British rulers of India are not impeccable. Many of them would be the better for more of the milk of human kindness. The massacre only a quarter-century ago in the Chillianwallha <sic> Bagh at Amritsar was disgraceful. The only crumb of comfort I can find in that black business is that the Indian gentlemen commissioners who were appointed to investigate, characterized General Dyer's inhuman conduct as *un-British*—a most significant adjective for them to choose, after having lived their lives under British rule. It is worth remembering, too, that the troops who carried out Dyer's orders <There was an adjective "inhuman" before "orders", which is crossed out by the author!> were native, not British. <But under what conditions? Dickinson, how truly I wish the "Librarian" in you had not meddled with politics, dirty politics! Probably the British soldiers who butchered the freedom fighters of George Washington were imported from the Mars! Dickinson, how low could you descend!!>³⁸

By and large the British official means well by the Indian peoples. Almost never does he get drunk with power. I believe that he has governed them better than they can at present govern themselves.³⁹ Self-government is even now coming faster than their leaders can prepare the Indian peoples to shoulder the burdens which self-government entails.

These are critical years for India as for the rest of the world and I can never let pass an opportunity for laying before my fellow-countrymen the unbiassed <!>⁴⁰ results of personal observation and study of the British raj. For it is from sentimental and misguided but well-meaning Americans that much of the money came which has financed the enterprises of hot-headed Indian agitators.⁴¹

Revenons a nos moutons. My business in Lahore, as I have said, was to organize the University Library, with the help of a score or more of young native librarians, whom I was first to instruct in the rudiments of modern library science.⁴²

Some thirty men of all ages entered the training class. I need scarcely say that there were no women. <Contrast with Baroda!>Mrs. Dickinson became the patient and extremely popular instructor in library handwriting. She was the first white woman that most of the students had ever spoken to. Their respectful appreciation of her society and their anxious efforts to win her commendation were good to see. Almost all these students had, of course, been married for years and years, but it was a revelation to most of them to see that a woman might after all be a reasonable being, if she were not systematically kept in secluded ignorance. Perhaps she taught them more than I did. She certainly was more popular.

You may be interested to hear a paragraph or two culled from a long-winded Babu petition which I received soon after the class began its work. It is worth quoting because it was then typical. I never saw the writer, and could do nothing for him. Both he and I were drowned in the turbid flood of his eloquence, and to this day I have never been able to make out just what he wanted. Perhaps you can tell. "In the state of my present despondency and helplessness, I am constrained to approach your gracious self, as the ruling gem of the race of my being in government, and crave your precious opinion for my future. I am emboldened to do so particularly because of the sympathetic, generous, and merciful nature of your noble self, and the confidence I have in you of not refusing your noble patronage to a promising though unfortunate youth ...<That last phrase sounds like

Wilkins Micawber!>

'In the end I beg to state that I have a mind to consign my whole life to your good self, if I am granted the honor of your kind patronage. I crave for a reply in your gracious self's own hand on the subject, and hoping to be excuse<d> for this lengthy petition, and praying to God for his choicest blessings upon you, I beg to remain, Sir, Your most obedient Servant.'

There were at least *thirty* pages in the letter but the above is a fair sample of them all.

The class showed a zealous and commendable spirit. They were punctual in attendance, long-suffering under dry discourse, which was often prolonged into the second, and sometimes into the third hour. Worst of all, there was no textbook--a serious matter for Indian students, whose forte is memorizing, rather than deduction and the common sense application of principles. It is each student's ambition to be able to repeat whole pages of his textbook word for word.

There was joy in the hearts and on the faces of my students, on the mornings when the blackboard was found covered with explicit doctrine and formulae that might be transferred first to note books, later (with much rocking back and forth and murmurous buzzing) to brain cells, and finally spread forth luxuriantly upon examination papers. For we had examinations--four of them--and on their results were based the carefully graded certificates issued in due form by the University at the conclusion of the course. I hope the grades were not influenced by any of the gorgeous trays of tropical fruits and flowers that appeared as if by magic in our hotel rooms on the morning of each examination.

It seemed odd to be working in a library, in which ancient oriental manuscripts were every day used as a matter of course. Such things seemed to me museum treasures, and I never ceased to regard them with awe and reverence, though I suspect they contained, beside many good and beautiful thoughts, a deal of shoddy, pretentious nonsense and obscenity which have led India astray these many centuries.⁴³ And it seemed cruel and unusual punishment to compel the strange and rebellious <!--> oriental names of their authors to comport themselves after the manner of Smiths and Joneses in the democratic, alphabetic ranks of the card-catalogue.

The swarms of servitors which infest Indian offices are something of a trial to a free-born American,⁴⁴ who thinks he has a perfect right to carry small burdens about the room if he feels like it. It was disquieting, too, whenever I stepped ten feet away from the electric fan, to be closely pursued by a dark, husky, fierce-looking individual who frantically flapped at me with a large something made of straw. It was only a fan, of course, but it was shaped exactly like a headman's axe! He seemed to put his whole soul into his work too, that man did. I wonder if he was one of the excited mob which the next year poured out of the city of Lahore and rushed screaming toward the European settlement, till they were stopped by the bayonets and bullets of an indomitable little band of Indian police.

I was never allowed to open the front door of the Library. Each morning when I turned up for work a dingy person on the verandah dropped his hookah, arose in haste from the *charpoi*, or string-bed, which was his home, salaamed impressively, and unlocked and swung open the front door. This was the chowkidar, or night watchman. At his side, also salaaming, stood his small son who each morning saluted my arrival at the Library with portentous solemnity, and tried his best not to be afraid. (*Some* sahibs from across the black water are said to have the evil eye!) Like all his guild, our chowkidar belonged to the thieves' caste and was paid to guard the building from the attentions of his brethren. *Dasturi*--it is the custom. The residences of most Europeans are guarded by such chowkidars, and how they howl during the night--to warn their brethren that they are on the job!

If I entered the Library quickly, I sometimes spied the shadowy outlines of a group of mehtars or sweepers slinking out by the back door. These outcast cleaners are abhorred by even the lowest caste, the menial sudras who sprang from the feet of Brahma. The sweepers are quite untouchable and unworthy to be seen of men.

Their degradation is such that when they get a chance, they are even said to eat beef! One is sorry for them, of course, but I have sometimes been tempted to think they almost deserve their wretched condition in life when noticing the perfunctory way in which their task of sweeping is performed. They scratch away at the dirt, with a handful of twigs which custom has immemorially prescribed, and will never use a decent broom except under immediate compulsion. Of course, not one of them has ever seen or heard of a vacuum cleaner.

The sweeper used to leave behind them two or three peons, clad in scarlet and gold. These worthies crouched <?> on the floor in dark corners, just where an American in a hurry was likely to tumble over them. Sometimes, though, they were summoned to run errands about the room by the **daftarees**. These dignified officials, like Sentimental Tommy in his mother's garret in London, were charged with keeping their tongues wet to lick postage stamps. They did more than this, too. They wiped the pens, filled the ink-wells, and sharpened the pencils of the library clerks or **babus**. The **babus** rejoiced, many of them, in B.A. degrees. How they loved to write out copies of official letters! (Typewriters were then as scarce in India as they are said to be today in the State Department in Washington.) The **babus** also made meticulous entries in elephantine ledgers whenever a book was taken from or returned to the Library, or even consulted in the building.

A working day of six hours is long enough for anyone in the plains of India in May, so at noon we dismissed the sleepy **babus** and office servants; told the **chaprassi** to call a tonga; and nerved ourselves for the ordeal of the day--the drive back to the hotel under the brazen sky of noonday. The thermometer registered 112 degrees in the shady depths of the Library. It was better not to think what it was in the full blaze of the sun, but we were wary of placing our hands on the leather cushion of the tonga. It was as hot as the top of a stove.

After this trying experience the fan-cooled shadows of the spacious, high-ceiled dining-room of the hotel seemed a veritable paradise, and we would generally do ourselves credit at tiffin, with the aid of certain iced drinks, normally

<Pages 304-311 (inclusive) missing.>

....neither **sahib**, memsahib, nor **miss-sahib** was in the least injured,--though a poor old native servant of the Club was killed. More than once did I hear the story of that night. The explosion of the bomb was closely followed by a rushing wind which bore down the electric wires and brought darkness to the European settlement. It was an anxious moment for Englishmen. The Lahore conspiracy had but just been brought to light, and no man knew how far its ramifications might extend. But the student's bomb proved to be a sporadic phenomenon, the lights soon came on again, and the music and dancing in the ball-room were interrupted only a short time.

Among the British community, a bomb or two makes little stir. It is all in the day's work. They know that always beneath their feet lies a slumbering volcano. There has been more than one serious eruption in the Punjab since my sojourn there. But every British official in India is a bit of a fatalist, and nearly all are brave, true men. They worry little over the dangers of their situation, and make themselves as comfortable as they can in this "land of regrets." An American guest falls easily into their ways, so after having imbibed a temperate "peg" or two to help us to enjoy the music, we return about midnight, to the hotel and end the day in Kim's city by crawling sleepily under the mosquito curtain, with an injunction to Ranchod to "call us as usual at four-thirty."

