

History of Universities

VOLUME XXVIII/1

2014

OXFORD
UNIVERSITY PRESS

‘The Establishment of a First-Class University Library’: The Beginnings of the University of London Library

K.E. Attar

When University College London opened its doors in 1828 under the name of the University of London, it did so with a library, which in 1828/9 spent some £2,580 on books, and with a librarian—indeed, one might say ‘with library staff’, as the librarian, the Rev. Francis Augustus Cox, was expected from his annual salary of £200 to appoint an assistant.¹ The University of London’s second precursor, King’s College, similarly boasted a library when it was established in 1831: a part of the college on which (together with the Museum) £948.16s.8d were spent for additions in 1833–4. By the foundation of the University of London in 1836, the libraries both of University College and of King’s College had already received their first major donations, four thousand books donated by Jeremy Bentham in 1833 to University College, and over three thousand volumes connected with oriental literature and general philology given to King’s College by William Marsden in February 1835 and honoured with a room in which to house them.² A library was similarly regarded as essential for the University of Durham upon its establishment in 1832, with William Van Mildert, bishop of Durham, paying for the erection of a gallery, declaring his willingness to pay to put the library in a reputable condition, stating that the librarian’s salary should not be niggardly, and becoming one of a cohort of early donors to give significant quantities of books.³ Later nineteenth-century forerunners of the civic universities also included libraries from the outset, even though they were in cities which embraced the Public Libraries Act early and already had good library provision, in a two-pronged thirst for education which demanded books independently from teaching institutions.⁴ The libraries did not necessarily prosper. Most spectacularly, Cox’s appointment at University College London was terminated in 1831 for want of funds, and the

average annual expenditure on books dropped to just £51 for the 43-year period from 1832 until 1875.⁵ Yet their mere existence distinguished their host institutions markedly from the new University of London.

The University of London was established by Royal Charter in November 1836 and commenced operations in 1837. The institutions named above, although not empowered initially to award degrees, all taught students. The University of London, in stark contrast, did not, instead existing until 1900 purely as an examining and degree-awarding body.⁶ Thus it had no immediate need for a library. With no building of its own until 1870 and minimal funding, there was little incentive to acquire one. The topographical context would have strengthened such indifference. Not only could students based at the London colleges rely on their college libraries, but examiners and members of the Senate had ample other library resources at their disposal. The Inns of Court met specialist library needs for law, the Royal College of Physicians and the Royal College of Surgeons for medicine, and the Royal Society for science more widely. More generally, the London Institution, which had been established in 1805 with the provision of 'a library to contain works of intrinsic value' as its first object, held about 27000 volumes across the humanities, mathematics, and the social sciences in its building in Finsbury Circus by 1835, and intended 'that no effort should be wanting towards effecting the establishment of one of the most useful and accessible libraries in Britain'.⁷ Closer to the University building, the Russell Institution in Great Coram Street, Russell Square, covered the same subjects and contained over 13000 volumes by 1837.⁸ The London Library opened in Westminster in 1841 with approximately 3,000 volumes and already held about 13000 volumes by the following March.⁹ And over all dominated the British Museum Library in Montague Place, which remained in the public eye during the early days of the University of London through a Select Committee of the House of Commons in 1836, the construction of its famous round reading room, and discussions about catalogues. London University men were fully aware of the intellectual riches within their reach. The classical historian George Grote, a member of the University of London Senate from 1850 onwards, selected Classics books for acquisition by the London Library and was from 1859 a trustee of the British Museum, of which he had long been a reader. Among other early university luminaries, Peter Mark Roget and Sir Francis Beaufort are recorded among eminent readers of the British Museum Library.¹⁰ An anonymous writer in the *London University Magazine* for 1856 complained of the university's original

accommodation in Somerset House being ‘mean and shabby in the extreme’ and its next home (1853–5) as ‘temporary quarters of a still worse description, situated in a miserable garret in Marlborough House’, winding up with a declamation of the government’s ‘general parsimony’ towards the university, whose entire income was about £6,000, of which the government supplied £3,500 and examination fees made up the balance.¹¹ This writer, while lamenting the paucity of scholarships and prizes, did not suggest that the lack of a library was a disadvantage in any way.¹² Supply satisfied demand.

