

Five laws of library science

THE SECOND LAW

Dr. S. R. RANGANATHAN



THE SECOND LAW AND ITS STRUGGLE

In the last Chapter, we traced the slow emergence of the First Law and examined, in a brief manner, its effect on the method of keeping books, on library location, on library hours, on library furniture and on library staff. The changes brought about by the First Law in all these matters were of a fundamental character. If the final effect of the First Law should be described in one word, that word is revolution. Once the outlook was revolutionised, other things followed in course of time.

The Second Law of Library Science comes on the heels of the First Law to carry this revolution a step further. If the First Law replaced the concept 'BOOKS ARE FOR PRESERVATION', the Second Law widens the concept 'BOOKS FOR THE CHOSEN FEW'. If the revolutionary cry of the First Law was 'BOOKS ARE FOR USE', the revolutionary cry of the Second Law is 'BOOKS ARE FOR ALL'. If the approach of the First Law was from the side of books, the approach of the Second Law is from the side of users of books. If the

First Law vitalised the library, the Second Law magnifies the library into a nation-wide problem. If the First Law threw open the existing libraries, the Second Law plants new libraries and brings about the culture of new species of libraries. If there was reluctance to act up to the First Law, there is, in the initial stages, positive opposition to the Second Law. Thus, the revolution brought about by the Second Law is of a more advanced nature and brings humanity nearer the goal.

EVERY PERSON HIS OR HER BOOK !
What a volume of ideas rests in a potential state in these six words of but seven syllables! How exacting will be the task of carrying out these ideas! What a variety of vested interests is arrayed in opposition against any attempt to put these ideas into force! These are points that require careful examination in a study of the Second Law.

It may be convenient to start from the very beginning. What are libraries? Libraries are collections of books built for a special purpose. What is that purpose? 'USE' is the answer supplied by the First Law. What is the use of books? Books give information; they educate. They may also give solace and furnish a harmless means of recreation. Let us first concentrate on their educational value. If books are tools of education, the law 'EVERY PERSON HIS OR HER BOOK' presupposes the concept 'EDUCATION FOR EVERY PERSON'. This lays bare the fundamental issue. The history of the answer to the question, "Is every person entitled to education?" will show how the Second Law too has been in actual practice seldom borne in mind by library authorities.

The Classes and the Masses

It is customary to begin all academic history from Aristotle. What is Aristotle's answer to this fundamental question? "It is the intention of nature to make bodies of slaves and freemen different from each other. . . And since this is true with respect to the body, it is still more

just to determine in the same manner, when we consider the soul.” These plausible premises led Aristotle to the characteristic conclusion that “a slave can have no deliberative faculty”. The result of this rigorous reasoning was that “while Athens and Sparta offered education to freemen, nine-tenths of the population were excluded from the privilege of learning. In translating this in terms of books, we find that BOOKS FOR THE CHOSEN FEW was the ruling concept and that the Second Law had no recognition. Even in Rome, which heralded the establishment of municipal and state schools, the privilege of learning rarely crossed the occupational and income lines. The narrowness of the Middle Ages is described by Margaret Hodgen in the following words, “The spirit of exclusion which the landowning classes asserted towards ambitious villeins bound for the church; the church toward laymen seeking intellectual independence; the merchants towards outsiders looking to enjoy profits of commercial enterprises, was in turn asserted by all toward the educational aspirations of the poor.” We are even told that “vassal fathers were punished for allowing vassal sons to attend school.”

The spirit of exclusion persisted for centuries. Here is a specimen of eighteenth century opinion. To make the Society happy and People easy under the meanest circumstances, it is requisite that great numbers of them should be Ignorant as well as Poor. . . . The Welfare and Felicity therefore of every State and Kingdom, require that the knowledge of the Working Poor should be confined within the Verge of their occupations and never extended (as to things visible) beyond what relates to their Calling. The more a Shepherd, a Plowman or any other Peasant knows of the World, and the things that are Foreign to his Labour or Employment, the less fit he'll be to go through the Fatigues and Hardships of it with Cheerfulness and Content. Beading, Writing and Arithmetic . . . are very pernicious to the Poor, who are forced to get their Daily Bread by their Daily Labour.” What a benevolent dispensation! What a show of ineffectiveness in this eighteenth century reasoning! With such ideas running rampant, one can easily imagine how effectively the concept ‘BOOKS FOR THE CHOSEN FEW’ would have thwarted the emergence of the rival concept ‘BOOKS FOR ONE AND ALL’.