<A line is drawn here. The original has this separating line here showing the unrelated nature of what has preceded. What succeeds the line is related, of course.>

By the time the Christmas holidays came along I had finished my courses of lectures and was ready to begin the transformation of the University's book collection into an efficient modern library. I invited a dozen or so of the more proficient students to help in this task. Having been grounded in elementary principles, they proceeded to strengthen this foundation by carefully supervised practice. Helen's volunteer work as supervisor and revisor

proved so valuable that the University authorities insisted on paying her a modest salary. (Thus did it come about that we were able, on our return, to increase the size of our little place at West Hempstead by the purchase of an adjoining plot which we called gratefully the Punjab Lawn.)

The University was glad to have me use part of the Christmas vacation surveying affiliated libraries in Delhi, India's capital city. And so we set off, with good consciences and Ranchod, on a trip which was a pleasant combination of business, sightseeing and holiday-making. This is as good a place as any to describe some of the sights beyond the gates of Lahore that we saw at this time.

Amritsar, sacred city of the Sikh, is but a score of miles from Lahore. Mahindra Singh, one of my Sikh students, lived there and commuted to the class every day but Sunday. Many of his classmates used occasionally to pay their respects by calling at our hotel on Sunday. This worried Mahindra who would have been glad to "acquire merit" in the same way but could not because, as he finally found courage to tell us, Sunday was the day on which he washed his hair! (From the cradle to the grave no good Sikh would dream of cutting or even trimming either hair or beard.) But Mahindra soon found a way to make up for his failure to drop around on Sunday. Very ceremoniously he presented me with a full set of the articles which, beside his hirsute adornments, every good Sikh must carry on his person whenever he goes out of doors. These include a shell-comb worn beneath his *pugaree* (turban), to keep His tresses tidy; a circlet of steel, also nestling in his turban, that should be sharp enough to decapitate a foe when skillfully hurled by a vigorous warrior; a formidable dagger that is also supposed to have a razor's keenness; and--a pretty little bangle to wear on his slender wrist. Thus equipped, I should be able to pass as a proper follower of Ranjit Singh, despite the fact that for full forty years barbers have been telling me my hair is beginning to be "just a little thin on top." (A masterpiece of understatement!)

The Golden Temple at Amritsar is the most sacred shrine of the stalwart sikhs, though to the casual observer it looks like just another temple, and a rather small and tawdry one at that. It stands in the midst of a sacred tank (artificial lake), connected with its shores by a narrow causeway. The sikhs, be it understood, are a sect of reformed Hindus, who have abandoned most of the two hundred million gods <!-- of their fathers and worship instead the memory of their Gurus, or early teachers, and above all the *Granth*, or huge book, which contains their sacred writings. All day and every day choristers sing and musicians play before⁴⁵

Page 191 of the original begins here.... strong comes now and then--for "the sunshine, and the palm trees, and the tinkly temple bells."

We returned to Lahore in time to take part in the Station's Christmas festivities, having as guest an old classmate of Helen's who had turned missionary. To our disappointment she proved, to my way of thinking, a bit narrow-minded and unenlightened. With but little persuasion she accompanied us to a dance at the Club perhaps because she wanted to see with her own eyes how the British worldlings misbehaved. "But could I persuade her to tread with me the dreamy mazes of the waltz?" *No*. Perhaps it was this refusal which gave me so low an opinion of her intelligence. Anyway, I spitefully concluded that she must have been descended from one of Macaulay's Puritans who "hated bear-baiting, not because it gave pain to the bear, but because it gave pleasure to the spectators."

In Lahore we were now engaged in a race against time. The University would have been glad to have us stay on indefinitely but Helen hungered for her young ones while I had no intention of endangering my job at Doubleday's by overstaying the year's leave. So, despite the growing heat as spring came on, we both ground away at our job as hard as we could and perhaps harder than we should. Anyway each of us was smitten by an illness which was new and a bit frightening; but luckily we were not hit simultaneously. In each case, as was our Civil Servant's privilege, we summoned the Civil Surgeon. I can still see and hear the cheery little man as he visited our quarters at the hotel: "*Sahib hai? Memsahib hai?* I say, what's this? What's this? Hm - hm -; so - so. I say, why don't you take a little whiskey? It won't hurt you. It won't hurt you. Hm - hm. Well, old chap,

I must be running along. I'll look in again tomorrow. But a peg or two will set you to rights. Ta-ta! Ta-ta!

His rattling, jocular bedside manner almost made one forget the fever and headache caused by "a touch of the sun;" and it must be acknowledged that his universal specific seemed to be effective in a day or two. We liked that most civil surgeon, and he seemed to like "The Americans"--partly perhaps because we were careful to call him *Colonel* instead of *Doctor*. He was the not indifferent holder of both titles.

As spring advanced and the hellish day-and night heat increased we began to be able to glimpse the approaching end of our task. But our troubles were by no means over. I chose this time to be afflicted with the worst toothache I ever had. Hardly worth mentioning? Don't say so, unless you have known grinding pain that would have made sleep impossible even without the 1120 temperature which varied little day or night. The "American dentist" in Lahore, like a sensible fellow, had long ago betaken himself to the Hills, so there was nothing for it but to trust myself to a native practitioner. His office was innocent of frills and gadgets, but he knew what had to be done and did it. I howled lustily; and--presently--thanked him from the bottom of my heart.

Never in my life had I been so sorry for myself as in that murderous month of May, 1916, when I turned forty, left youth behind and entered upon middle age. But just then an idea turned up which cheered me considerably. The end of the task of re-organization was only a matter of days. But June had not yet come and I had been engaged till June 30th. A month more of that city of dreadful night was unthinkable. Why should we not get permission to skip off to the Hills--Dr. Ewing and Professor Woolner were already about to leave for Kashmir--to spend the final three weeks of our service in a comfortable climate, writing a summary of my lectures--an elementary textbook of library science—for the guidance of our students and their successors, after we had sailed for home? Why, indeed?

My idea won the approval of the authorities as soon as it was broached. So to the terror of the students the date of final exams was advanced a fortnight. Just then, providentially, a bright idea occurred to handsome, charming Durga Parshad, my only Christian student.⁴⁶ He proposed that the class entertain the professor at a high tea. This presumably would put him in good humor and take the students' minds off the fast-approaching day of trial. They thought it an excellent suggestion and I was pleased, for it involved such a relaxation or circumvention of caste barriers as I had thought impossible. Half the class were orthodox Hindus and two or three of these Brahmins. The rest of us were a heterogeneous collection of Mohammedans, Sikhs, Jains, Christians, and reformed Hindus (Brahmo Somaj). I wondered how we could sit down and eat together. But Durga Parshad, B.A., knew all the answers. When we arrived we found two large tables, grouped to form a T, heaped high with Indian goodies. The Hindus, when the time came, seated themselves in nominal isolation about the standard of the T, the rest of us about the crosspiece. The Hindu food was prepared and served by fellow Hindus and there could be little danger of its pollution by our shadows as both tables were set in the thick shade of trees in the bungalow garden. Of course there was no meat of any kind at the Hindu table and no ham sandwiches at the other one, out of respect to the Mohammodans. Almost every student provided some delicacy peculiar to his people. The professor of course <wa?> expected to devour quantities of each specialty with great gusto, and narrowly watched to see that he did so. Never have I been so thankful for a robust appetite and an exceptionally good digestion. Most of the provender was in the form of rich pastries or sweetmeats, heavy with nuts and dripping with ghee (clarified butter). All went well, however. The Hindus, so far as I know, had subsequently to go through no tiresome purification ceremonies, and I had no stomach-ache. Durga Parshad, the life of the party, kept things going by teaching us parlor games which he had learned from American missionaries, but which were as unknown to Helen and me as to his other pupils.

