



# UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE.

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## LIBRARY-CATALOGUE.

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*To all whom it may concern:*

Be it known that I, ALEXANDER J. RUDOLPH, a citizen of the United States, residing in the city and county of San Francisco, State of California, have invented an Improvement in Library-Catalogues; and I hereby declare the following to be a full, clear, and exact description of the same.

My invention relates to certain improvements in cataloguing books for libraries and similar institutions.

It consists of a series of slip-holders and a method of arranging them for convenient reference and inspection, said slip-holders forming, also, a complete page and manuscript copy, from which the printed catalogue can be set up whenever necessary.

Referring to the accompanying drawings for a more complete explanation of my invention, Figure 1 is a perspective view of my slip-holder with two slips in place and one about to be inserted. Fig. 2 is an end view of the same. Fig. 3 is a portion of one end of the holder, showing the closed end of the turned-over flange. Fig. 4 shows a modified form of the holder. Fig. 5 is a perspective view of a tray for containing the slips.

In a library which has stopped growing the printing of a complete and satisfactory catalogue is a practical and simple matter, but in public libraries it is a most difficult and expensive problem. All of the libraries are constantly and many of them rapidly increasing. From this circumstance, so gratifying on every other account, arises the difficult problem of printing catalogues. While the catalogues of such collections are passing through the press new books are received, which it is impossible in the ordinary manner of printing to incorporate with the body of the work. Recourse must, therefore, be had to a supplement. Before long the student may be obliged to grope his way through ten or more catalogues instead of one to ascertain whether any book he is looking for is or is not in the library. Even then he cannot be certain, for it may have been received since the last appendix was printed.

In order to overcome the difficulty which is experienced, it is customary in libraries to make what are termed "card-catalogues."

The cards are contained in drawers with two longitudinal compartments to each drawer, each compartment about five and three-eighth inches wide by three and one-eighth inches deep, the compartment being eighteen inches long inside. Six, nine, or twelve drawers are made in each case, and each drawer will hold in its two compartments, say, four thousand cards, and for the San Francisco Free Public Library, with now about eighty-five thousand volumes, about sixty such drawers are required. Within these compartments are placed cards having entries made upon them of the subject-matter, the author, title, entry, and cross-references, all these being arranged alphabetically. As many as four cards are necessary to properly index any work, each occupying its proper alphabetical position in the drawers, and many more when works are analyzed. Upon these cards the first one may contain the main entry, as the author's name, the title of the work, and other matter. The second card following with another index would contain the title entry followed by the author's name with the usual other matter. The third card would contain the subject entry followed by the author's name and the title entry, while the fourth card would contain a cross-reference to serve as a check upon the others. Each of these cards under the heading "Subjects" must have the subject written each time upon it—as, for instance, under the subject "Chemistry," the author's name would follow and the title of the work. Upon the next card the word "Chemistry" would again have to be written and a different author and the subject of his work, and so on through the list, making a great amount of work and a great quantity of cards to be examined. In the same manner the cards commencing with the authors' names must have the name written upon each card. Any person searching for an entry must stand in front of these cases, find the drawer containing the letter, pull it out, and search by handling the cards, turning over one after the other until the entry is found, and each person thus searching must necessarily cover so much space as to monopolize many thousand entries. When these cards have accumulated to such an extent that a

new catalogue is to be made, it is necessary to write out from them a manuscript copy of the catalogue to be sent to the printer, as it will be impossible to use the cards on account of their liability to get lost, misplaced, and disarranged.

The object of my invention is to overcome this difficulty, which I do by providing what I term "slip-holders" A. These are preferably made of metal having the edges turned over to form channels, as shown at B, upon one or both sides, as may be desired. These slip-holders may be made single, as shown in Fig. 1, or they may be made in double column, as shown in Fig. 4, and the ends are closed, so that the inserted slips cannot be pushed out and lost. I then cut card-board slips of sufficient stiffness and elasticity having such a length that by slightly curving them the ends will pass beneath the turned-over flanges B, and thus retain the slips in place. If the book is already catalogued in another library-catalogue, I cut out the entry, mount it on the card-board slip, and introduce it into the slip-holder in its proper place. Such entries as are not found in printed catalogues are written upon the slips and placed within the slip-holders in their proper alphabetical position. The moment this is done the catalogue is complete, and an instant later any student can find all the books upon a certain subject properly catalogued and in a manner to be easily examined.