Even the nineteenth century was for long under the spell of this concept of a bipartite division of persons into a small governing class consisting of those who, almost as it were by divine right, occupied the privileged position and the large class of the others who, as it was supposed, by the essential constitution of things belonged to the lower orders, had no right to education and hence had no right to the instruments of education, viz., books. The well-to-do and influential classes—the freemen of the nineteenth century—resisted outright on grounds of sheer self-interest even the bare suggestion that the poor should be given the rudiments of education. The story is told of the Marquis of Westminster refusing to give even a farthing for the London Mechanics’ Institute because of his apprehension that the education of the workmen would make them rebel. “True,” he said, “but we must take care of ourselves”. The struggle that books had in reaching every person is amply illustrated by the experience recorded by Francis Place, a Charing Cross tailor of the early years of the last century. He “had to be more and more careful that none of his ordinary customers should be allowed to go into the library at the back of the shop” “Had these persons been told that I had never read a book, that I was ignorant of everything but my own business, that I sotted in a public house, they would not have made the least objection to me. I should have been a ‘fellow’ beneath them, and they would have patronised me; but . . . to accumulate books, and to be supposed to know something of their contents, was putting myself on an equality with themselves, if not indeed assuming superiority; it was an abominable offence in a tailor, if not a crime, which deserved punishment. Had it been known to all my customers that in the few years from 1810-1817, I had accumulated a considerable library, in which I spent all the leisure time I could spare, . . . half of them at least would have left me”. We find Green complaining even late in the nineteenth century that “It is one of the inconveniences attaching to the present state of Society in England, that all questions of education are complicated by distinctions of classes”. Even so late as 1918, the Hansard discloses that the Education Bill of Mr. H.

A. L. Fisher was opposed on the ground that, if the workmen are to be given such a long and elaborate course of education, “How are the horses to be kept at work, the cows to be milked, the sheep to be tended and the folds to be pitched? How is education going to help a man who has to spread manure on a field”. A veritable incarnation of Barnard de Mandeville!

That the political instinct of those in privileged positions was vehemently opposing the advent of the Second Law of Library Science is pointed out in unmistakable words by all students of Politics. Viscount Bryce says, for example, “That all the despotic governments of sixty years ago, and some of them down to our own day, were either indifferent or hostile to the spread of education among their subjects, because they feared that knowledge and intelligence would create a wish for freedom”.

The arguments of those that opposed the Ewart Bill—the first Public Library Bill of England—were “that too much knowledge was a dangerous thing and that libraries might become centres of political education”. In his Presidential Address to the Leeds Conference, Dr. Guppy remarked, “It is somewhat perplexing to find that in the middle decades of the last century, many of the most eminent men were debating, with all seriousness, not what was best in literature to put before the people, but whether it would be safe, and wise, and politic to admit the general public to libraries at all. So far from readers being considered competent to handle and examine books, it was a question whether the rough uncultured democracy should be permitted, even with most stringent precautions and regulations to invade the sacred precincts of the Library”. When a library school was inaugurated at Moscow in 1913, the following question was asked in the National Duma by the leader of the extreme right: “How can the government tolerate library courses, which would pave the way for a revolution “

Thus the Second Law had to face not merely an inherited instinct as was the case with the First Law but it had to face a very strong opposition based on political and economic instincts. However misleading these instincts might have been, there is hardly any ground to doubt their bona fide nature. In fact, as it may

be easily seen, they were mere derivatives of a more fundamental instinct, viz, the instinct of self-preservation. But, society had not been lacking in far-seeing souls that could perceive the mistaken nature of such opposition. There were indeed men who would draw just the opposite inference from that very instinct of self-preservation.