The day of examinations followed hard upon that of the tea-party, and proved not so terrible after all. Students who had completed their class work and afterwards helped in the reorganization of the Library all eventually received to their great delight a piece of stamped paper, duly signed. So pleased were they that, remembering the recent successful entertainment, they felt they must also say farewell to their teachers by organizing a formal

tamasha,⁴⁷ to which Vice-Chancellor Ewing, Registrar Woolner, and the Faculty Committee on Library should be invited. I don't remember much about this affair save that it oozed so much oriental grandeur and heavy-handed ceremony that to the former Jersey chicken Farmer⁴⁸ it proved embarrassing as well as flattering. Rolling up to the festal door in our tonga, we stepped out on a red Turkey carpet which reached to the curb. Up this marched the bewildered *guru* and his consort, followed by a flock of smiling and discreetly murmuring *chelas*, till they reached a dais at the far end of a decorated *diwan-i-kas* <khas> (hall of audience <privileged?>), whereon with many bows they were seated in two central chairs with amused <why?> University dignitaries on the right hand and on the left. Never before in all our lives had Mother and I been called to play the parts of rajah and ranee and I am sure we muffed them ludicrously. There were music, refreshments and of course speech-making, climaxed by the presentation of a very large silk handkerchief of <on?> which was beautifully printed an address containing the salaams of the chelas for their revered guru⁴⁹

The *tamasha* was the colophon of our tour of duty in Lahore. We were now free to plan and prepare for our journey to the cool hills of Kashmir. Our destination was nearly a thousand miles away, two hundred miles from a railroad and at an altitude of twelve thousand feet, yet planning and preparing for the move proved absurdly simple, thanks to our hosts, the Nedous. For this family of Swiss hotel-keepers operated not only the hostelry which was our home in Lahore, but another one at Srinagar, the Capital of Kashmir, whither we were first bound, as well as a summer rest-camp high in the Himalayas at Gulmarg. The last was our ultimate destination.

The Nedous were--and doubtless still are--an interesting and capable Swiss family, well and favorably known to several generations of British-Indians. I well remember the patriarch of the tribe who was to be seen every morning during the "cold weather," pedalling his three-wheeled velocipede majestically along the roads near the hotel. (This inevitably recalled a spectacle already mentioned--that of the bearded and august Lord Salisbury whom I saw in the Nineties when he was Prime Minister riding the same childish vehicle down Whitehall on his way to the Houses of Parliament.) Father Nedou had several sons born in India. All of them were reared and educated there, for he had seen many India-born white boys spoiled by a European education for subsequent careers in the "Land of Regrets." So the sons of the House of Nedou were all what British Indians call C.B.'s--Country Bred's. The old gentleman's ideas worked out all right save in the case of one son.

Note: Here ends the portion of "The Bookman's Memories" (or Memoirs?) by Dickinson. Although we have here only a selection, yet much of it is irrelevant. Dickinson was tragically brainwashed! He was brutally indoctrinated. He had read unworthy literature. His mind was polluted. He was a disciple of Katherine Mayo! Truly he lived in *British* India during his one year of sojourn in that country. A polluted mind searches for only polluted objects. He was a good *teacher* and advisor as far as the teaching and propagating the American ideas and ideals of librarianship were concerned, but unfortunately he did not try to see the politics and government of the mighty British Empire with his own impartial eyes. We regard Dickinson a slave and a His Master's Voice!

After I had edited and corrected Dickinson's "Memoirs" I had a second thought. I wondered whether I should get it printed and published! It contained hardly any substance. Much of it was not worth being published any way. It did not add any value to the professional literature of librarianship. Truly it is said: "Tell me not what sort of a person is he. Tell me the company he keeps and I will tell you what he is." Dickinson had certainly fallen in bad company. He had imbibed and swallowed all the dirt and filth his distorted British masters could inject in him. Remember the title of his series of papers! It is--On His Majesty's Service Only!! Yes, he had come to India to serve "His Majesty" only. He was not a servant of India's teeming millions. He was not for the down-trodden. Although born as a free American, yet his mind got probably swollen by the honor and prestige accorded him in the land of hospitable people. He was immature. He was a raw youth with impressionable mind. However, I decided to let this partisan account of India's recent past go out to the world at large. Let the reader be the judge.

Dickinson's work at the Panjab University Library

Dickinson's Own Report on His Work

At the Panjab University Library⁵⁰

October 1915 to July 1916.

On October 12th last <1915> I arrived in Lahore, and on the 13th reported to the Registrar and began a consideration of the library situation. Perhaps the best way of reviewing the work done will be to follow the lines of the preliminary "Report and Recommendations" filed in October.

A gratifying and, let us hope, a permanent change has taken place in the attitude of the library assistants toward books and public. Books are no longer locked up so tightly, nor is the public or the climate as evidently distrusted. This is well. But it should be understood that I am in no wise of the opinion that books will take care of themselves. I advocate unglazed shelves, to most of which readers shall have access. *But* books must be frequently cleaned, and open shelves must be supervised. A great aid to supervision is to have one door only through which all must come and go, with the charging desk close to this door.

1st. Supplies not to be had locally were promptly ordered from the Library Bureau, England. This order was passed on to America, where there was an inexplicable delay of two months before the goods were shipped. I should recommend that "Libraco" (the English supply house) should henceforth receive orders for all supplies obtainable from them.

2nd and 3rd. A series of twenty five lectures on library science were prepared and delivered to about the same number of students (most of them librarians of affiliated colleges) whose interest in the subject was most gratifying. A preliminary general information test and four examinations were held and on the basis of them, certificates were issued, stating the proficiency of each student in the various divisions of the subject.

4th. Four of these students were regularly employed as temporary assistants in the re-organization work in the University Library. The competition from other libraries for the services of these men was so strong that it was found impossible to hold them as long as we wished. One of these, Madan Gopal, has been engaged for a year by the University Library. As he is an excellent worker, I would strongly recommend that his appointment be made permanent.

Many librarians from other libraries volunteered for practical work in the University Library. They accomplished little there, but gained practical experience which should prove useful in their own libraries.

Letters are being given to all who assisted in the University Library's re-organization, describing the kind and quality of the work done.

5th. Time limitations were such that it seemed inadvisable to visit⁵¹ college libraries *outside Lahore*. The only institution so visited was St. Stephen's College, Delhi. Representatives were sent to us, however, for a considerable stay from Islamia College, Peshawar; Sri Pratap College, Srinagar; Agricultural College, Lyallpur; and others. While the librarians of Khalsa College, Amritsar, and Gordon College, Rawalpindi, were daily attendants at the lectures.

The building. It has been decided to use for the library the whole lower floor of the building still under construction. In April last recommendations were made to secure furniture and fittings necessary for the new quarters. Thus far only the shelving has been ordered; and the new rooms will not be ready for occupancy this autumn unless the other fittings and the rest of the furniture are soon arranged for.

Percival collection. It is to be hoped that a continued effort will be made to secure permission by some means

not to keep this collection all together.

Shelving arrangements I have high hopes that open shelves, *with proper care and under proper supervision* will prove successful in the University Library.

Classification. Dr. Dewey's "Decimal classification" has been adopted⁵² and all the books in the University Library have been so classified.⁵³ A development of the "D.C." has been worked out for the Sanskrit books by Mr. Woolner, and applied to the Sanskrit library.⁵⁴ It has seemed best in the Persian and Arabic library to *retain* <emphasis mine> the British Museum scheme of classification. Dr. Dewey forwarded for our use elaborations of some oriental topics which will appear in the next edition of the "D.C.," while Mr. Mukand Lal worked out a satisfactory expansion of 954—Indian history.⁵⁵

The shelf-list. The shelf-listing of the books has followed the classification very closely and so is now practically complete. This means that, with the aid of the "D.C.'s" index, we have a working subject catalogue of the collection, as well as a means of taking the annual inventory.

The Catalogue. As each book was classified, written directions for its cataloguing by the dictionary method were noted in it. Several thousand cards have been written, and this work is now going forward rapidly as most other tasks are completed. By far the greater part of this work of classifying and indicating the cataloguing I have done personally. Mrs. Dickinson and Mukand Lal have attended to most of the rest, while more <mere?> practice work on a few hundred books has been allotted to the other workers. All the work done by others has been carefully revised by me. So <me, so?> that every book in the library has passed through my hands and has received my personal attention. I need only except from this statement the individual volumes of long sets of periodicals and proceedings.

The charging system. The Newark Charging System has been installed. This involved pasting in each book dating-slip and book pocket; making a book card for each book; and writing the call number on each dating-slip.

In this connection it should be said that all the books have been properly re-labeled, the old labels having been removed; and in each is being placed the bookplate (designed by Mr. Lionel Heath) inscribed with call number.

Book numbers I neglected to bring with me from America a table of "author numbers" or "book numbers." Consequently there was nothing for it but to make one for ourselves. This has been done, and printed copies of the "Panjab University Author Numbers" have been distributed to Panjab libraries. A revised edition with complete directions for use, will appear in the "Panjab Library Primer".⁵⁶ This table is a most useful device. Several rupees would have to be paid for a copy of one of the American compilations.

Library handwriting. Each member of the class was required to practice this till he had reached a satisfactory standard of excellence. If Panjab librarians, henceforth, do not write legibly and uniformly, it will be because they allow themselves to deteriorate.

Accessioning. All the books in the library have been accessioned, with the possible exception of some few periodical sets. The highest number is now 14,146 <24,146?>.

Library rules. The library rules have been revised and somewhat relaxed, <.> I would advise still further relaxation, especially in the way of allowing undergraduates to borrow books. When all visitors enter and leave the library by a single door, it should be possible, with the aid of the Newark charging system, to administer the library with fewer people on duty at one time. This I hope will make it practicable to keep the library open more hours in the day and more days in the year.

