

therefore will endeavor to make itself understood in detail, though it may sacrifice something of literary finish in so doing. It will not always be possible to make as readable an article as Mr. Pendleton's, on our first pages, and still give, as he has given, the exact details. We believe he has pointed out the true method to start libraries in small towns, and his personal experience has been so successful that his advice should have much weight. Perhaps the same method would be equally valuable in raising needed funds for libraries already started. We are promised a second article on the same subject for the February JOURNAL.

THE February JOURNAL will contain, in addition to its regular departments and general articles, further reports from the committees on Poole's Index, Sizes, Co-operative Cataloguing, and Constitution of the Association. The first great need is undoubtedly the proper organization, simple but thorough, of American library interests, so that the objects and methods of the Association can be presented to librarians with invitations to become members. It should be understood that such organization is not simply to create *esprit de corps* and to enjoy social intercourse with one another, but is a great labor-saving necessity; an economizer of time and money; a *desideratum* alike for library and librarian. Without such organization experience has sufficiently proved that Poole's Index will remain uncompleted; that each cataloguer will work alone and unaided on his copy of each book without utilizing to any proper extent the like labors of his fellows; that the folly will be continued of hunting and recording meaningless signatures instead of sizes; in short, that but a fraction of the work which ought to be accomplished can be satisfactorily done. Individuals have neither authority nor ability to carry forward the needed work. It must be done by the co-operation of those most interested—the libraries. So the first necessity is an association, and we have the Association. But at Philadelphia the importance of carefully-digested plans led the Conference to organize itself into the Association and delegate to the officers elected the preparation of the constitution. The board of officers, after agreeing upon what they will offer, will probably print it for the criticism of the librarians, and at the meeting in the summer, after being carefully considered, it can be formally adopted.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON SIZES.

To the American Library Association :

YOUR Committee on the Sizes of Books, instructed to report the necessary details for putting into actual use the plan adopted at Philadelphia, having agreed upon these details, beg leave to submit the following for the general adoption of cataloguers and publishers :

1. To designate the actual fold of the sheet in printing, use the ordinary symbols 4°, 8°, 12°, etc.

2. To specify the actual size of the binding, paper, or letterpress, measure the outside height and width in centimeters, using the decimals where extreme accuracy is desired, always giving the height first. In measuring the binding, give the width of the board from the hinge to the edge, not including the round; in measuring the type, include neither folio nor signature line. Prefix *b*, *p*, or *t*, according as the measurement is of *binding, paper, or type*.

3. To designate the approximate size of the book, use the initial letters T (32°), S (16°), D (12°), O (8°), Q (4°), F and F⁵, F⁶, F⁷, etc., for the larger books.

To the size-letter of books having a width of four fifths and not exceeding the full height prefix *sq.*, to indicate that they have the square form. To those having a width greater than their height prefix *ob.*, to indicate that they are oblong.

The measurements and abbreviations are grouped in the following table :

Numerical Symbol formerly used.	Verbal Symbol to be used.	Limit of Outside Height. Centimeters.
32°	T	10
16°	S	15
12°	D	20
8°	O	25
4°	Q	30
<i>f</i>	F	40
	F ⁵	50
	F ⁶	60
	F ⁷	70
	etc.	etc.

Thus all books more than 15 and not exceeding 20 cm. in height are marked D; those more than 20 and not exceeding 25 are marked O, etc. The corresponding widths requiring the *ob.* and *sq.* are decided accordingly. A book 16 cm. high and 13 wide would be marked *sq.* D, because the width is more than

four fifths the height, although less than four fifths the height of the largest book of the D size; and in the same way a book 16 high and 17 wide would be marked *ob. D.*

Examples.

The ordinary symbols, 8°, etc., are recommended for use only in special cases, and when accompanied by either actual or approximate measurements. There are cases in which it may be desirable to record the imposition (fold), and then these symbols are to be used, but they need no special illustration.

N. Y. 1876. 347 p. 8° b 19 x 13.

This form of entry would be used where it was desired to indicate more accurately than by "8° D" that the book, though folded in 8°, was really smaller than the ordinary duodecimo. The b shows that the boards are 19 centim. high, and 13 wide from the hinge to the edge.

London. 1689. 347 p. 8° p 23.8 x 17.2

This form would probably be used for a rare old book where the price would be largely affected by the extent of the margin. The size of the binding is of little account, and the amount of letterpress in such books is well known. The item of importance is, how much of the margin is left? Therefore the measurement of the paper itself is given in centimeters and tenths. In both these examples the fold is given before the measurements, as it might be of value in determining editions or in collating with bibliographies where the fold is the item given. The exact measurement being given, there is of course no use of the approximate measurement as indicated by the letter D or O. Ordinarily the measurement takes the place of the fold, but some libraries and publishers may prefer to give both, for a time at least, as they now qualify the fold by *large, small, very small* etc.