The location of factories near sources of power caused a redistribution of population and the towns were inundated with a flood of people unaccustomed to civic responsibilities. The crowding together of tens of thousands of the illiterate poor was creating a host of unspeakable nuisance. For a time the black-coated gentry were able to maintain a safe distance from centres of dirt, disease and petty criminality. But they could not remain aloof for ever. Poverty rudely encroached in course of time. It brought disease and unsavoury sights to the doors of the vicarage and the manor. In their eagerness to defend themselves the gentle folk hurried to their most trusted advisers. The first of these, the economists, recommended a judicious dose of education. Adam Smith, for example, recommended that “The public can impose upon almost the whole body of the people the necessity of acquiring the most essential parts of education, by obliging every man to undergo an examination or probation in them, before he can obtain the freedom in any corporation, or be allowed to set up any trade either in a village or town Corporate”. He took advantage of this predicament of the well-to-do and even pleaded as follows: “The education of the Common people requires, perhaps, in a civilised and commercial society, the attention of the public, more than that of people of some rank and fortune . . . The public can facilitate this acquisition by establishing in every parish or district a little school, where children may be taught . . . Though the state was to derive no advantage from the instruction of the inferior ranks of people, it would still deserve its attention that they should not be altogether uninstructed. The state, however, derives no inconsiderable advantage from their instruction. The more they are instructed, the less liable they are to the delusions of enthusiasm and superstition, which, among ignorant nations, frequently occasion the most dreadful disorders. An instructed and intelligent people, besides, are always more decent

and orderly than an ignorant and stupid one. They feel themselves each individually, more respectable and more likely to obtain the respect of their superiors, and they are, therefore, more disposed to respect their superiors. They are more disposed to examine and more capable of seeing through, the interested complaints of faction and sedition; and they are, on that account, less apt to be misled into any wanton or unnecessary opposition to the measures of Government”.

Although, generally speaking, the words of Adam Smith fell upon deaf ears, there were some who could appreciate the soundness of his reasoning. In fact, it induced Mr. Whitbread to introduce a Bill in Parliament in 1807 for universal education, though, it goes without saying, it was rejected by an overwhelming majority. In spite of the ridicule of die-hards, the “Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge” did much to spread education among the masses, under the inspiring leadership of Lord Brougham, The Penny Cyclopaedia, the Penny Magazine, the Gallery of Portraits and the Pictorial Bible are the surviving monuments of the missionary zeal which championed the cause of ‘BOOKS FOR ALLS in the thirties of the last century. While the majority of the magnates and officials of the early Victorian era desired that the young peasant should till the same fields, with the same tools in the same seasons as his father before him, enlightened souls like Matthew Arnold were impatient with the tardy recognition shown to the newly emerging concept ‘EDUCATION FOR ALL’. As Her Majesty’s Inspector of Schools, he lamented, in 1853, that “The children of the lowest, poorest classes of the country, of what are called the masses, are not, to speak generally, educated; the children who are educated belong to a different class from these, and consequently of the education of the masses, I, in the course of my official duty, see, strictly speaking, little or nothing”. The first twenty pages of Graham Balfour’s Educational Systems of Great Britain and Ireland give a brief but vivid picture of the ingenuity and tenacity with which a handful of far-seeing patriotic statesmen secured the educational enactments of 1870, 1880 and 1891, which successively made ‘EDUCATION FOR ALL’ first permissive, then compulsory and final-

ly free. Once ‘EDUCATION FOR ALL’ had been established, it required but a decade or two for our Second Law ‘BOOKS FOR ALL’, to enter the field and quietly bring about the realisation of Huxley’s dream, of ‘a ladder of learning’ from the gutter to the Universities.