Future book-buying. I leave⁵⁷ with Mukand Lal⁵⁸ several lists of books for first purchase, purchase when funds are available, etc. There are some astonishing gaps in the collection, and the books on the first list should

certainly be secured without delay.

The collection's greatest need is periodicals and periodical indexes. English libraries have neglected this side of their work for a long time, but are not likely to do so much longer, as is evidenced by the recent establishment of the "Athenaeum's" index. I have left with Mukand Lal definite suggestions toward building up the periodical collection.

Binding. A great many of the Percival books need binding. Several rolls of approved "library buckram" have been ordered from the manufacturer, and it is proposed to have the library's customary binder use this material in future work. This man's work is good, but I am convinced that his prices are too high. The Gymkhana Library, for example, has work done for from one-third to one-half what we pay.

Panjab Library Primer. This book of about 50,000 words will, I hope, help to make the results of the year's work both more widespread and more permanent.

In conclusion, I beg the privilege of expressing my appreciation of the generous spirit of co-operation that has surrounded me on all sides during the last nine months. If I have done well, I must divide the credit with many zealous co-workers.⁵⁹

Respectfully submitted,

Lahore
July 13th, 1916

Asa Don Dickinson,
Librarian

<July 13th, 1916, less 9 months = Sept. 1915. Dickinson arrived in Lahore on October 12, 1915>.

SOME NOTES ON DICKINSON

AND HIS "WORKS"⁶⁰

Here is a catalog entry for Dickinson's Primer:

D020 Dickinson, Asa Don, 1876-1960.
D563T The Punjab library primer. Lahore, University of the Panjab, 1916. iii, ii, 242 p. forms.
"Libraries of the Punjab": p. 221-228.
"The librarians <?> professional periodicals and books": p. 204-209.
"The librarians <?> cultural reading": p. 210-213.

The book was the first of its kind in India. It was held in high esteem for quite some time, may be, because it was the only book available at the time.

Two important resolutions were passed at the second All-India Library Conference held at Lucknow in 1935:

No. 4. Resolved that necessary action should be taken to recommend standard expansions of such parts of the Dewey Decimal classification as pertain to Indian and Oriental subjects for adoption by librarians, which use the classification.

No. 5. Resolved that the Punjab University be requested to revise the "Punjab Library Primer" by A. D. Dickinson, published by the University in 1916, so as to include the latest development in Library Science.⁶¹

Here was an appreciation of America's contribution to the promotion of library literature in India by a group of

librarians. The *Primer* was never revised, however. By the beginning of 1930's Ranganathan appeared on the scene well-equipped and ruled over the field in full form. The Primer went into the oblivion.

Asa Don Dickinson's Contribution

There is a Portrait of Dickinson facing page 43 of the fourth volume of the January 1934 issue of The Modern Librarian, in connection with the article by Labhu Ram on the Panjab University Library.⁶²

The following legend appears under the portrait:

Asa Don Dickinson
American Librarian,
who organized the Panjab University
Library on the Dewey Decimal System.

The credit for introducing Melvil Dewey and his Decimal classification into India must be given to Asa Don Dickinson. He introduced the scheme in the Panjab University Library and also conducted the first library course in Lahore. His Panjab Library Primer was the principal contributor--an harbinger--to the spread of the Decimal classification throughout India.

Although Borden too devised his own scheme of classification, brought it out in a book form, classified the Baroda Central Library by it, and also taught it to his students, yet the scheme remained confined to Baroda, just as in the U.S.A. his scheme remained confined to the Youngmen's Institute Library in New Haven, Connecticut, Borden's own institution where he worked for more than two decades.

Of course, Borden cannot be compared with Dewey. In this connection it should be noted that a reviewer reviewing the book Baroda and Its Libraries by Dutt recommended not to follow Borden's scheme but to stay with Decimal.

Panjab Library Primer--A Review⁶³

LITERARY

The Librarian

The "Panjab Library Primer" is by Asa Don Dickinson, who is, or was, librarian of the University of the Panjab. Mr. Dickinson, an American librarian, and sometimes writer and publisher, went to India a year ago, taught the students of the University at Lahore all that he could remember about American methods of Library management, and when he could remember no more, and when the weather grew very hot, retired to a place called Gulmarg, in the Himalayas, two hundred miles from a railroad. (He travelled those two hundred miles by--what was the kind of carriage Kipling was always talking about? Oh, yes--tonga. That is it; tonga. We nearly said, dakbungalow.)

At Gulmarg, and in three weeks, he wrote this little book. Not so very little, either. It has nearly two hundred and fifty pages. And it bears the fascinating imprint: "Lahore, Printed at the 'Civil and Military Gazette' Press," where Mr. Kipling worked, and where "Departmental Ditties" and other early works (are we right?) were printed. Until this book was written there was only one library manual in India. And only one copy of that. It was a copy of Mr. Dana's library primer--one that Mr. Dickinson took out with him.⁶⁴ Now the students in the Panjab have at their disposal a large amount of information—the wisdom of Messrs. Dana, Dewey and

Dickinson.

The book is doubtless good. Comment upon it may safely be left to the reviewers of the library magazines. During a meal of curries and mango chutney, eaten at the charges of the ex-librarian of the University of the Panjab, in a strange place of khit<d?>matgars and ram chundars, haunted by a mysterious Chighalese white rat, we interviewed the author of it, and procured many interesting and never-to-be-repeated facts about life in the Panjab, the trail of Kipling in Lahore, the identity of Mrs. Hauksbee, the present occupation of Kimball O'Hara (known to most persons as "Kim"), the rise and progress of library economy in India, the quaint customs of the Rajah of Jubbulpore, and the antipathy of Indian buffaloes toward American librarians. But these were all other stories, and they have unfortunately been left out of "The Panjab Library Primer."

On The Panjab Library Primer by Dickinson.

There are many other evidences to refute the above claim of Dickinson that he wrote something quite original, that it was *his* writing. The above statement is merely a deception of the learned world by a plagiarist. Bombay University had sent its librarian-designate to the U.K. for studies in library organization and administration as early as 1913. Borden must have brought many books along with him. Kudalkar also lived in and toured the United States in the year 1913/14. Library journals had already published many articles on library science. Sayajirao had built a large library of his own. He had traveled quite extensively throughout Great Britain, Europe, and the U.S.A. He must have collected some books relative to library literature as well. Also a British librarian had organized Lakshmi Vilas Palace Library. Furthermore, a book was published in Surat (Gujarat) as early as 1913, entitled *Hints on Library Administration in India* with a foreword by Borden! Although the imprint gives Surat as the place of publication, yet Mehta might have been a resident of Baroda. Undoubtedly he must have derived all the inspiration from Borden. I have not yet seen the book. In view of these facts it is highly inappropriate to say that India had only one book! Dickinson and many of his American "gurus" were breathing the air of British Imperialism. At least some of them were the disciples of Katherine Mayo of the "Mother India" defamation. Dickinson himself says that he read some "books" before he arrived in India. Well, he must have read the wrong books. He was certainly brain-washed.

The only sad part about the above statement is that in the opinion of the reviewer, Borden precedes Dana, which is not true!

One More Note on

Panjab Library Primer--CRITICISM

John Cotton Dana: Library Primer. 1910 (Fifth Revised Edition)

I saw Dana's book for the first time today (3 July 1973). The reviewer of Dickinson's book *Panjab Library Primer* says that there was only one book on library science in India until the Panjab Library Primer was written, and that that book was Dana's *Library Primer!* Here is the exact quote: "Until this book was written there was only one library manual in India. And only one copy of that. It was a copy of Mr. Dana's Library Primer--one that Mr. Dickinson took out with him."

Even a cursory glance through Dana's book is sufficient to disclose that Dickinson's work is a perfect "piracy" and a tragic "plagiarism." I don't know why Dickinson did not even acknowledge his debt to Dana!

Dickinson's book <the copy seen by me> has a paste-in slip inserted right between the front cover and the first fly-leaf. It says:

Dickinson: The Panjab Library Primer. CRITICISM⁶⁵

This manual was written last summer in three <!--> weeks, two hundred miles from a railroad, in the heart of the Himalayas. The author hopes that his friends will bear in mind these unusual conditions, and be lenient to the little book's many and quite evident shortcomings.

It is the souvenir of a great adventure!

A.D.D.

The reviewer of this book, the one I saw at the New York Public Library, has noted this fact.

Asa Don Dickinson calls himself in this book "Librarian of the University of the Panjab." In other words, he held this title in Lahore.

The "Preface" is dated at Gulmarg, July 1916. The book was published by the University of the Panjab, Lahore, in 1916, i.e. the same year. The author would be naturally anxious to present his souvenir to his friends, admirers, and colleagues.

Beginning his "Preface" the author says: "This little book is the fruit of a decade's experience among American libraries, modified by a year's acquaintance with conditions peculiar to India" (p. i).

