

5/22/29

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It was recommended that the sum of \$12,000 be contributed to the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, to assist the Library to complete the printing of its great Catalogue Generale.

BIBLIOTHÈQUE  
NATIONALE -  
CATALOGUE

1. In many respects the Catalogue Generale, when completed, will be the most important of all similar aids to scholars and to library administration, and its speedy completion is a matter of first importance to the world of letters. It had advanced as far as the letter "L", in ninety volumes, when interrupted by the War, and ninety-six volumes remain to be published. Publication is in progress in spite of the straitened budget of the Library, but at a rate which would not see the work finished before the end of the present century.
2. The Conference of Eastern College Librarians initiated in 1928 conversations between its representative, Dr. C.C. Williamson, and the Director of the Bibliothèque Nationale, M. Roland Marcel, looking to the expedition of the publication of the remaining volumes. These discussions brought to light the following facts:
  - a) The Bibliothèque Nationale has the technical facilities for the production of eight volumes a year, and feels that it cannot exceed this rate without jeopardizing the mechanical perfection of the publication.
  - b) The cost per year was estimated at \$9,600, or a total of \$115,200 for the twelve years required for the finished Catalogue.
  - c) The publication could be financed by the Library at the proposed rate of eight volumes a year provided: (1) that complete sets of the ninety volumes already published could be sold in the United States and in England in a sufficient quantity, together with subscriptions for the remaining ninety-six volumes; and (2) that by voluntary agreement the old and the new subscribers should accept a price of \$10 a volume for subsequent issues instead of the pre-war price of Fr. 175.
3. These facts having been ascertained, an active canvass of American libraries was accordingly instituted by the Conference of Eastern College Librarians for the sale of the existing forty-five sets of the first ninety volumes and for subscriptions at the advanced price to the remaining ninety-six volumes. Sufficient orders were received to cover fully the estimated cost of the publication, all the existing sets having been bought

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and subscriptions having been received from over one hundred libraries for the volumes remaining to be issued. Some libraries which had previously enjoyed the privilege of receiving the Catalogue Generale without cost from the Bibliothèque Nationale waived this privilege for future volumes and placed their orders at the advanced price. The principal book dealers also have agreed to forego their commissions on the Catalogue so that the Bibliothèque Nationale may receive the full amount of the American subscriptions.

4. Recently, when it was hoped that the plan would go into immediate effect, word was received from M. Roland Marcel stating that the undertaking will require \$10,600 a year for twelve years rather than \$9,600, recent experience having shown that the recruiting and training of new collaborators involves a somewhat larger expense than was at first calculated. The accuracy and the speed of the work can best be secured in the circumstances by calling upon the present highly trained technical staff for supplementary work, especially in the expert and exacting task of reading the final proofs. This supplementary work will cost Fr. 25,000 a year, making an annual increase of \$1,000 over the original estimate.
5. The Conference of Eastern College Librarians regards the new estimates as very moderate and reasonable, but at the same time finds itself at an impasse inasmuch as the price per volume cannot now be revised for libraries which have already subscribed at the rate of \$10, and as there is no possibility of securing one hundred additional subscriptions, or indeed any considerable number, from among the non-subscribing American libraries, which are usually small and cramped for means.
6. The Conference of Eastern College Libraries has, therefore, requested the Foundation to come to its assistance in this emergency by making the proposed subvention to the Bibliothèque Nationale of \$1,000 a year for twelve years.

Whereupon it was, on motion,

RESOLVED that the sum of Twelve thousand dollars (\$12,000) be, and it  
RF 29089 is hereby, appropriated to the SOCIETE DES AMIS DE LA  
BIBLIOTHEQUE NATIONALE, PARIS, towards the EXPENSES OF  
PRINTING THE CATALOGUE GENERALE, payment to be made in twelve  
annual instalments of \$1,000 each.

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