How literally the Second Law has realised this dream of Huxley may be seen from the account given in Adult Education and the Library, about the progress of a fisher-boy along the paths of learning. He was born in Norway. In his fourteenth year, he was withdrawn from the school. His father said, “You are not worth educating” and the lad was sent to the eternal task of fishing in the desolate coast of the North of Norway. But the Norwegian Government maintained at this outpost of the world a good library, though small, and had its books periodically changed and replenished. By burying his head and heart in its books, this lad, pronounced to be not worth educating educated himself more than he himself realised. He, then, went to the New World, began his Preparatory School in his twenty-third year, took his degree in his twenty-eighth year and settled down as a professor in his own college. This career of Professor Rolvaag of St. Olaf’s College is by no means unique. We, in Madras, remember the story of the marvellous achievement of books, read in the light of street lamps, in raising a boy born in obscurity to the bench of the High Court. This sway of the Second Law has resulted in reclaiming for the benefit of the world many such promising men from the very depths of society. A generation or two ago, her rival, ‘BOOKS FOR THE CHOSEN FEW would have sworn by their prenatal social status and forced them to drag on and die, without ever reaching their full stature.

“Here is a woman who earns her own living as a chef in a hotel . . . She noticed one day, that her eldest daughter frowned impatiently when the mother made a mistake in grammar. The mother decided that she would not lose one bit of her daughter’s respect on that account. She asked the readers’ adviser to recommend books which would help her to avoid the most common errors of grammar and pronunciation. She wanted a progressive course on good English suited to her special needs. Later she asked for books which would keep

her informed on present-day happenings and so on and so on”.

There is again the case of a policeman who asked for books which would help him to discover why crimes are committed. “What’s the use of arresting people if you can’t help them?” he asked. He devoured books in Sociology and Psychology. If he had lived before the advent of the Law ‘EVERY PERSON HIS OR HER BOOK’, what chance would he have had either to study books in Sociology and Psychology or to discharge his official duties in a manner, not only satisfactory to his conscience but also beneficial to society. How useful and popular our police will become if they are made to read like their New World contemporary books in Sociology and Psychology in addition to the sections of the Police Manual!

The prophetic nature of the words of Adam Smith has been demonstrated to the very letter by the services rendered by the Second Law of Library Science to the public of the city of Grand Rapids in the State of Michigan. The water-supply of the city could not keep up with the growth of the city, . . . As a result a large part of the citizens depended on wells for much of their drinking water, because they would not drink the unfiltered river water. The typhoid-fever rate was very high— several hundred cases a year—with a correspondingly high death rate . . . The city Government and the business interests of the city finally secured the appointment of a Special Commission of high-grade business and professional men to study the whole situation and to report a plan to be submitted to a vote of the citizens. After long and careful study they recommended the adoption of the plan to take the water from the river and to filter it by the rapid sand or mechanical filtration process . . . Eight or ten days before the election, full or half-page newspaper broadsides were distributed to every house in the city claiming that filtration was a failure, by publishing facsimile reproductions from newspapers and technical magazines, etc., of items with reference to typhoid fever in certain cities, and then followed by the statement that the said cities had filtered water. In short, the whole purpose of these broadsides was to discredit the report of the Special Commission in order to have it defeated. New broadsides appeared about every other day and were always distributed to every house in the city.

They came out over the name of “a young unemployed Engineer”. The library immediately checked up a number of the reference to other cities in the annual reports and municipal documents in its collection . . . on the trail of the young engineer’s published broadsides and made the knowledge it found available to the newspapers, with the librarian signing the published statements of the facts the library found. Here is a sample of what we found. Reading, Pennsylvania and Albany, New York, both had filtered water supplies serving other parts. The typhoid epidemics were in the sections of those cities served by the unfiltered supplies. The broadside advertisements were correct in stating that Reading and Albany both had typhoid epidemics and both had filtered water, but, nevertheless, these statements were both damnable lies in the impressions they conveyed. Thus, “the library was the first . . . to rally the forces to save the day for pure water. Pure water won at the polls and Grand Rapids, except for sporadic cases brought in from outside, has as a result eliminated typhoid fever from the city . . . I have always believed that the library would have been derelict in its duty had it failed to give to the public the knowledge it had on such a vital matter”.