One gets an impression from what Dickinson wrote introducing his book that he wrote book in real rush--in great hurry—and that he had no source books to consult! While going through Dickinson's book for the first time, I had noted that he had given full bibliographical details of so many reference sources, which would not have been possible had he had no access to some basic reference resources. Dana's book clearly shows what Dickinson's source was! One does not have to have too many sources if the book is merely an outright theft from an earlier work!! It is to be remembered that Dickinson conducted a regular library class under the auspices of the University of the Punjab, the Library of which must have many reference sources. Also, Dickinson must have prepared his lessons and class notes for his lectures.⁶⁶ Under the circumstances, there is nothing surprising if he wrote the book in three weeks, especially if he had some stenographic or even clerical assistance.

Even the flavor of the original (Dana's book) is retained in the forgery. Dana has named his book "Library Primer." Dickinson has prefixed the word--"Panjab". Dana's book was merely "A Library Primer". Dickinson made it <The> *Panjab Library Primer.*

Dickinson was born in 1876. He had worked in the U.S.A. only ten years before he went to India. He would have started working in American libraries at the age of 30 or so. When he went to India he was around 40. As compared to Borden he was less mature. He had less experience of the world and of course of the libraries. It is not surprising, therefore, to find him bitterly critical of the then-prevailing conditions in India. We see him making fun of the "Babus." He had digested anti-Indian literature. Anis Khurshid has quoted Dickinson extensively.

It is noteworthy that Dickinson wrote the book keeping in mind peculiar conditions in India. It was not an outright transplantation of American ideas into Indian soil but a modification to suit Indian conditions.

Similar ideas were expressed also by Borden in his first article on Baroda. This was a reasonable approach.

It may be noted that this book did not find any place in the library curricula of the Ranganathan age in India. Of course, it held its sway over the Panjab for a long time.

Dickinson got able collaborators. Shri Labhu Ram, Librarian of the Panjab Public Library, assisted him in supplying data on Indian public documents. Shri Mukand Lal was the Assistant Librarian of the University Library at the time. He helped Dickinson in collecting data on the then existing conditions of the libraries in the

Panjab. Mukand Lal also saw the book through the Press.

Possibly Dickinson had studied under Melvil Dewey.⁶⁷ He begins his second Chapter, "The librarian and his training," with the following words: "For many years Dr. Melvil Dewey delivered the initial lecture to students beginning their studies in the New York State Library School. The subject of this introduction to librarianship was 'The Qualification of a Librarian,' and we can do no better than attempt a paraphrase of it here" (p. 3).

On "Library Training" Dickinson said:

The course of lectures on library science delivered at the University of the Panjab in the autumn of 1915 was, so far as known, the first attempt at library training in British India, although a library class has been held at Baroda for three or four years, a result of the sojourn in the Gaekwar's dominions of Mr. A. W. Borden <sic> an American librarian. (pp. 6-7)

It may be noted that Dickinson or the copy-writer has committed an error in the order of the initials of Borden's name. They are "W. A." and "A. W."

One can find a clear distinction between the methods of library training pursued in the U.S.A. and the U.K. at the time of Dickinson. In order to bring out this distinction, Dickinson says:

In Great Britain the method of training consists of studying for the diploma of the Library Association, combined with practical work. The diploma is awarded to those who have passed examinations in the six sections of the Association's syllabus, which are as follows:

1. Literary history.
2. Bibliography.
3. Classification.
4. Cataloguing.
5. Library history, foundation and equipment.
6. Library routine (practical library administration). (p.7)

Lala Labhu Ram:

A Worthy Colleague of Dickinson

Punjab Workers

Dr. A. C. Woolner (C.I.E., M.A., D.Litt., F.A.S.B.) Vice-Chancellor, Panjab University and the Dean of University Instruction, was the Honorary Librarian of the Panjab University Library from 1902-1928. His portrait appears facing p. 41 of volume 4, January 1934, of *The Modern Librarian*. This portrait is displayed as frontispiece of the second issue and in conjunction with the article beginning on page 41 and running to page 53, entitled "Principal Woolner's Dream, or the Phenomenal Growth of the Punjab University Library" by Lala Labhu Ram, who succeeded Woolner as the Librarian, Punjab University Library, Lahore.

This paper by Labhu Ram is an early contribution to the professional literature of librarianship and demonstrates the contribution U.S.A. made to the development of library service in India.

Lala Labhu Ram had attended the All-India Conference of Librarians, held under the auspices of the Government of India in 1917 <1918?> as a representative of the Panjab Government. He had submitted to the Conference a memorandum entitled "Necessity of Reference Librarians in the Indian Libraries." Labhu Ram says that he had "been feeling this need <for reference service> since a long time <sic>."⁶⁸ Naturally this could be an outcome of his association with Dickinson. Labhu Ram had contributed a chapter on "Indian Public

Documents" to Dickinson's *Panjab Library Primer*. He was a colleague and a co-worker of Dickinson. Labhu Ram says that the Education Department of the Government of India had recognized the principle <of providing reference librarians> and had suggested the desirability of making provision in the University libraries.

PANJAB UNIVERSITY LIBRARY⁶⁹

Reorganization

"The next logical step was the reorganization of the Library. The services of Mr. Asa Don Dickinson--an American expert Librarian, were acquired. Within a year the Library was overhauled, re-classified and recatalogued. He took infinite pains to ensure that the various processes of reorganization should proceed unbroken from beginning to end, that no gap should be left unfilled which would prevent the Library from functioning on new lines at the opportune time. The reorganization on the American system considered to be a remote possibility by the University Commission⁷⁰ in 1904 was complete as if by magic by the end of 1916. And the *Panjab Library Primer* by Mr. Asa Don Dickinson was published in the same year to which the writer also contributed a chapter on Indian Public Documents."

Open Access System

"The adoption of the open access system strongly advocated by Mr. Asa Don Dickinson was hesitatingly introduced in 1916 and the barriers between readers and books were removed for the first time in the Panjab <A landmark!> On the one hand it was apprehended that the doorless shelves might damage books due to atmospheric conditions and the direct access might lead to possible losses of books; on the other it was felt strongly that unduly restrictive regulations, requiring readers and borrowers to fill up an application form for every work consulted were needlessly irksome and detrimental alike to the use and popularity of the Library. It was further urged that readers should be left free to browse and forage themselves among the long ranges of shelves. Undoubtedly the system has greatly benefitted students."

University Library Training Class

"In instituting the Library Training Class in 1915, the University laid the foundation of an entirely new Library service and is proud to be the first in the field in British India and until recently was the only centre of Library education in India.

"In the years 1921-22 and 1922-23, the regular instruction in library training was supplemented by lectures given by specialists.

"It is gratifying to note that the trained graduates of the class have met with the requirements of responsible positions in all types of Libraries and they are interspersed throughout Northern India. Thus the Panjab University's contribution both to library organization and the library profession is of the first order. And it would not be improper for the Panjab University to claim with Othello, if one can be permitted to modify the quotation, that 'It has served the State and they know it.'"

DICKINSON--His students

Dickinson generated a succession of successful librarians. As an example may be mentioned the name of Lala Mukand Lall Bhatia. "An Appreciation by His Pupil" appears on page 68 of vol. 4, No. 2 (January 1934) of *The Modern Librarian*. A portrait of Librarian Bhatia also appears facing the article. It is signed by "S.R.B." Undoubtedly the writer is Sant Ram Bhatia, the great editor of *The Modern Librarian* and subsequently the *Indian librarian*. S.R.B. says:

In 1915 the Panjab University secured the services of Mr. Asa Don Dickinson to organise the University Library of <on?> the lines followed in America and to train a class of librarians in the Punjab. This opened out a new field for L. Mukand Lall and he made himself thoroughly conversant with every branch of library science and organisation with the result that at the examination held at the end of the course he obtained first class honours in every subject and topped the list of successful candidates. His experience and knowledge was of real help to Mr. Dickinson in preparing the Punjab Library Primer that has proved of great help to many a college and school librarian.

Khan Bahadur K. M. Asadullah, was another worthy disciple of Dickinson. Khurshid says:

It was through the efforts of the Punjab Library Association with <and?> other prominent libraries <librarians?> of the country <?> K. M. Asadullah (1890-1949) that the Indian Library Association was formed in 1933. Asadullah, a pupil of Dickinson, and the Librarian of the Imperial Library, Calcutta, was elected as its Secretary, which post he held until 1947, when he was transferred to Pakistan on an option of service. It was through his efforts and his other colleagues of the Dickinson class that yet another Association called the Government of India Libraries Association was formed in 1933 at Simla. Asadullah was widely known for his educational and social services.