N. Y. 1857. 47 p. Q t 4 x 6.

This form indicates that the book by outside measurement is a quarto, while in reality it is made up almost entirely of margin, the little island of letterpress occupying only 4 x 6 centim. in the centre of the page 30 x 24. This illustration shows the desirability of a compact symbol, understood by all, to indicate facts of this kind. As the height is always given first, it also shows, and without using the abbreviation *ob.*, that the letterpress is oblong.

N. Y. 1864. 347 p. D.

This is the common form that is recommended for catalogues and trade-lists, the single letter telling the reader the size as accurately as he can remember it.

N. Y. 1873. 347 p. 8° b and p 24 x 17 t 14 x 10.

This form illustrates a full description, which may sometimes be desirable. It is, "the book is folded as an octavo;" both the boards and paper being 24 x 17 centim., it is bound without the usual squares or projections of the covers. The type being only 14 x 10 centim., it is a large-paper copy.

These illustrations might be largely increased, but enough have been given to show that the plan recommended is adequate to all wants.

Though the committee were appointed simply to report the measurements to be used in carrying out the plan of the Conference, they have reopened the whole subject anew, and are happy to say that the conclusions arrived at are identical with those of the Conference. It seems impracticable to use the characters for actual measurement that are so universally recognized, among bibliographers at least, as referring entirely to the fold. The committee have, however, felt the force of the argument based on our familiarity with these terms, and can see no improvement on the Conference plan of using the same name, thus conforming to our settled habits, but writing it with the initial letter instead of the numerical symbol, and thus avoiding all confusion.

The proposition to use the numerical symbol was again carefully considered, but after investigation no one was found willing to recommend this course, because eminent authorities showed that there was a use for this symbol to indicate *fold*, and that it must be retained for this purpose. The committee therefore feel that this question should be considered as finally settled.

To specify the size by actual measurement it was found necessary to provide for three distinct classes of books. The ordinary book is quickest and best measured by giving the outside dimensions of the boards. The "round" of the back should not be included, because this varies in the same book according to the use it has received and is no part of the size of the sheet, the round on the back corresponding to the hollow on the front. The measurement of the board gives the true size of the sheet, for the binder usually trims off about the same

amount of paper that is occupied by the "squares," or projection of the boards. This is also the most convenient measurement, for a card with the size marked upon it can be introduced between the cover and the title-page, even with the bottom of the boards, and the approximate height and width required will then appear above and at the right of the cover.

In rare old books, where the amount of margin left largely affects the selling-price, it will be necessary to give the measurement of the paper itself, and in such cases it will usually be necessary to give the decimals or millimeters.

When it is desired to give the actual amount of reading matter more readily than by counting the lines and specifying size of type, the method recommended by Prof. Jewett is undoubtedly the best. The committee have followed the old rule in excluding from the measurement both the signature and folio lines.

The abbreviations given to indicate which measurement has been taken are very compact and easily remembered, as the *b* stands for either boards or binding; the *p* for either paper or page.

The committee have also reconsidered the expediency of adopting the centimeter as a unit, in accordance with the vote at Philadelphia, querying whether it were really best to substitute this for the familiar inch. They find on investigation that even the opponents of the metric system acknowledge that it is soon to come into general use in this country; that it is already adopted by nearly every other country of importance except England; that it is in itself a unit better adapted to our wants than the inch, which is too large for the measurement of books. The advantages of adopting a system intelligible to all other nations are manifest. A movement is already on foot in Europe for calling a Library Conference on the basis of last summer's, and in England, at least, the adoption of actual measurements to record the sizes is also under discussion. If the Association can adopt a plan which will recommend itself as the best to these other countries and conferences, it is not at all improbable that even international uniformity may be secured. In addition to these considerations, before the report of the committee was finally decided upon, there came from two well-known publishing houses a proposition to conform the sizes of their books to the scale adopted, provided the centimeter and not the inch was

taken as the unit. It therefore seemed clear to the committee that the adoption of the new unit for library use was very desirable, and it is thought that no practical difficulty of any kind will be found in so doing. The cataloguer can procure at an expense of a few cents a rule marked in centimeters, from which he can immediately and unerringly assign the proper size to any book. The suggestion that the inch might be used for a time longer, until our people become more familiar with the new system, was considered, but there was the great objection that this would necessitate a second change after a time, and then all the catalogues made on the present plan would become confusing after the change. The present seems certainly the most favorable time for making the change which in itself is so desirable.