Instances of this nature can be multiplied ad nauseam. But as it is not our purpose to record here the achievements of ‘BOOKS FOR ALL suffice it to say that, to-day, the Second Law of Library Science has triumphantly planted its democratic flag in many a land having blown to pieces the black-coated barrier of exclusiveness and snobbery. During the last century, Europe and America, Japan and Russia, were as impervious to its appeals and as impregnable to its attacks as India was. But, to-day, Europe and America, Japan and Russia have capitulated to it, while India is still defiantly holding her own. Who is responsible for this strange phenomenon? Who has been helping India to stick to her guns in this battle against ‘BOOKS FOR ALL’, while she has been establishing a world record in losing battles in other spheres?

Whatever might be the complex of contributory causes, her “English-educated” sons cannot escape their share of the blame. Macaulay and Wood imported English education

into India with the best of motives. They evolved their famous 'filtration theory' with the highest of hopes. They could not have reasonably foreseen that the filter would develop human jealousy and selfish exclusiveness. Certainly, they never, for a moment, dreamt that the filter will work in the contrary way and get itself coated with another super-filter that will grant a place in the sun only to those English-educated Indians, who could get their English-education on English soil. Yes. This tragic triumph of India in her fight against the intrusion of the Second Law of Library Science, nay, even of its precursor 'EDUCATION FOR ALL', is not a little due to the almost criminal apathy and neglect of duty on the part of her better placed "English-educated" sons. They have developed an abnormal short-sight which disables them from seeing beyond their nose, at any rate beyond their privileged circle. They glibly speak of India, and her millions, when they mean only the two per cent, of her millions who can lisp in English. Remind them how you will that Macaulay intended that they should, actively and ungrudgingly, spread their knowledge among the masses. No, they will rather prefer to take their lesson from Bernard de Mandeville. Honourable exceptions there are and all honour to them. But the majority act as an impervious clog in the filter.

Our only hope lies in the supreme resourcefulness of the Second Law. History has shown that it is an adept in the art of strategy. If Macaulay's filter has proved a snare, ere long it will divert its course and keep clear of this clog in the 'filter'. The Second Law will not take a defeat. It must win ultimately. With the world opinion backing it, it may win even at no distant date. If they are shrewd business men, the English-educated' Indians should greet it with an olive branch and volunteer their services in its holy war on lingering ignorance. Then only, they will gain any respect in the eyes of the world and then only can they survive amidst the forces that will be set free on the day the Second Law plants its flag on Indian soil and puts the BOOKS in the hands of ALL, even as it has done on their soils.

The Men and the Women

The antithesis has not been merely be-

tween the classes and the masses. As we trace the prejudices of ages in the light of the Second Law of Library Science, we come across several others. It is not merely the income line that has, for long, divided humanity into those that are entitled to the use of books and those that are not. Sex, for example, was another factor that restricted the enforcement of the Law, 'BOOKS FOR ALL'. In our own country, the Second Law has not yet fully succeeded in overcoming such sex disabilities.

No doubt, the conditions have begun to change. Signs of the onslaught of the Second Law are not wanting. The surging wave of 'BOOKS FOR ALL' may, ere long, wash away even the hardened bank of the feminine conservatism of the Indian Home. But that should not close one's eyes to the tenacious fight that is being fought to-day, in several homes against the encroachment of the pernicious habit' of reading among ladies. Nor should one delude oneself with the fond, but blinding boast that our country had, in days past, kept the road wide open for her women to emulate the stronger sex in the pursuit of learning. It does not help us now to be told that women could and did read as well as men from the Vedic days onwards down to the day when an alien tongue drove a cultural wedge into the till-then homogeneous home. It is only half the truth to say that the use of a foreign medium for current thought has sequestered Indian women from the world current that has enabled her sisters in many a clime to keep abreast of their brethren. The glorious record of women like Maitreyi, Panchali, Lola-vati and Auvaia and the still-surviving memory of the learned ladies that formed the fitting life-companions of the intellectual giants of places like Tiruvisalur, should not blind us to our present plight, when for every Maitreyi we have thousands of Katyayinis, when the bulk of our sisters are straggling a century behind, unlettered, untutored, and unprovided with books. But, if it can be a source of consolation and encouragement, it may be mentioned that the concepts 'EDUCATION FOR ALL' and '<BOOKS FOR ALL' definitely crossed the sex-barrier only within the last half-century or so in most of the countries.