Undoubtedly Asadullah was a great pupil of a great teacher. He had a very distinguished career in the sphere of education and libraries in India. His contribution to the field of library education was outstanding. Whatever good work he performed in promoting the cause of the library movement in India may be partly due to his initial training under an American librarian. Thus, we see that America was able to contribute in more than one way toward the development of library service in India. Khurshid has given a brief resume of Asadullah's life and work on pp. 202-203 of his study. He has recorded:

Born in Lahore, Asadullah became the first graduate librarian of the famous Government College Library (1913). In 1919, his services were requisitioned to organize the M.A.O. College Library (now Aligarh Muslim University). In 1921 he was appointed the Librarian of the Secretariat Library of the Government of India from, which he was deputed to the Imperial Library, Calcutta. In 1929, he obtained the diploma and the fellowship of the Library Association, London. In recognition of his services to the library movement, the Government of India conferred on him the title of Khan Bahadur in June 1935.

Khurshid concludes:

Asadullah was a dynamic library leader, started a library class at the Imperial Library in 1935; and took an active part in the Bengal Library Association and the Indian Library Association. He initiated the All-India Library Conference, which has since become a regular feature.

Additional information on the life and achievements of Asadullah can be found in *The Modern Librarian*, 7:69-72, Oct. 1936 *Hindustan Review*, 85:510, Dec. 1949.

We are presenting below an outstanding contribution by K. M. Asadullah.

The Modern Library Movement in India⁷¹

By

Khan Bahadur K. M. Asadullah

Librarian, Imperial Library, Calcutta

The beginning of the modern library movement in India could rightly be traced to the year 1910, when by the former enlightened ruler of Baroda (who died only recently) an American expert in librarianship (Mr. Borden, by name) was brought to India to introduce the library system in Baroda State <!.>. What Baroda had achieved was well-known to every one present here, and hardly needed detailed narration. The Central Library, the Women's libraries, the Children's libraries, the travelling libraries were all well-known examples of what had been done in that state through the library movement and how free primary education combined with this excellent library system had helped to dispel illiteracy from among the subjects of Baroda State.

The next step in this direction was taken by the Panjab University, when another American gentleman, Mr. Asa Don Dickinson was invited to reorganize the University Library and train a number of librarians in new methods. This was in the year 1915, and I had the honour of belonging to that first batch of librarians who learnt the art of librarianship from Mr. Dickinson. The Punjab has continued to do this useful work of imparting training in librarianship, ever since then, and classes have been held for the purpose every second year. The example of the University Library was followed by several colleges affiliated to the University, either through the help rendered to them by the University, or independently. The Libraries of the Government College, and the Forman Christian College were prominent in this respect. I had the privilege of being the librarian of the first-named institution, being the first graduate to enter the profession and being nicknamed 'educated daftari'. Happily those days are over now, when librarians of the educated classes were called by that name, and the value of training in librarianship has been realised, and so many libraries have been reorganized according to the modern methods of the upkeep of libraries.

From the Punjab, the 'infection' spread to the adjoining province, the United Provinces of Agra & Oudh, when the former M.A.O. College (now Aligarh Muslim University) felt the need of reorganising its library according to the same methods, and I had to go there to undertake that task. I was helped in this matter by my friend and pupil Mr. Sant Ram Bhatia, now librarian of the Forman Christian College. Next was the Lucknow University to take up the question of reorganisation, where again the product of the Punjab helped to accomplish the desired object.

In 1917 or 1918, the Government of India convened a Conference of Librarians, the first of its kind to be held in this country, which after a few days' deliberations, passed a number of resolutions, purporting to improve the condition of libraries and librarianship. The moving figures of this Conference are <were?> Sir Henry Sharp (then Mr.), the then Educational Commissioner with the Government of India; the late Mr. J. A. Richey, then Director of Public Instruction in the Punjab, and the late Dr. A. C. Woolner, then Registrar and Librarian of the Punjab University. Unfortunately, not much came out of this Conference.

This was followed by the formation of a Library Association, of which the organisers were again the late Dr. Woolner, and Mr. Richey. I had the privilege of working on its Committee, but after some time it was realised that the formation of such bodies was perhaps a little too early in this country, and the Association came to an abrupt end.

About 1921 certain public-spirited gentlemen formed an All-India Public Libraries Association, which was also responsible for organising a number of Library Conferences which were usually held along with the sittings of the Indian National Congress, and as such were not favourably looked upon by so many men in the profession, and the management of which was dominated over mostly by lay men. This Association has been living by spasms, but nothing has been heard of it for the last few years. This body was also responsible for bringing out the first library journal in the English language, which has also ceased to exist now.

In 1929 a few library enthusiasts like Messrs Bhatia, Manchanda, and others started a Librarians' Club in Lahore, which ultimately developed itself into the present Punjab Library Association. This Association, even if it had nothing else to its credit, deserves the thanks of all interested in libraries and the library movement for starting and keeping <it> on the well-known journal, the *Modern Librarian*. This Association was responsible

for convening a number of Provincial Library Conferences, and infusing interest in the minds of so many people, and giving an impetus to what we see in the library world of the Punjab today.

In 1932, the said Association contemplated inviting the All India Public Libraries Association (which by that time had ceased to be a semi-political body that it was supposed to be) to hold their next Conference in Lahore. For certain reasons this could not be done, and the idea was taken up by Calcutta. A truly representative body of both men in the profession and outside was formed to arrange for an All India Library Conference, of which the chief object was to form an Indian Library Association. When the late Dr. Woolner who at that time was holidaying in Kashmir learnt of the proposal through the press, he wired to know what the idea was and who were the conveners of that conference. On being satisfied on this score, he at once ran from Kashmir to Calcutta, and took a very prominent part in the proceedings of the Conference, and helped materially in the formation of the Indian Library Association. This was in September 1933.

The Indian Library Association started the work assigned to it, in right earnest, and it is already responsible for bringing out a Directory of Indian Libraries, and is busy compiling a *UNION* Catalogue of scientific periodicals in important libraries of India. This has been possible with the cooperation of the Inter-University Board, which body was contemplating publication of such a catalogue, and at the instance of the late Dr. Woolner, agreed to transfer the material collected by them for that purpose, to the Indian Library Association. Further, all except three Universities have given financial help to the Association, in order to enable it to undertake its publication at an early date. I am sure that with the present Vice Chancellor at the head of affairs in the Punjab University, that body will not be lagging behind in affording the financial help expected of it, as the original proposal was placed before the 1933 Conference by the Librarian of the Punjab University Library, and was sponsored by one of its former Vice Chancellors. Further, the value of such a useful publication could well be realised by the present Vice Chancellor, as <he> himself is a scientist of no mean parts.

The Association has since then been able to arrange for two more conferences being held, one in 1935 in Lucknow at the invitation of the Lucknow University, and the other at Delhi, in December 1937, <All this is a very poor writing!> at the joint invitation of the University of Delhi, and the Government of India Libraries Association. This Conference was a bigger success both as regards the number of persons who attended it, and the number of papers etc. read there. The Proceedings have recently been published, which include for the first time, a number of papers read at the Conference.

The Association is further busy with evolving a scheme for interloaning of books between important libraries, and for this purpose did actually place before the second Conference a well-planned scheme, but this has not been put into practice, as certain libraries are feeling reluctant to work either as centres for the circles in which it is proposed to divide the country for the object in view, or for taking up the responsibility for fear of increase of work.

Another important activity of the Association is the attempt to work out detailed expansions of those parts of the Dewey Decimal Classification scheme which pertain to India and Indian subjects. A Committee has been working upon it, and presented its report in the Delhi session of the Conference, but the final results are yet to be determined.

The Association has always been advocating the cause of the introduction of modern library methods, and imparting training in them. It suggested to all the Provincial Education departments to introduce short courses in librarianship in their Teachers Training Colleges, so that school teachers who ultimately have to be in charge of school libraries should know how to manage them. Only one Provincial Government (Assam) agreed to this proposal, and did actually acquire the services of a trained gentleman from the Indian Library Association who lectured to the students of the Training College for about a fortnight and this was very much appreciated by the authorities.

The Association has recently taken up with the Provinces the question of the establishment of Provincial Copyright libraries. This proposal was adopted at the Delhi session of the Library Conference and the Governments concerned have been addressed, and their replies are being awaited with great eagerness.

Being a trained librarian, and a great advocate of training, I have not failed to help in this direction, for after much 'haggling' with the Government of India, I obtained their permission to start regular classes in the Imperial Library for imparting training in librarianship. The Imperial Library had not been unmindful of the need for training, and about a dozen persons from various parts of the country got their training during the period 1929 to 1933, when the scheme for conducting regular classes was submitted to the Government and the first class of twenty students was started in 1935. The second was held in 1937, with the same number of students on rolls, and the third is to begin from the 1st of April next. The scheme has considerably been changed this time, whereby persons not connected with the Imperial Library will be co-ordinated as teachers and examiners.

It is gratifying to note that there is an awakening among the public for library movement, and those responsible for the management of libraries have come to realise the value of training, and employing trained hands to take charge of libraries. This fact is well supported from the large number of applications that have been received by the Imperial Library for admission to its next Library Training Class. This number (112) includes about forty applications from persons who are already working in libraries, and wish to get training. This is a very encouraging sign for the success of the library movement in this country."