Though many have advocated only four sizes, F (f°), Q (4°), O (8°), and D (12°), the committee have felt it necessary to provide for the more accurate description of the very large and very small books, deeming the difference between the *Evening Post* and the *Athenæum* too great to be ignored. The plan submitted provides a different letter for each decimeter in height in the large books, and for each half decimeter in the small books. After a series of actual measurements, and several consultations with printers, binders, and paper-makers, it has seemed best to the committee to give a series of sizes on this the simplest possible scale, in order that the new plan may be perfectly understood and easily remembered even by the dullest.

It was found by measuring a selection of books, and by folding up various sized sheets of book paper, that the sizes very closely approximated those given in the report. After consultation with a number of those interested, it has seemed better to ignore this slight discrepancy and give the standard size in regular progression. For the same reason the width requiring the prefix *sq.* has been fixed by a regular proportion, though in fact, to the eye, the smaller books seem to require the prefix *sq.* with less proportionate increase of width than the larger ones. If no rule is adopted, the cataloguer must have a table of widths constantly at hand, or else must burden his memory with the list.

The same desire for simplicity has determined the committee to accept S (16°) of the Conference to designate the size of books most of which would now be commonly called

18°. *In fact*, an 18° is seldom printed, the name being conventional, for it is an impossibility to work an 18° except sheetwise, a style of printing little followed. The difficulty lies in the number of off-cuts or insets required. The 18° can be printed only by unlocking the form and altering the imposition after the first side is printed. So, practically, the so-called 18° are printed as 16°, 24°, or 32°. The cheapest and therefore most desirable imposition is one without off-cuts, *f*°, 4°, 8°, 16°, 32°, etc. The 12° with its one off-cut requires the cutting off of four pages, then these must be folded and set inside the regular signature, which must bear also a secondary signature, and must be carefully looked for in all collation, both by binder and buyer. The extra labor and the danger of loss involved makes 12°, 18°, 24°, etc., undesirable forms to impose. It seemed to be necessary, however, to introduce the familiar 12° between the 8° and 16°, but otherwise the scale given is confined to the regular impositions without off-cuts.

A size designation was wanted for the few books not more than 10 cm. high, and another for those more than 10 but not exceeding 15, and therefore not called D. It was determined, for the reasons given, to mark all the larger ones S, including 16°, 18°, and 24°, and the smaller ones T, including 32°, 48°, 64°, etc. The S and T seemed the best symbols; and two additional sizes for books smaller than D were all that could be recommended.

The new symbol introduced for large folios is thought to be a desirable innovation, and no better plan is suggested. It is often important to know something of the dimensions of a sheet more than that it is a *f*°. The proposal is to attach to this F (except in the case of the small *f*°, which would be *F*^s) a superior figure, indicating the height of the book in decimeters. This is very simple and compact, and seems unobjectionable. A book marked *F*^s would be recognized at once as a very large *f*°—for example, one of the large dailies. This plan has been in actual use for several years in one library of 40,000 volumes, and has been a complete success. The committee therefore feel safe in recommending it for general adoption.

The plan provides for fold, size of book, size of paper, size of letterpress, and also the simplest possible symbols for the approximate size designated by a single character. They recommended that only this last symbol be commonly used in cataloguing, deeming it sufficient for

all ordinary purposes. Where the other items are to be given at all, they strongly recommend the plan above as the best for the uniform use of cataloguers, whether librarians or publishers, giving as it does all needed facts in the simplest and most economical manner.

JAMES L. WHITNEY,
CHARLES A. CUTTER, } *Committee.*
MELVIL DEWEY,

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON A NEW EDITION OF POOLE'S INDEX.

THE committee to whom was referred the plan proposed at the Conference of Librarians held at Philadelphia for continuing Poole's "Index to Periodical Literature," beg leave to report :

The committee met at the Public Library in Boston, October 20th, all the members being present. The plan proposed by Mr. POOLE at the Conference, and which the committee were to consider, was as follows :

"The completion and continuance of the Index I believe is practicable under a plan of co-operation, which this Conference has it in its power to organize. The plan I suggest is, that the libraries here represented, and others that may join with us, each take charge of indexing one or more series of periodicals which have appeared since January, 1852, when the references in my Index stopped; and to send the titles unarranged to the central bureau, where they will be condensed in one alphabetical arrangement, and incorporated with the matter of the edition of 1853. A system of rules for indexing will be prepared by the central bureau, so that the work may be done in a uniform and harmonious system. The work of each library will be thoroughly revised before it is incorporated in the general Index. The work will be electrotyped, and every five years, or oftener, a supplementary volume in uniform style will be issued. I am ready, if I can procure such associates and assistants as I desire, to superintend the work of this central bureau. I have in mind one librarian in an Eastern city [Mr. WILLIAM I. FLETCHER, of the Watkinson Library, Hartford, Ct.] who is fully competent to be my associate, and I regret that he is not present with us in this Conference. Part of my business at the East will be to see him and engage his coöperation, which I am confident he will give me. I have the assurance of several of our most responsible publishing-houses that