From the days of the primitive man, the majority of women have generally occupied a sheltered place and have not had, therefore, a higher

cultural or professional training such as would enable them to deal with large affairs. In earliest as well as recent civilisations, the limits to which feminine accomplishments might extend have generally been definitely fixed by custom and those who dared to exceed them have run the risk of being thought unwomanly'. In Athens, it seems, it was an accepted dogma that no respectable girl should be educated. The Athenian wife for example, "lived a virtual prisoner within four walls . . . They could not in their own persons inherit property, but were regarded as an appanage of the estate . . . Their education was trivial". The social ostracism practised to prevent ladies from getting their share of education and books is indicated by the following statement about the education of women in Greece: "Literary education and intellectual pursuits belonged to those who were without the home circle, the *hetærae*". In the writings of St. Paul there appeared similar restrictions which seemed to set women off as an inferior, dependent class. After referring to the sixteenth verse of the third chapter of Genesis regarding the status of women, he wrote, "And if they will learn anything, let them ask their husbands at home".

For a long time it was even commonly believed that women were not capable of education. Here is Chesterfield writing to his son "Women, then, are only children of a larger growth; they have an entertaining tattle, and sometimes wit; but for solid reasoning, good sense, I never in my life knew one that had it, . . . A man of sense . . . neither consults them about, nor trusts them with, serious matters". Again Rousseau says of women that she is 'an imperfect man', that in many respects she is only 'a grown-up child'. He adds, "The search for abstract and speculative truths, principles, and scientific axioms, whatever tends to generalise ideas, does not fall within the compass of women; . . . as to works of genius, they are out of their reach, nor have they sufficient accuracy and attention to succeed in the exact sciences, Rousseau would willingly repeat Moliere's words:—

It is not seemly, and for many reasons,
That a woman should study and know

so many things.

Rousseau's conception of the capacity of women is only what was too common in France and other countries in the eighteenth century.

The nineteenth century tried to excel the eighteenth by inventing anatomical explanations for the woman's incapacity to benefit by books and learning. Here is a piece of serious scientific demonstration which dates from 1866.—"A man has will and understanding, and a cerebellum and a cerebrum by which they act; and so has a woman. In this they are alike. But in man the understanding predominates, and in woman the will; and here they are different. If this be so, we may, of course, expect to find a larger development of the cerebrum, or upper brain, in man, and a larger development of the cerebellum, or lower brain, in woman; and this is so. A man's head is higher, and fuller in front, than a woman's; while a woman's head is broader and larger behind than a man's." Another contemporary of this anatomical psychologist cannot see any virtue in wasting such elaborate reasoning to establish such an obvious thing. "The great argument", he would say, "against the existence of this equality of intellect in women is, that it does not exist. If that proof does not satisfy a female philosopher, we have no better to give".

If girls' schools existed, "they aimed at 'breeding', deportment and the accomplishments, not at learning". In his *Essay on Projects*, Daniel Defoe gives a pathetic description of the customary education of girls in the following words: "One would wonder indeed how it should happen that women are conversible at all, since they are only beholding to natural parts for all their knowledge. Their youth is spent to teach them to stitch and sew or make bawbles; they are taught to read indeed and perhaps to write their names or so; and that is the height of a woman's education ". If «any lady acquired learning, the attitude towards such learned ladies was one of contempt and ridicule. We have it recorded that Dr. Johnson once laid down the dictum that "man is, in general, better pleased when he has a good dinner on his table, than when his wife talks Greek". His contemptuous parallelism between a woman preaching and a dog wa-

lking on his hind legs is also well known. We have the story of an American bachelor who explained his single state saying,

“One did command to me a wife both fair and young

That had French, Spanish and Italian tongue. I thanked him kindly and told him I loved none such, For I thought one tongue for a wife too much.