I should like to make a reference to the useful work that was being done by certain other Associations like the Madras Library Association, the Bengal Library Association, the Calcutta Library Association, the Bihar Library Association, the U.P. Library Association, the Andhra Desa Association, and others.⁷²

BARODA'S INFLUENCE ON THE PANJAB

We would like to offer some brief comments on the writings of and on Dickinson presented earlier.

In the year 1915, Dickinson was invited to Lahore (India) to organize the Panjab university library on modern American lines and teach modern library methods to as many of the librarians of the Panjab as could be gathered together. The invitation came in June 1915. The cable arrived in August.

Dickinson refers to the disturbed conditions prevailing in India and raises a question: "Would His Majesty wish me to come and teach library science to his rebellious <!--> subjects amid the blackened ruins of his empire?"

He went by first cabin class. First he went to Boston <by a ship of White Star Line>. There was a library on the ship. He went to Gibraltar. Took a P&O. Dickinson says:

We were met on the pier <of Bombay> by Ranchod, who had been Mr. Borden's second butler at Baroda, as he proudly informed us. (Imagine a librarian with a second butler!). He bore a letter from Mr. Kudalkar, Mr. Borden's successorRanchod knew English all right.⁷³

Of course, it is not necessary for me to quote Dickinson extensively here, but he is very critical of the then existing conditions of the library and its staff—locked cupboards, large issue registers, babus, etc. "babus, who rejoice in B. A. degrees and love to copy letter in long hand and to make elaborate entries in several elephantine ledgers whenever a book is taken or returned to the library, or even consulted in the building."

It is possible that A.C. Woolner or some other official of the Punjab University might have visited Baroda, or at least learnt about it, because even in the first meeting with the Registrar, Dickinson was informed of what he was expected to do and he was told about the "Newark System." Unless Dickinson himself had provided this

term and it was not actually used by the Registrar, we have to conclude that the Panjab knew about Baroda!!⁷⁴

To quote Dickinson: "They actually loan these museum treasures <MSS> and the cumbrous old ledger system of charging is to make way for the Newark system!"

Well, Punjab University authorities might have known about this independent of Baroda.

Dickinson's library class consisted of thirty students, mostly the librarians of affiliated colleges of the University. Certificates were awarded by the University. The Panjab Library Association was formed.

With regard to the library training, Dickinson said elsewhere:

The course of lectures on library science delivered at the University of the Punjab in the autumn of 1915 was, so far as known, the first attempt at library training in British India, although a library class has been held at Baroda for three or four years, a result of the sojourn in the Gaekwar's dominions of Mr. A. W.<sic> Borden, an American librarian.⁷⁵

There is very little reference in the *Panjab Library Primer* of Dickinson to the magnificent achievement of Borden in Baroda! Probably Dickinson did not care much about Borden!

For Dickinson's obituary: See *Publishers Weekly* 178 (5 December 1960): 24.

Anis Khurshid on Dickinson

It is not possible to agree with Khurshid on many points. Dickinson was writing in a frivolous mood. It was not at all a serious writing. At least his introductory part does not appear to be more than a travelog.

By tradition and in practice, the United States encouraged free use of books. Its philosophy was liberal. On the other hand, the British were conservative. They did not encourage the free use of books to the same extent the Americans did. Dickinson has pointed out this difference in attitude.

Khurshid too notices this fact. He says that Dickinson was uneasy also because of the "English setting in which he had to work." Then Khurshid quotes Dickinson:⁷⁶

Library facilities on the Mongolia <P & O Steamer> were not very admirable. Indeed, until a short time ago, a rather large fee was charged to every passenger for the privilege of using the meager 'Officers' library, which was kept tightly locked up during the greater part of the day. This was our first hint of what we were later to recognize as the characteristic attitude of Englishmen toward books, as something to be respected and carefully safeguarded against casual contact with the common herd. The first thing one knows the books will be soiled or worn out! My word!

AN EPILOGUE

Contribution of the Panjab to the

Development of Library Service in India

The Panjab (The Land of the Five Rivers) made a distinct contribution toward the development of libraries and librarianship in India, and the credit goes to a large extent to an American pioneering librarian named Asa Don Dickinson (1876-1960), who was invited to Lahore in 1915 by the University of the Panjab "to organize its Library on modern American lines." Dickinson was preceded by another American library-missionary. William Alanson Borden (1853-1931) who went to Baroda in 1910 at the invitation of the Maharaja Sayajirao Gaekwar

(1862-1939) of Baroda State.

While Borden laid the foundations of the first public library system in India, Dickinson created a model for India's subsequent *academic* library system. Like Borden, Dickinson also established a library school, but in an academic environment, and wrote the *Panjab Library Primer*, the first systematic book on library organization and administration in India. The work of these two American librarians in two major types of library systems (in two types of Indian administration) was so fundamental and deep-rooted that it became the permanent foundation for the growth and development of libraries and librarianship in the whole of South Asia.

Although Dickinson worked in Lahore only for a year, yet his students and the alumni of his library school established themselves all over India and became the leaders in their respective regions, some achieving All-India fame. For example, Khan Bahadur K. M. Asadullah was an able student of Dickinson. He worked in the Panjab for some years and then served as the Librarian of the Imperial Library in Calcutta from 1930 to 1947. He made a significant contribution to the cause of the library movement in India.

It is noteworthy that two American librarians were invited to India for the development of libraries and librarianship in the same decade and they laid the foundation of Indian library edifice.

The story of Borden has been well narrated in the First American Library Pioneer in India (also titled Foundation of Library Movement in India). The present work brings out Dickinson's contribution to the development of library service in India. It is a collection of his writings as well as some writings and notes on him. It is more or less an autobiography. We have brought out these as a collection for the first time. We do not claim any originality in this venture.

Generally the "Introduction" precedes the work. Here we have brought this type of statement at the end! We strongly believe that Dickinson was a great librarian and his contribution stands out as outstanding. Yet as a man he was lacking. His writing is not generous. His attitude was not impartial. He was highly prejudiced. No self-respecting Indian nationalist will tolerate his writing and attitude. Even an American, if he is an impartial, will condemn them. Yet we have presented these writings before the world of learning for what they are worth.

We did not want to prejudice the mind of the reader beforehand. Here and there we have added some critical remarks and notes. We felt an irresistible urge to call a spade a spade. This is how we felt. We only wish Dickinson had confined his writings just to libraries and librarianship and had not indulged in India's politics and social problems as they existed then.

Footnotes:

1 The article was published in *The Modern Librarian*, v. 15, Jan-Mar 1945, pp. 27-28. This was occasioned by Dickinson's retirement. It included some extracts from the College and Research Libraries. He died in 1960.

2 He was still alive when the above biographical sketch was published.

3 Asa Don Dickinson, "On His Majesty's Service Only," *Public Libraries*, 21 (1916): 132-35, 179-80, 226-27. This is an autobiographical account. These are direct quotations.

4. An un-American statement!

5 Probably there was German money also for 1857--India's First War of Independence!

6 Here begins the real story of the librarian.

7 Those uninformed Indian librarians who baselessly argue that we <the Indians> were equally influenced by the British even in library matters

(i.e. to promote library service) should read this passage! Of course, we followed the British philosophy of librarianship--Books for the chosen few!-- until we were taught that there was an alternative, a better way!

Important: British vs. American philosophy of librarianship.

The British might have developed free public library service in their own country, but in matters of university libraries and the national library <British Museum> they are still much backward as compared to the New World--America, the Land of the free. See what Dr. Charles G. Nauert wrote from Paris. Cf. also the *World* (newspaper of London) on Borden's appointment to Baroda.

8 There was no visa system! U.S.A. had an American consul in India!!

9 Refer to Borden himself--"treated royally"

10 Groundwork for American influence.

11 This was the condition at the BHU in 1945/46 when the present writer (MLN) took his Diploma in Library Science just before the dawn of India's independence!

12 Dickinson's knowledge of real India was extremely limited. He looked at India through the eyeglasses of India's inveterate enemies!

13 Dickinson puts a lot of stress on India's caste system in a derogatory manner. He did not read "the *Bhagavad-Gita* the Divine Song of the Lord."

14 Dickinson! How little you know of India!

15 I personally had a very similar experience at B.H.U. which I have recorded in one of the papers written for Columbia. But Dickinson has highly exaggerated the situation.

16 As if those were composed at *the* same time. They were never *current* simultaneously! Dickinson's

knowledge of ancient India was extremely limited indeed! Yet, ironically enough, he was not aware of this tragic situation!!

17 Since writing the above, the first shipment of supplies has been received. <Note by Dickinson himself>.

18 "Editorial Comments," LJ 41 (May 1916): 329-31. This letter was published May 1916. It must have been written two or three months earlier. Dickinson had already been in India for four months when he wrote this letter. He came to India in October 1915.