Nonetheless, the university accrued books almost from its inception.¹³ Senate Minutes of 15 November 1837 record the decision to order eight books: seven on education (of which five were titles by Victor Cousin concerning Continental education of various levels, and were in French) and Whewell’s *Mechanical Euclid*,¹⁴ forty years later, seven of these had found their way to the new University of London Library, recorded in its catalogue.¹⁵ In January 1839, the mathematician and Senate member George Birch Jerrard proposed and carried a motion ‘That a Committee be appointed to take into consideration the subject of Books which may be required for the use of the University’; an activity instantly curtailed by another motion to ‘such books as may be required in the Faculty of Arts’, and in June 1839 books estimated as costing £72.18s. were ordered for the use of the Classical Examiners.¹⁶ This is one of just two references to purchasing books in the early years. The second, from 16 December 1846, includes the first known reference to the University Library: ‘That the Treasurer be authorized to purchase for the University Library, Rutherford’s “Institutes” and Dumont’s “Traité du Code Civil, et du Code Pénal,” [i.e. Jeremy Bentham’s *Traité de législation civile et pénale*, edited by Etienne Dumont] in which works Candidates for the Degree of B.L. are examined’. Neither of these editions appears in the 1876 library catalogue, although by 1876 the Library held six copies of an 1858 edition of the Bentham.

Donations began with 270 books given to the university in 1838 (for which reason the University Library has been dated to ‘about 1838’):¹⁷ seventy Parliamentary reports and papers on education in England, Scotland, and Ireland presented by the Chancellor (Sir William Cavendish) and Henry Warburton, a member of the Senate; 185 unspecified volumes presented by Nathaniel Vye of Ilfracombe (a local benefactor in Ilfracombe and not himself a University man); and fifteen titles ranging from medicine (the predominant subject) and physics to philosophy, astronomy, sermons, an English dictionary, and Augustus De

Morgan's *Thoughts Suggested by the Establishment of the University of London* (one of the titles ordered in 1837). From then onwards, a steady trickle of books came in, with between five and twenty-eight titles being given to the university in most years. By 1870, when the university moved into Burlington Gardens, it had been given approximately 700 titles. These were largely donations by authors of their own works, or by learned societies providing works that they generated, and almost all had been recently published. When not published within a year or two of donation, books were typically part of a group donation by an author giving a new publication and sweeping up copies of his older works at the same time, as when Friedrich Bialloblotzky, the university's first examiner in German, gave four books in 1839; Sir John William Lubbock, the first vice-chancellor, gave seven in 1841; and James Heywood MP, a new member of the Senate, donated four compilations in 1857. Subjects ranged from mediaeval history to Egyptian archaeology, library catalogues, Old Norse romance, college calendars, and statistical reports on the health of the navy. Theological works were given rarely, perhaps unsurprisingly in view of the university's avowed religious neutrality and the absence of theology from its curriculum until 1900; Classics, more strikingly, was all but non-existent. No literature is included, despite the fact that English, French and German were, in contradistinction to the ancient universities, degree subjects from the outset.¹⁸ The first journal was the *Pharmaceutical Journal and Transactions*, of which the first issue was given in 1842 and others followed, probably thanks to the influence of the pharmacologist and university examiner Jonathan Pereira. Medicine, noted as dominant in 1838, continued to predominate, followed by works pertaining to education: primarily the calendars or reports of other educational establishments, sporadically or regularly, ranging geographically from University College London (1843 and 1854) to the University of Melbourne (1868), via Durham, Manchester, Edinburgh, Belfast, Ushaw, Magee, Madrid, Brussels, Kiel, Basle, Christiania, McGill and Toronto, Calcutta and Madras. The calendars do not appear in the University of London Library's first catalogue, and were presumably regarded as works for university administrators. Some gifts were decidedly outside the university spectrum, notably reports of the 26th and 29th annual meetings of the Literary Association of the Friends of Poland, given in 1858 and 1861 respectively and discreetly lost before the issue of the 1876 library catalogue; unusual, too, is M. Moorhouse, *A Vocabulary and Outline of the Grammatical Structure of the Murray River Language, Spoken by*

