

the early industries of Wigan to which we have just referred without finding the attention arrested by some point of interest such as that "many families [in the end of last century] have a cannell pit in their back-yard ; and when they are in want of coals, they send down a collier who will dig as many in a few hours as will serve the family many months—the pit is then shut up." What a primitive picture as compared with mining at the present day ! The philologist will be interested in the accounts for "wages and other necessities for the Coal Pitte" taken from a document dated 1600. Mr. Betley's article on Coal Mining and Mr. Percy's on Iron, Steel, Engineering, &c., are equally worthy of attention, but appeal more to the specialist than to the general reader.

## Correspondence.

### "CHIEF" LIBRARIANS.

*To the Editor of THE LIBRARY.*

SIR,—Will you or any of your readers kindly enlighten me as to the difference in the signification of the designations "Librarian," "Chief Librarian," "Principal Librarian," and as to which is the proper designation for the head of a free public library, the subordinate members of which are designated "Sub-Librarian," "Assistant Librarian," &c. ? "Chief Librarian" would seem to argue the existence of at least one under him described as "Librarian," from whom he is distinguished by the prefix. But among the institutions using the designation "Chief Librarian," I have failed to find one that recognised also a "Librarian" under him.

### "EXCHANGES."

While in this enquiring mood, I would also like to ask for the opinion of my fellow librarians on another matter which sometimes disturbs my peace of mind. Is it necessary or even desirable to send immediate acknowledgment of the receipt of annual reports sent by other libraries ? My plan is to send no such acknowledgment, deeming it a sufficient recognition of the courtesy to send a copy of my own annual report in return, and to mention in it the names of the libraries to which I have been indebted. This is strictly in accordance with the spirit of an "exchange," and is, I believe, also in accordance with the usual practice among other institutions. It would be well, however, to arrive at a common understanding on the subject. Personally I would deprecate any call for immediate acknowledgment, which would have no other substantial effect than to lay an additional burden of expense and trouble on institutions which are already sufficiently burdened—some will say overburdened.

In these remarks I refer only to reports which are regularly published, and are therefore fit subjects of exchange. Catalogues or other extraordinary publications should certainly be specially acknowledged.

Yours faithfully,

A. W. ROBERTSON,

*Librarian of the Public Library, Aberdeen.*

### TALFOURD'S "ION."

DEAR SIR,—Mr. Ditchfield in his article on "The Literature and Writers of Reading," in the last number of *The Library*, calls this work "an English version of the *Ion* of Euripides." This is, however, a great mistake, for beyond the simple fact that in both plays the principal character is a youth named "Ion" (a foundling, in the one, discovered at last to be the son of Apollo by Creusa, daughter of Erechtheus, King of

Athens, whereas in the other he turns out to be the son of Adrastus, King of Argos), the two have absolutely no resemblance or connection whatever. "Ion," with a totally different history in the two plays, is the only *dramatis persona* common to both. The scene of the *Ion* of Euripides is laid at Delphi; that of Talfourd's at Argos; and the whole plot of the one is from beginning to end entirely independent of that of the other. In short, with the exception of the coincidence above mentioned, the *Ion* of Talfourd has no more to do with the *Ion* of Euripides than Shakespeare's *Julius Cæsar* or *Hamlet*. F. N.

#### LIBRARY BUREAU

SIR,—Like "Student," I have been surprised that the suggestion to form a Library Bureau has not met with more response, or even adequate notice. Perhaps as suggested by Mr. Ogle there may be an impression abroad that only London librarians would benefit thereby. Curiously enough, the exact opposite impression was conveyed to my mind, and whilst fully realizing the inestimable value such a scheme might be to librarians at large, if properly carried out, I forbore to send in my name as an adherent, thinking that it was for others more interested to speak first.

With respect to the preparation of uniform title slips of all new books, great assistance could be rendered to librarians by the publishers if only they could be induced to follow the lead set by the Smithsonian Institution. That enterprising establishment now places in front of each work it issues a leaf bearing ready printed to a uniform size all the necessary title slips, including main and cross references, both by author and subject entry, so that all the numerous librarians of the American Public Libraries have to do on receipt of the volume is to cut them out and insert them in their places in his catalogue.

The cost of printing these with the volume must be trifling indeed, whilst the labour and time saved to the host of librarians is enormous. Could not our publishers be approached by the Association, and as many of them as possible induced to do the same in the future, the Association offering to help by giving copies of their rules, and aiding in other ways. Even if minor alterations or changes of headings had to be made by individual librarians, according to fancy, it would still be a great saving to have the bulk of the work already done.

B. B. WOODWARD,  
*Librarian, Natural History Museum.*

[*This letter has been unavoidably held back.*—EDITOR.]

#### Library Association Record.

THE last monthly meeting was held at Hanover Square on Monday, November 10th. The Rev. W. H. Tickell, 283, High Road, Lee, S.E., was elected a member; and John Colman, Publisher, 61, Honeywell Road, S.W., was proposed for election at next meeting. Mr. Joseph Gilbert read a paper entitled "Some Misleading Titles of Modern Books." A discussion followed, and a vote of thanks was awarded to the author.

#### NEXT MEETING.

THE December meeting will be held in the Battersea Public Library, Lavender Hill, S.W. (*Station, Clapham Junction*), on Monday, December 8th, at eight p.m., when Mr. Inkster, the Librarian, will read a paper on the Battersea Public Libraries.

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Editorial Communications and Books for Review should be addressed to the Editor, 20, Hanover Square, W.—Advertisements and Letters on Business to the Publishers, 62, Paternoster Row, E.C.