19 Dickinson makes no difference between an immortal classic and an ephemeral trash writing of a half-baked man. Classic, even if one, is enough! The seeker of knowledge and truth has to secure one; guru in the real sense of the term and he can come as wise as Dickinson has seen any.

20 Dickinson was certainly brain-washed! He had really read some wrong books. He was terribly indoctrinated.

21 Did Mahatma Gandhi read less than what Dickinson had read?

22 From typescript of "A Bookman's Memories or Memoirs by Asa Don Dickinson, 1876-19<50? i.e. 1960>: 190- . Obtained through the courtesy of Dr. Anis Khurshid and the University of Pittsburgh (PA) Library. Typed from a photocopy. Dr. Khurshid refers to the work as "Memoirs," while my section <copy> has the title "Memories."

Dr. Anis Khurshid wrote to me that Dickinson's daughter-in-law <?>, who possesses the manuscript, does not lend it to anybody! With great difficulty he was able to get a photocopy of only that section (this one) which relates to Dickinson's work in the Panjab. The relevant section begins on page 190 of the original.

23 Is it not too much to say? Could we call this an objective statement? Of course, not.

24 The author Dickinson has made some additions and corrections in his MS.

25 Both Borden and Dickinson cite Kipling!

26 Who asked them to settle among the aliens?

27 Dickinson was in the Punjab during the academic year 1915/16 and wrote his autobiography in 1949. So a long period of time had intervened.

28 So Dickinson probably encouraged such opportunities!

29 I had thought to revise and bring this description up to date. But that, I find, is impossible; the India of today being so different from the India of thirty-five years ago <Dickinson has just said: "thirty years."> The sketch which follows then, let it be remembered, is an American's impression of *Kipling's India*, as observed in 1915-16. As such it may still help one to understand the new India of this morning's newspaper. <Note by Dickinson himself>

30 We don't know why Kipling should be brought in! And so often!!

31 Yet he has preserved for the posterity an ocean of Vedic lore, Mr. Dickinson!

32 Dickinson does not spell correctly! Or, is this the way he was taught?

33 It is evident that the person who selected the pages to be photo-copied for Khurshid omitted the portions that were not directly related to the subject, Dickinson's library work in the Panjab. Also is to be noted the fact that the "day" of the work began very early in the morning.

34 The original is correct. Khurshid erred while copying. He inserted one additional "r".

35 Dickinson is speaking for the White! Too partisan a writing!! He had truly imbibed the spirit of the Mother India by Katherine Mayo! I wish he had also read the writings of, say, Panjab Kesari Lala Lajpat Rai while in the Panjab, or even afterwards!

36 Dickinson had come to Punjab to train the librarians, how to organize and operate an university library. It would have been much better if Dickinson had concentrated on this assignment he was invited for, because that assignment itself was quite demanding.

37 Totally biased mind! I would call it a statement based on ignorance!! Dickinson forgets that the East is the mother of all the major religions, including his own if he had one at all! He ought to have read his own fellow countrymen such as William Alanson Borden and Charles Cuthbert Hall.

38 It would have been more appropriate if Dickinson had not meddled into the social, religious, political life of Indians because it is not possible for an ordinary westerner to understand India without her total background and foreground.

39 An American citizen not writing as a true American!

40 Not worthy of a scholar!

41 I wonder if Dickinson had read any immortal classics such as India in bondage!

42 How sincerely I wish Dickinson had remained satisfied with minding his own business! He should have remained a librarian only without indulging in India's then current politics.

43 Not a healthy writing, once again!

44 Here Dickinson calls himself "a free-born American," yet he did not believe in the right of a captive nation, such as India, to aspire for freedom when it came to her so called "rebellion" against the mighty British Imperialists. Dickinson had a double standard. According to him, America's declaration of Independence did not apply to non-white Indians! Definitely he would have been an enemy of those who freed slaves in his own country!!

45 Again a gap of 4 pages. Pages 314-317 <inclusive> missing. Dr. Khurshid wrote to us that Dickinson's daughter-in-law gave with greatest reluctance only the relevant portions! Who selected?

46 Dickinson was very conscious of religious differences in India! He spoke the language of India's enemies!

47 So, the students and colleagues of Dickinson were not less grateful than those at Baroda!

48 (a) Background of Dickinson. (b) He turned 40 in May 1916.

49 In my opinion this cannot be called a serious writing at all! Not surprising, coming as it does from a

"former Jersey chicken farmer!" Dickinson did not deserve to be called a guru in the real sense of the term!

50 Obtained through the kind courtesy of the School of Library and Information Science, University of Pittsburgh, PA.

As a librarian Dickinson was superb. As a "white" man he was a blind follower of the enemies of India, the British Imperialists. He stood in sharp contrast with Borden, who truly represented American angels. Dickinson was an unthinking spokesman for the inconsiderate British.

51 Original totally blank in many places. Copy (thermofax) not good at all.

52 Probably the first library in India to adopt Dewey. A landmark!

53 Either the collection was too small, or so many people would have been employed that the work was accomplished in such a short time.

54 Quite an important step.

55 Indo-American Library Cooperation--Dewey Contributes.

56 So Dickinson had already planned to write this book.

57 Dickinson's assignment in the Panjab was specifically for a limited period, only one year.

58 Mukund Lal was in-charge of the University Library. Of course, Dr. Woolner was the Registrar and Librarian.

59 We do not know if Dickinson's zealous co-workers presented him any Farewell Address. Yes, they did! Or the students only? Probably the latter. <MLN 18 June 1975.>

60 What follows is a collection of some notes and memos which throw some light on the origin and growth of the library movement in the Panjab. They do not constitute an organized "treatise." The reader will take them for what they are worth. We claim no originality here and we don't think they are highly valuable either. But they will appear as interesting.

61 The Modern Librarian 5 (April 1935): 117.

62 The Modern Librarian 4 (January 1934): 41-53.

63 Review published in a newspaper dated 4 April 1917; title of the newspaper does not appear. Review--one column 7 1/4" x 2 1/4". At the top appears-- "Wednesday April 4, 1917," followed by "Literary" and then "Librarian.

This review (clipping) is pasted inside the copy of the book, preserved in the Reference Department of the New York Public Library. This is a direct quotation.

64 This statement is absolutely un-academic.

65 I could not copy the whole book in the first attempt. Interlibrary loan could not be extended! Someone at Columbia (University) wanted it!! MLN 5 June 1973. Subsequently the whole book was microfilmed, xeroxed, and copied by typing. Xerox copy was sent to Dr. Sharma at the Punjab University Library, Chandigarh, inquiring if he would buy! He just incorporated into his collection as a

gift! He did not pay anything!!

66 Dickinson himself mentions in his Memoirs that he wanted to organize his class notes and get them published <see pp. 45-46>. That was a good excuse to go off to the top of the mountains while still on duty! Was he not a co-worker of the Imperialist British!

67 Dickinson graduated from N.Y. State Library School at Albany in 1904 where Dewey was the Teacher-Director. It is well-known that when Dewey left Columbia for Albany, he also took along with him his library school.

68 The Modern Librarian 4 (January 1934): 53.

69 We are presenting here some extracts from the above paper read at the Third Annual Punjab Library Conference and published in The Modern Librarian.

70 Did the Commission regard the reorganization on the American system a remote possibility? Very interesting!

71 The Modern Librarian 9 (April-June 1939): 90-95. This is a direct quotation. Speech delivered by Khan Bahadur K. M. Asadullah, F.L.A., Librarian, Imperial Library, Calcutta, and Hony. General Secretary of the Indian Library Association, on the occasion of the AT HOME organized in his honour, by the Lahore Librarians at the Forman Christian College Library, on Thursday, the 9th February, 1939. Asadullah was an able student of Dickinson.

72 The above enumeration shows the number of associations active at the time. It seems the paper ends abruptly!

73 Dickinson was not aware of the fact that Borden had not less than a dozen servants! Anne Brown told me of his royal party, group of servants, living in Baroda. Mrs. Brown mentioned one Gopal and recollected about Ranchod as having been mentioned by her parents!

74 Maybe the Punjab was aware of Baroda, <we are talking of 1915!> but certainly Dickinson did not come via Baroda as my subsequent research has proved. The above comments belong to the period (1967-1969) when I was writing my history of the Baroda library movement.

75 Dickinson: Punjab library primer, p. 7.

76 pp. 13-34 of "On His Majesty's Service Only."

According to Khurshid <p. 199 of his doctoral dissertation>,

Even the then Registrar, A. C. Woolner, had some misgivings about an American librarian coming to India as would appear from what Dickinson says: "Dr Ewing was out of town on the day I called to report for duty, so I sought out his next in command, Dr. A. C. Woolner, who was Registrar. This was a happy accident, for Professor Woolner, every inch a Briton, had for once harbored misgivings of Dr. Ewing's good judgment in calling a fellow-American to help them put their libraries in order.