the Natives of South Australia, from Wellington on the Murray, as far as the Rufus (Adelaide, 1846), donated in 1847 and retained. Occasionally duplicate copies of a work were given, presumably with a view to exchange: two copies each of *Grammar of the Bornu or Kanuri Language* and *Dialogues, and a Small Portion of the New Testament in the English, Arabic, Haussa and Bornu Languages* (both of which were published and given in 1853); and Dimitry de Glinka's *La Philosophie du Droit* (1863; given in 1865), four copies of the fourth edition of Henry Taylor's *Decimal System* (published and given in 1851), and twelve copies of Charles James Foster's pamphlet *The University of London: A Parliamentary Constituency* (1851; given in 1858). Single copies of each found their way to the library.

Most gifts were in the English language. The first Latin items, both editions of theological works, came in 1839, and occasional gifts in vernacular languages, beginning with French (1841) followed: over the years the university accrued works in Italian, Greek, and even Czech and, owing to the generosity of the University of Christiania, several in Norwegian.

The most illustrious non-authorial donor was Prince Albert, who gave William Macgillivray's *Natural History of Dee Side and Braemar* (printed by command of the Queen and presented widely by the Prince Consort) in 1855. The first female donor, and the only one during the early period, was a Miss Sarah Gibbs of Boston, Massachusetts, who in 1852 gave a *Book of Common Prayer... According to the Use of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America* (New York, 1835). Some donors recurred, in some instances remembering the university with new volumes of multi-volume or serial works as they came out: volumes two to five of *The Library of Medicine*, edited by Alexander Tweedie and donated by him in 1840 and 1841; from 1842, successive issues of *The Pharmaceutical Journal and Transactions; Schriften der Universität zu Kiel* from several years. Several donors were connected with the university. The lists of presents make this explicit only for Charles Delille, for whom the full description given below his name on the title page of his 1852 donation, *Introductory Lecture on the French Language*, is transcribed: 'Professor at Christ's Hospital, the City of London and Merchant Taylors' Schools, the City of London College, and French examiner in the London University and the College of Eton'. But Alexander Tweedie, Jonathan Pereira, and Friedrich Bialloblatzky were examiners. The medical men Edward Ballard (M.D.), Benjamin Hobson (M.B.), and Robert Barnes (M.D.), who gave

books in 1853, 1855, and 1858 respectively, were London graduates. Numerous donors, several recurrent, were members of the Senate: Sir Francis Beaufort; Archibald Billing; Peter Mark Roget; Sir James McGrigor; George Biddell Airy; Henry Warburton; Sir James Clark; Thomas Hodgkin; and James Heywood. Richard Wellesley Rothman, who gave his *Account of Observations of Halley's Comet* in 1838, and William Benjamin Carpenter (donor of his *Comparative Physiology* in 1838) both served terms as Registrar, while Sir John William Lubbock, who gave five of his books in 1841, was the university's first vice-chancellor. The gift of books must be regarded as an act of faith in university expansion, for there can have been no pressure to give books for the non-existent library and several members of the Senate—among them, the economist Nassau William Senior and the historian and bishop Connop Thirlwall—did not; even George Grote, an indefatigable worker on behalf of the university and vice-chancellor 1861–71, gave no copies of his writings during his lifetime.

Rumblings of the desirability of a library began in the late 1850s. On 24 November 1858 Dr Edward Smith moved resolutions in Convocation, the body of graduates of the University of London, suggesting 'that a subscription list should be opened to obtain funds to assist in the erection of University buildings and for the formation of a library and museum, and that a committee should be appointed to confer with the Senate on the subject'. The resolutions failed for want of a seconder.¹⁹ Yet under six months later, at a meeting of 'members of the University of London and their friends' held in May 1859, university senator and politician Lord Derby recalled visions for a University of London by the poets Milton and Cowley which included a library, and the Chancellor, Lord Granville, suggested a library.²⁰ A statement placed before the First Lord of the Treasury on Friday 24 June 1864, 'Claims of the University to have a Building, to be provided at the Public Expense, appropriated to its own exclusive use', included the claim: 'and it [the University] cannot be considered complete without a Library and other apartments which may be employed as a centre of union among its Members': phraseology which implies that a library was regarded less as a research laboratory than as a social space.²¹

