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Chapter 13

Cataloguing

HOLISTIC VIEW

In a modern library, the catalogue does not exist in a vacuum. The open access system, the classification scheme, the classified shelf-arrangement, the plan of the stack-room, the floor guides, gangway guides, bay guides and shelf guides, the reference staff and their careful and sympathetic initiation of readers, the fact that from the school library onwards one is gradually accustomed to modern library arrangement and apparatus and that provision is now-a-days regularly made in schools and colleges for drilling students in the use of a classified arrangement and classified catalogue both formally and informally – all these factors, it must be realised, hang together with the Library Catalogue. It would be absurdly abstract to develop any one of these as if the other did not exist. We must take the Holistic View.

(14; p160)

LIBRARY CATALOGUE – A BOX OF TOOLS

Library catalogue is like a box of tools: the Entries may be named according to the use for which they are designed.

(14; p35)

Catalogue is a Medium of Communication

Intimacy characterises service. Intimacy underlines the individuating particularities in the reader library setting. The catalogue is a medium of communication in this intimate setting. Thus, local colour should be inherent in library catalogue.

(3; Sec. 34)

MAN-IN-THE STREET AND CATALOGUE

The profession that has given so much thought and labour to development of the Dictionary Catalogue fondly finds many a justification for calling it the most serviceable if not the only and eternally serviceable form. The stock argument is appeal to the needs of the lowest common intelligence.

(14; p182)

DESCRIPTIVE CATALOGUE

The Descriptive catalogue is really a survival of the bibliographical description developed for listing manuscripts and incunabula.

(14; p21)

AIDS TO LIBRARY CATALOGUE

All bibliographies should be assembled near the catalogue cabinet so that they may be used in conjunction with it. In the presence of a skilled reference librarian this combination will be capable of more intensive analysis than the Library Catalogue alone.

(14; p236)

HEADING FOR AN ENTRY

Choice of heading is half the battle in cataloguing. Rendering of heading nearly exhausts the other half. Style of writing forms only a trivial fraction.

(3; p130)

HINDU NAMES

A formidable legacy has fallen to the share of the Indian librarian/cataloguer. It is at once the prize and the penalty he has for the unique antiquity of his national culture, and for the extra-ordinary and unexampled productivity of his authorial ancestors even at the distant time, to which few other nations are able to trace their literary remains.

(14; p295)

CHANGE OF NAME AND CATALOGUER

A vexatious factor in the choice of personal names is change of name... Change of name is a fact external to the cataloguer; he has no control over it and can only face it.

(14; p297)

PROBLEM OF ANONYMOUS WORKS

The apparently insoluble difficulty of anonymous works with merely descriptive titles has to some extent been responsible for the Cataloguer's need to erect an author image if the real man cannot be discovered. This accounts for the indefatigable energy put forth to find him out somehow and to compile dictionaries of anonyms.

(14; p321)

ACCURACY OF WORK

A most trivial mistake in spelling may effectively hide away a catalogue card from the readers.

(4; p41)

LIBRARY CATALOGUING

The use of special terminology requires persistent co-operation on the part of the student, and not infrequently a willingness to undergo special initiation into its use. In spite of this, some librarians still want to be told the principles of library cataloguing without the use of special terminology. They sometimes even insist on something quite simple which can be followed without sufficient experience. This is a wrong demand. No other profession in the world appears to ask for anything like this. If the library profession alone feels in this unprofessional way, this must be due to some faults in its attitude towards the *What, Why* and *How* of library cataloguing.

(17; Vol. 5, 1968, p231-232)

Since 1938, Cataloguing is being made science-based. But the choice of the Entry Element from among the words in the name of an Institution, forming the Heading of a Catalogue Entry had been left to blind tradition. While making a Comparative study of Catalogue Codes along with Ganesh Bhattacharrya, this lacuna in theory was discovered, and the Canon of Recall Value was formulated to remove it.

(17; Vol. 8, 1971, p1)

READERS' CONVENIENCE AND EXPECTATION

The primary interest of the readers is to get from the Catalogue the information needed by them readily and with least difficulty. But their having to use the Catalogue accustoms them to certain kinds of Entry Elements in different kinds of Entries. If the Catalogue used by them in the past had not been as convenient as they could've, the *Convenience factor* loses its weightage and surrenders itself to the *Expectation factor*. This surrender of *Convenience* to *Expectation* virtually blocks progress in Cataloguing Rules.

(17; Vol. 8, 1971, p36)

The Readers' Expectation in a Catalogue, as in any other matter, is determined by what he has been accustomed to for years and years. Habit makes him look for the same old thing for ever. Indeed, we speak of Habit being *inexorable*.

(17; Vol. 8, 1971, p36)

THE NEED FOR A CATALOGUE

As time advanced more books were published. Further, while the scholars were mortals, the books were immortals. Therefore, very soon the number of books in a library became considerably large – too large for a scholar to find his book without the aid of a catalogue.

(17; Vol. 3, 1966, p5)

When the Spiral of Scientific Method is established and normative principles have been enunciated to guide the framing of a catalogue code, it is necessary to draw the line at the right place between a conservative regard for the existing – time honoured traditional rules on the one hand, and a need to move forward by making the necessary changes in the rules in order to attain a desirable simplicity and consistency and also a better help to readers in the use of the catalogue.

(17; Vol. 6, 1969, p304)

It should be remembered that a library and its catalogue are long-living. Their expectation of life is not as short as that of readers. Further, what has good recall value to the latter class of readers will also have equally good recall value to the former class of readers; but not vice versa.

(17; Vol. 6, 1969, p306)



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