

THE
ROYAL TECHNICAL COLLEGE
OF
EAST AFRICA



an introduction to

THE COLLEGE LIBRARY

The College Library is on the second floor opposite the Gallery of the Assembly Hall. The Librarian's room is in the Library on the right hand side. Do not hesitate to approach him for any help which you require.

While you are a member of the College use of the College Library is one of your rights and privileges. This booklet will help you to use it to your best advantage. When you visit the Library for the first time you should note when it is open and the library staff will explain to you the routine of obtaining the books and information which you need. Then look around and find out where the books are which you will need during your course: there is a plan which will show you where the bulk of them will be found. A further search will show you where there are others which will be of further assistance: the guiding of the shelves will help you to do this. Browsing around in this fashion is always useful, but remember that the convenience of the other users of the library is as important as your own.

The Librarian and his assistants are there to serve you. But since there are many who need help and there is much material to be made available, this booklet has been prepared and certain rules and routines devised so that you may as far as possible help yourself. When you do not know where to look for what you need, first consult the Subject Index and the Catalogue. If these cannot help you do not hesitate to

ask for the assistance of the staff. Locating your material, either personally or through the tools provided—the Classification, the Catalogue and the Subject Index—is the work of the staff; making use of material when it has been found is your work.

A library is more than a room stocked with paper and ink and boards and glue, just as a motor car is more than a heap of steel and leather and oil. A library comes to life only when the books and other material which go to make up a modern information centre, and the staff, and the public are brought together in active co-operation. And since the books are there only as a tool for the other partners they are, in one sense, the least important of the three. The responsibility lies the heavier, therefore, on the staff to provide what is most useful to you and to make it as easily available as possible, and upon your shoulders to make clear to the staff what is needed and to make the best use of the services provided.

Information is made as easily available as possible but there will be occasions when it is not immediately found or is not found at all. In such a case you should fill in a search form, and the staff, whose experience in making searches is at your service, will take over the enquiry. It is important that the form should be filled in as completely as possible. For example, if you want information on keeping stainless steel clean or the whereabouts of kyanite deposits in Kenya state your enquiry so; do not ask simply for information on stainless steel or kyanite. As soon as the staff have completed their work the form will be sent to you with the information indexed for you, or with the notification that it is not available. In the latter case, should you so wish and provided that the matter

is not merely one of passing interest, the search will continue as a matter of routine and you will be notified if the answer is found at a later date. Clearly the number of such cases will be the smaller as the size and scope of the library increases.

A classification number and an Accession number will be found in each book. You need not be concerned with the Accession Number in the book or in the Catalogue (where it appears in red). But the Classification Number is your concern.

The first thing to note is that each number represents not a book but a subject. The system used is known as the Universal Decimal Classification, a widely used system which has been adopted as a British Standard. You will find a summary of it in the library and at the beginning of the Subject Index, and it will be convenient for you, if not essential, to have some acquaintance with it.

Linked with the classification is the SUBJECT INDEX. This tool will guide you from the subject in which you are interested to the classification number and armed with that you can go either to the catalogue or to the shelves direct. Turn first to the exact subject and if there is no entry turn to the more general entry. Thus, if there were no entry under Kirchhoff's Law you should turn to Electric Current.

You will notice that classification numbers run from single figures to complicated numbers representing not only the whole subject but aspects of it together with points of view, times, places and the form of the material. Thus if it became necessary

to place in its exact sequence a handbook on the use and working in Kenya during the twentieth century of the radio compass, all this could be expressed in one long number, viz.: 621.396.663.004.2 (661) "19" (021).

The build up of this number is as follows:—

62 Engineering.

621.3 Electrical engineering.

621.396 Radio communication.

621.396.663 Radio compasses.

to which are added

.004.2 Directions for use and working.

(661) Place number for Kenya.

"19" Time number for the twentieth century.

(021) Form number for a handbook.

Such numbers, therefore, are not given simply to dazzle the user of the catalogue. The book might be called Navigation Aids in East Africa Part I: which would mean little to the staff by itself whereas the number reveals the whole of the subject and approach of such a book.

Such detailed knowledge as this, however, is not necessary for you. To know what the first four figures indicate would be quite sufficient and indeed without any such knowledge at all you could trace the book on the shelves, where you could examine it. For the Library plan tells you where the books classed 6 are shelved: you would simply go there, look for the 62s the 621.3s and so on to your quarry.