A designated library for the University of London began with architectural space within the university's first purpose-built accommodation in Burlington Gardens, Piccadilly, in 1870. To the right, or western, side of the principal staircase in Burlington Gardens, a corridor led to 'the great library or examination hall', a room 72 × 53 feet which occupied

the entire western wing. As shown by a photograph from the 1890s, bookcases lined three sides of the large hall, on the ground floor and a gallery.²² Since mid-1872 the books in the cases had been protected by glass doors.²³ A smaller library on the second landing was intended as a reading room for the general use of graduates.²⁴

Sharing a function was not ideal, and over the coming years the needs of examinations would always come first; that was, after all, the university's primary purpose, although public expressions of dissatisfaction with the sharp division between teaching and examinations began in 1873, roughly concurrently with the commencement of the library as an institution generally regarded as underpinning and supporting teaching.²⁵ The only panacea was damage limitation, applied in April 1874 when the Senate resolved: 'That the Library be not used, except under special circumstances, for other Examinations than those held by the University'.²⁶ Yet whatever the limitations, the physical provision was instrumental in galvanizing the provision of books. On 13 March 1871 the Liberal politician Julian Goldsmid, later to become vice-chancellor of the university, wrote to current vice-chancellor George Grote:

You know that I have taken great interest in two things which I, in common with many others, thought of vital importance to the University of London, the one being the acquiring a University Building, and the other obtaining Representation in Parliament.

Both these questions being settled, it appears to me that there is one other object we should now have in view, and that is the establishment of a first-class University Library, which I think will not only improve the position of the University, but also be of great service to its Students and Graduates.²⁷

In accordance with this aim, Goldsmid gave the university one thousand pounds (equivalent to £45 700 at a 2005 reckoning),²⁸ at the rate of one hundred pounds a year over ten years, to purchase classical books. His generosity almost immediately inspired more. The mathematician and mathematical historian Augustus De Morgan, Professor of mathematics at University College London, erudite scholar, voracious reader, and book collector, died on 18 March 1871.²⁹ A mere fortnight later a paragraph in *The Spectator*, taken up by at least two regional newspapers, acknowledged Goldsmid's munificence and continued:

We trust Mr. Goldsmid's generosity may be infectious. Would it be impossible, by the way, to secure for the University the late Professor de Morgan's unique mathematical library, which probably contains the most curious collection of books on the history of mathematics to be found in England? The value of this

collection is besides greatly enhanced by Mr. de Morgan's own numerous and characteristic annotations. Whether the library is to be disposed of or not, we do not at present know; but if it could be obtained, there would be a special fitness in securing it for the University of London, which would then have a really good start towards the formation of a fine classical and scientific library.³⁰

On the morning of Wednesday 10 May 1871, Lord Granville as Chancellor appealed at the annual University of London degree ceremony for books to fill the empty bookshelves of the new University of London Library. Samuel Loyd, First Baron Overstone and a member of the University Senate, was present. That afternoon, a meeting took place to determine how to honour De Morgan, at which, again according to the *Spectator*, 'There was also a great desire to purchase his rare mathematical library (valued at something like £1,200) on behalf of the University of London'.³¹ Lord Overstone accordingly purchased the collection from Mrs De Morgan for the university, writing to the Senate in June 1871 following receipt of the books:

It is a source of satisfaction to me to have been the means of preventing the disperssion [*sic*] of this remarkable collection of mathematical Works; and I gladly present it to the London University, as a testimony of my appreciation of the service which that Body has rendered to the extension and improvement of Education in all its branches throughout the United Kingdom, and in the hope that it may prove the first fruits of a Library which shall ere long become such in all respects as the London University ought to possess.³²