What! love ye not the learned! Yes, as my life, A learned scholar, but not a learned wife.”

The effects of such disparagement of women's powers, the lack of incentives to learning and the ridicule, that was offered to the few who would learn, had a disastrous effect in shaping the opinion of the women themselves with regard to their right to education and books. They would fain continue for ever on the established folkways of traditional ideas. Many an Indian of to-day may hear within the walls of his home an unmistakable echo of the emphatic words “Book larnin’ don’t do no good to a woman” uttered by an American lady about a couple of generations ago. Indeed the obstinate feminine conservatism which keeps the Second Law at bay and wallows with self-complacency in a book-less, education-less state reminds one of the victims of Comus, who are changed

Into some brutish form of wolf, or bear,
Or ounce or tiger, hog, or bearded goat.

And they, so perfect in their misery, Not once perceive their foul disfigurement, But boast themselves more comely than before.”

However dogged custom has been, during the slow passage of many centuries, to keep EDUCATION and its companion the Second Law of Library Science on one side of the sex-line, it is certain that in this age of social unrest, when practically every custom and institution of every society is exposed to the unsparing scrutiny of critical minds, women and women's right to education and books have been thrust into the forefront of discussion. The whole vexed question of the woman's ‘sphere’ and of her education viewed in the light of that sphere’ has engaged the minds of men for more than a generation and is, at present, nearly settled in the only right manner admissible. It is now admitted that even University education is desirable for at least a great number of women. That education will unfit woman to be wife and mo-

ther, that the physical strain will be too great, or that she is intellectually incapable of mastering higher branches of learning, were serious arguments a generation or two ago and unquestionably acted as impediments, but are now only slumbering memories in the social mind of a busy world and come to the centre of consciousness only in some sequestered nooks, still undisturbed by the effects of the Great War. The antediluvian view, which would utterly restrict the woman, making her at best a tolerably intelligent and obedient slave, is already vanishing. The worst view that may now be tolerated is that which would give her a measure of freedom by taking a half-step forward towards her education, arguing that, by this cultivated-mother influence, the life of society may be improved at the very fountain-head. But the most radical view, that is fast gaining ground, would propose absolute equality of opportunity in education and in political, social and economic life, maintaining that a woman need not, unless she herself so desires, pay her obligation to society, biologically, any more than man, but should be equipped so as to be equally free to choose a literary, scientific or industrial career.

So far we have seen only the first phase of the war on the sex barrier. The Second Law of Library Science had no part in this phase of the war. It was all left to its precursor < EDUCATION FOR ALL. But the campaign against sex-distinctions involved more battles than that against class distinctions. Even after the sex-barrier was broken through by its companion, the Second Law was not able to march in freely. For, until the latest radical view began to appear on the scene, people argued “Yes. Education is necessary for a woman and she is capable of it. But woman's education to prepare her for her allotted sphere—the home—can be obtained through apprenticeship to her mother, in the home. There is no need for any formal schooling or book-learning, which would lead her away from the hearth”.

The little learning I have gained Is all from simple nature drained, was a correct description of the state of affairs in the latter half of the last century, a state which was not favourable for the success of ‘BOOKS FOE WOMEN’.

Fortunately, however, even before the radical

view asserted itself and blew up the sex-barrier, it came to be realised that such a natural process of education is not practicable in the crowded life of to-day, that formal education and book-learning are necessary even for cooking, nursing, and the care of children. The increasing incapacity of the home to hold the monopoly of the education of its daughters and the changing conception of education did much to prepare the public mind to receive the gospel 'EVERY WOMAN TOO HER BOOK'. Even assuming that the sphere of the woman was the home, it came to be realised that home-making is at once an art and a science. It is a progressive art and a developing science. It has a serious organic contact with the Fine Arts on the one side and the severest sciences on the other. It would include, for example, care of children, nursing, first aid, foods and nutrition, of course, cooking, marketing, laundering, millinery, sewing, budget-making and thrift, kitchen-gardening and horticulture, home hygiene, home sanitation, home decoration, the making of simple repairs, home courtesies and obligations of family and family life. While such is the complex of elements involved in the profession of home-making, women ought to be constantly trained for these duties a man is trained for his trades and professions.