The Catalogue is another tool for your use.

The Subject Index will tell you the place in the classification scheme allotted to the subject. The task of showing what exactly on that subject is available

in the Library is performed by the Catalogue. This is in two parts: an Author list which will tell you whether books by a particular author or a particular book by him is in stock; and a Subject List which will tell you what is available on a particular subject. Unless you already know the number for your subject you will go first to the Subject Index and then to the corresponding number in the Subject List of the Catalogue.

You will notice that in the Subject section of the Catalogue all the necessary details are given: author, title, publisher, date of publication, number of pages, and whether the book contains illustrations (ill.), plates (pl.), maps (mp.), a bibliography (bibliog.) and so on. Often only examination of the book itself will tell you whether it is what you are seeking, but it will often help quite a lot to consider the catalogue entry. If you are looking for full information on the whole of a subject you are more likely to find what you need if a book was published this year, contains 600 pages, with illustrations, plates and a bibliography, and is written by a known author than if it contains 54 pages, was privately published by an obscure firm and was written by a completely unknown author. On the other hand, if you are seeking a special point of view on a subject concisely expressed it might very well be brought together in small space in the smaller book whereas the material would be spread through the whole of the larger one. You will learn by using the catalogue the extent of the help which can be gained in this way.

On the other hand, you should beware of accepting titles from the catalogue, for "An introduction to..." serves often to preface the title of a quite advanced

work and may mean no more than that the writer knows that there is a great deal more to be said on the subject. Again, "Elementary" and "Advanced" are comparative terms and an "elementary" treatise on an advanced subject is no beginner's book.

The Catalogue, therefore, is an aid, a signpost, and your final judgement must be based upon examining the book itself. That is why the Library stock is as far as possible open to your inspection.

Periodicals, pamphlets and official publications contain much important material on technical subjects. Indeed, it has been asserted that the most important material appears in such places. You should not neglect, therefore, the periodicals that are provided. Examine them for yourselves so that you can know the sort of material which they contain; for the "Machinist" will not help students of the domestic science courses to sew, or does "Nature" deal only with birds and beasts. It is intended that the articles in the periodicals shall be indexed as they arrive and here also will be detailed the cuttings held in the cuttings files. All the periodicals are stored when the next number arrives, some for longer, some for shorter periods, and all important articles are cut out and filed before any periodical is finally disposed of. Some files go back many years.

Separate indexes are maintained of pamphlet material and of local and British official publications. Ask the staff about these.

And finally, in your search for information do not forget that there are some books which are too large for the main run of shelves used by the class to which

they belong. These are shelved separately in correct classified sequence, as far as possible.

The Rules governing the use of the Library are set out below. Please remember that they are made for the benefit of the users of the Library as a whole. Without them the service would be worse and the staff could not function efficiently. You are expected therefore, to observe these rules as naturally as you accept the service which you will receive in the Library.

The College Library is provided for the use and enjoyment of all members of the College, and of certain other persons by agreement. It is not open to the general public, although special cases may be referred to the Librarian.

Order and reasonable quiet should be observed in the Library.

Users of the library may expect courtesy and assistance from the staff; similarly the staff should receive courtesy and co-operation from library users.

Books, periodicals and other material in the library should be handled with care. You are not encouraged to use ink in the library. Use of loose ink and of Biro-type pens is forbidden. Tracing from books may not be done without permission.

Cards must on no account be removed, even temporarily, from any card file or sequence.

Bags and cases should be left with the assistant upon entering the library or, better still, not brought to the library at all.

There is a College rule forbidding smoking in the library.

Periodicals and books labelled as Reference books may not be removed from the library, except as laid down from time to time by the librarian. Many of them are available for borrowing at week-ends.

Material labelled as lending stock may be borrowed for one week at a time in exchange for a library ticket. The assistant in the library will arrange this for you. You should take care of your ticket since you will be held responsible for any book borrowed with it, and will be required to return it when you leave the College.

The hours of opening are posted at the entrance to the library. They are adequate for normal use, but should special circumstances arise, you should ask the Librarian to consider your case.

The Librarian has been given authority to enforce correct and reasonable use of the library at all times by all who come there.