The De Morgan library was described around the time of its acquisition as 'a valuable collection of mathematical works'³³ comprising about 2,000 volumes;³⁴ by 1908, it had, more fully and correctly, been summarized as consisting of about 4,000 volumes of mathematical and astronomical books, including a considerable number of rare and valuable books.³⁵ The contents ranged in date of printing from 1474 to 1870, such that the University Library opened with a high proportion of antiquarian material and its first 'special collection', although the De Morgan collection was not so designated until 1908.³⁶ There were twenty-one incunabula,³⁷ while 7.5 per cent of the books date from the sixteenth century, 13 per cent from the seventeenth, and 15 per cent from the eighteenth. They included several very rare items. For example, *Lunarium ab anno 1491 ad annum 1550* by Bernardus de Granollachs ([Lyons: Johannes Siber, 1491]) was long thought to be the sole copy of that edition in existence (and remains the only complete copy recorded on ISTC),³⁸ and *Arithmetices compendium ex Boetij*

libris, by Johannes de Muris ([Central Germany, c.1520]) and the fifth edition of Humphry Johnson's *A New Treatise of Practical Arithmetick* (London, 1724) remain to the best of our knowledge unique. The collection included a number of obviously iconic titles, such as the *editio princeps* of Euclid's Elements (1482) and the first editions of Copernicus' *De revolutionibus* (1543), Napier's *Mirifici logarithmorum canonis descriptio* (1614), Johannes Kepler's *Tabulae Rudolphinae* (1627), and Newton's *Principia* (1687) and *Opticks* (1704). In addition to bringing antiquarian books into the library, some by famous printers (Erhard Ratdolt; John Day; Christophe Plantin; the Elzevirs), the collection introduced into the University Library its first multiple editions: most spectacularly forty editions of Euclid in various languages and formats spanning five centuries, but also runs of popular textbooks such as William Oughtred's *Clavis Mathematicae*, *Cocker's Arithmetic*, and *Hodder's Arithmetic*. It also provided the university with its first books of interest as association copies. Connections extended beyond De Morgan's annotations in his books noted as an enhancing feature by the *Spectator*, as quoted, and by De Morgan's widow,³⁹ unremarked at the time were associations with other writers, such as the inscription of the German mathematician and astronomer Christoph Clavius (1538–1612) on Albertus Pighius' *De aequinoctiorum solsticiorumque inuentione* (1520).

On 18 June 1871, just four months after De Morgan, George Grote died, bequeathing his books to the university subject to a life interest by his wife. Unlike De Morgan, Grote had not been a conscious collector, and although the earliest book in his library was the Heber copy of an Aldine work, Ammonius Hermiae's *Hypomnēma eis to peri ermēnias Aristotelous* (1503), most of his books—about eighty per cent, to judge from an estimate made on the basis of the 1876 catalogue—dated from the nineteenth century. But he had been a wide and voracious reader, with money from 1830 onwards to satisfy his literary interests, and the breadth of his library paralleled the breadth of his reading.⁴⁰ His library contained about 5,000 titles, described by the University of London Library as being 'mainly of Latin and Greek classics and books on history'.⁴¹ The description does not do justice to the diversity of Grote's collection. Certainly the Classics were comprehensively represented in editions, translations and commentaries, including multiple editions of Demosthenes, the elder and younger Pliny, Sophocles, Terence, Juvenal, Homer, Virgil, and especially Aristotle and Plato, on whom Grote wrote. Yet by specifying history, the university obscured the large number of

Grote's books and pamphlets pertaining to politics and economics. Philosophy also featured, extending in the modern era from the early modern period (Sir Francis Bacon; Franciscus Burgersdicius; Robert Burton) via Edmund Burke and Immanuel Kant to Grote's contemporaries and consorts, including Jeremy Bentham, James Mill, and Grote's editor, Alexander Bain. All branches of the natural sciences were represented: Linnaeus on botany; British Museum catalogues of natural history; Audubon's *Birds of America* (1835) and *Ornithological Biography* (1831–5); Arago on astronomy; Hunt and Rudler's *Descriptive Guide to the Museum of Practical Geology* (1867); Lionel Beale's *How to Work with the Microscope* (1861); Emil du Bois-Reymond on animal electricity, translated by Henry Bence Jones (1852); Ludwig Büchner on physics; Robert Scott Burn on mechanics. There were titles pertaining to travel across at least five continents,⁴² language, education, music (Charles Burney's history), ethnography (Heinrich Berghaus), and mathematics. The University of London Library in its early years was not strong in *belles lettres*. De Morgan's felicitous ownership of Robert Anderson's fourteen-volume *Complete Edition of the Poets of Great Britain* (1793–1807) went some way to amend the weakness. Otherwise, what literature there was came to a large extent from Grote: Klopstock and Gottfried August Burger, Goethe, Lessing, and Schiller for German; Arago, Beaumarchais, Le Sage, and Voltaire for French; Milton, Joanna Baillie, and Beaumont and Fletcher for English (with three tales by Maria Edgeworth in French translation).