There is much in the plea, "When the other sex are to be instructed in law, medicine or divinity, they are favoured with numerous institutions richly endowed, with teachers of the highest talents and acquirements and with expensive libraries . . . Woman's profession embraces the care and nursing of the body in the critical periods of infancy and sickness, the training of the human mind in the most impressible period, childhood, the instruction and control of servants, and most of the government and economics of the family estate. These duties of women are as sacred and important as any ordained to man; and yet no such advantages for preparation have been accorded to her". While such a reproach was justifiable till about three or four decades ago, every effort is now being made in all forward countries to have that reproach removed by a proper orientation of the initial education at school and by a profuse supply of books for that education to be continu-

ed to the end of one's life. 'EVERY WOMAN HER BOOK' is the guiding motto of the libraries of to-day. They now take care to see that their books reach behind the purdah. They endeavour, for example, "to get all mothers, whose names appear in the official records of birth when a new baby comes into the home, into contact with the Library's book-service on the care of children" Such a discriminating distribution of books in restricted fields of knowledge marks the second stage.

It is however in the third phase of the war that the sex-barrier was completely overthrown in the march of the concept 'BOOKS FOR ALL'. This phase is taking shape only in the present century. It began with a critical investigation into the inherited tradition about the 'woman's sphere' and about the 'woman's inferiority' in matters intellectual. The first to lay the axe to the root of the pseudo-scientific opinion of the nineteenth century was Karl Pearson. In his paper of 1897 entitled "Variation in man and woman", he clearly demonstrated that there was, in fact, no indication of greater male variability, when actual anatomical measurements of actual human beings are treated with mathematical insight. After a rigorous statistical examination of varied anatomical data, he concluded his long paper in his characteristic carping manner with the words "I . . . assert that the present results show that the greater variability often claimed for men remains as yet a quite unproven principle . . . The "sequacity" exhibited by the multitude of semi-scientific writers on evolution is possibly a sign of the very small capacity for intellectual variation possessed by the literary male". The evidence collected by Karl Pearson was extended and corroborated by the further statistical data published by Montague and Hollingworth in the American Journal of Sociology in October, 1914.

This anatomical investigation was followed by the psychological demonstration of the absolute absence of sex difference in mental variability by the elaborate mental tests carried out by Trabue, Courtis, Terman and Pyle. Again, there was the time-honoured traditional opinion that the functional periodicity has an unfavourable effect on woman's mental capacity.

Havelock Ellis, for example, makes the sweeping remark that the monthly physiological cycle “influences throughout the month the whole of a woman’s physical and psychic organism”. Dr. Hollingworth’s experimental investigation of 1914 into this allegation disclosed, on the contrary, that the data, gathered by her, undermined rather than supported such opinions.

After experimental psychology thus established that the division of labour between the sexes, which had existed throughout historic times, was not the result of psychological differences at all, and that women are as competent intellectually as men to undertake any and all human vocations, it came to be realised that “the education of women, especially in the higher stages, will make available to the country a wealth of capacity that is, now, largely wasted through lack of opportunity and it even came to be argued that an educated woman, a woman when given ‘HER BOOKS’ “is a

far better and surer guarantee of the education of the coming generation than a literate man”. Then came the opportunity for the Second Law to break through the sex-barrier and triumphantly proclaim, “Education should develop women’s tastes and aptitudes precisely as men’s. The rights of women to choose their books should be precisely the same as those of men. The books that I distribute should be different, not on the ground that the one is a man and the other a woman; but, they should be different only on the ground that each is an individual”.

Thus, the Second Law of Library Science is now no longer satisfied with offering to women books on Home-making or with books of orthodox devotion; on the other hand it insists that all books have a perfect right to enter any home for the benefit of all the members of the home irrespective of sex.