

EDITORIAL

A letter in a recent issue of the *Library Association record* focussed on a conflict which seems to have bedevilled library education since its inception¹. The letter, written by a library school lecturer, was in response to proposals from the Library Association's Sub-Committee on Conservation and Preservation for additions to the library school curriculum. In the report there had been proposals that library schools should include preservation topics in their curriculum and a list of topics together with time allocations was helpfully supplied. The letter writer argued that the proposals showed a total ignorance about the structure of library education, the current demands on it and the resources available to educators.

The conflict between practitioners and educators is, of course, not unique to library/information studies. Recently in the United Kingdom, for example, colleges running hotel and catering courses have been criticized by the hotel and catering industry for not providing the kind of training for their students that the industry wants. There should be no doubt that if the aim of a course is to lead directly to employment that employers should have some say in what is taught on the course. Many institutions in library/information studies education recognize this and involve employers in decision making by including them on such things as Faculty Boards. By the same token, though, practitioners must recognize the educational, as opposed to training, aspect of courses and that library schools, which are for the most part members of large institutions, are subject to the regulations and constraints which apply within these institutions.

Nothing can be gained, though, by both sides retreating into their respective camps and continuing to hurl insults at each other. The difficult economic situation in most countries of the world, taken together with the upheaval caused by technological developments, means that, more than ever before, there is a need for employers and educators to ensure that they fully appreciate each other's perspective and work positively towards reconciling differences. If this can happen not only will the students or potential employees benefit but librarianship/information studies will be in a sound position to respond to the challenges ahead.

R.F. Guy and J.A. Large
Editors

¹ *Library Association record* 88(5) (1986) 223.