No bulletin need be written to show the additions to the patrons of the library and no manuscript need be prepared for printing, because the slip-holders themselves form a manuscript for the printer when it is desired to print a catalogue.

Another important factor is the utilization of already-printed material, such as library-catalogues, bulletins, and periodicals devoted to various literature, which publish regular lists of new publications, give the headings of topics in periodical literature. By utilizing this printed material a great saving of time and legibility is secured.

This device forms an elastic alphabet and admits of almost endless additions. Entries for new books are easily inserted in their proper alphabetical position by simply moving the slips already in place, and when one of these slip-holders has become filled it is only necessary to add another, and any rearrangement or additions are easily made from time to time to maintain the proper alphabetical arrangement.

Any library having printed catalogues with supplements and bulletins can readily form with my device one or more complete and printed catalogues and insert all new additions, and thus keep the catalogue on a level with the actual state of the library up to date.

Where the card-catalogue gives only one

entry upon each card and in which there may be as many as fifty different entries under a single title, as in "Chemistry," "Astronomy," &c., one has to turn over fifty slips to read all the entries, while in my device these fifty entries or more are placed before the reader in the form of a complete page, which can readily be consulted, and all the time and trouble of overhauling so many cards is avoided. These slip-holders are placed in trays or drawers having a width sufficient to contain the slip-holders lying upon one edge with the greatest length transversely of the tray, which is shown at C, and they may thus be turned and examined from the side like the pages of a book, instead of from the top, which is the method necessary with the cards. At one end of this tray is placed a board or stop D, against which the ends of the slip-holders will be arrested to prevent their being pushed through too far. Within the tray is placed a series of partitions E, either stationary or removable, by which the slip-holders are subdivided alphabetically or otherwise for more convenient examination. The trays may be of any desirable length and may be mounted upon rollers or casters, so that the whole apparatus can be easily moved to any point where it may be most convenient to use it.

Having thus described my invention, what I claim as new, and desire to secure by Letters Patent, is—

1. In a library-catalogue apparatus, a series of rigid slip-holders having parallel grooves or channels upon their opposite edges, independent flexible slips the ends of which are held within said grooves or channels, said slips having written or printed upon them the subject-matter of the work to be indexed and each being movable along the holder, whereby they are capable of rearrangement within the slip-holders and new slips may be introduced between the inserted slips to admit new matter from time to time, whereby an elastic alphabetical and paged index is provided, substantially as herein described.

2. The improvement in library-catalogue apparatus, consisting of a series of rigid slip-holders having grooves or channels formed upon their parallel edges, independent flexible slips separable between meeting sides to admit additional slips containing each one subject-matter and fitted to be held within the grooves of the slip-holders to form one or more alphabetically-arranged columns upon each slip-holder, and a portable tray having vertical partitions at intervals and a stop at the rear end, said tray being adapted to contain the slip-holders standing upon edge and alphabetically arranged with relation to each other, substantially as herein described.

3. The method of cataloguing and indexing the books of a library and providing manuscript copy from which the permanent catalogue may be set up and printed, consisting

in entering the title, subject, and other matter of the book upon independent slips, securing said slips in grooved rigid slip-holders, so that their positions therein may be changed  
5 to admit additional slips to form complete indexed columns or pages in alphabetical order, whereby said slip-holders may be used as copy from which the permanent catalogue is

printed without further writing or manuscript, substantially as herein described. 10

In witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand.

ALEXANDER J. RUDOLPH.

Witnesses:

S. H. NOURSE,  
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