A gratifying ramification of the De Morgan and Grote gifts was to attract further presents, both of books and money. In 1871 the Master of Rolls wrote to offer the university over 270 volumes, the East India Office also gave the library 147 volumes, and Miss Manning donated 28 volumes which had belonged to the late lawyer Serjeant Manning (1781–1866): a notable departure from the previous pattern of donations from 1839 onwards being primarily of single titles. The impetus continued. James Napier Smith gave 'a collection of old mathematical works' (quantity unspecified) in 1873; the Royal Society deposited a complete set of its *Philosophical Transactions* in 1876; Lady Shaw Lefevre, widow of London vice-chancellor Sir John Shaw Lefevre (1797–1879), presented the library with about 250 Russian books, the works of standard authors, in 1880; and Miss Dunn donated about 150 law reports which had belonged to the late London graduate Edward Clennell Dunn in 1884.⁴³ In 1871 the Chancellor empowered the Registrar to provide £25 annually for ten years for library books, and the

Member of Parliament authorized him to give £50 to buy scientific books. From 1873 the Library received an annual Treasury grant of £100, which met current expenditure and left a slender balance to purchase new works, at costs of between about 1s.6d and 6s.6d per volume.⁴⁴ And the avowed and visible library presence attracted a marked increase in the quantity and sources of donations, notably from 1892 onwards the latest academic books from Cambridge University Press, given by its Syndics. Possibly the antiquarian element of the De Morgan library was responsible for attracting some old books: at any rate, whereas earlier donations had all dated from the nineteenth century and mostly from the year of the donation or the preceding one, in 1871 the university was given the pamphlet *Motives Grounded upon the Word of God, and upon Honour, Profit, and Pleasure for the Present Founding an University in the Metropolis London* (London, 1647),⁴⁵ to be followed in 1872 by Théophile Bonet's three-volume folio *Sepulchretum, sive Anatomia practica, ex cadaveribus morbo denatis* (Geneva, 1700) and, from a third donor, *Regneri de Graaf Opera omnia* (Amsterdam, 1705) and Johannes Gottfried Zinn's *Descriptio anatomica oculi humani* (Göttingen, 1755).

Moreover, in 1871 a committee was appointed from among the members of the Senate, including such distinguished figures as the historian Lord Acton and the politician Sir William Stirling Maxwell, to purchase library books and prepare library regulations. It met between once and three times a year and kept minutes of meetings.⁴⁶ Purchases were made in most subsequent years, with varying levels of funds for the purpose, and an emphasis on 'books taken from the lists now submitted to, or from lists previously approved by, the Committee, with such additions thereto as may seem advisable in order to obtain the latest and best editions of Classical authors and to improve the collection of Dictionaries and other standard works of reference now in the Library, preference being given to such works as from cost, rarity, or otherwise, may not be generally accessible to students'.⁴⁷ Graduates of the university were the main constituency.

In 1872 it was decided that the Assistant Registrar should undertake the duties of Librarian, with a messenger, on an increased salary of 34 shillings per week, to act as his assistant.⁴⁸ The mathematician and physicist Thomas Archer Hirst, Assistant Registrar at the time of the resolution, resigned in 1873, such that Arthur Milman, a graduate of Christ Church, Oxford, and a barrister, civil servant, and Commissary of the Dean and Chapter of St Paul's, became the first chosen incumbent, to

be followed by Henry Nottidge Moseley in 1879, Frederick Victor Dickins in 1882, and Henry Frank Heath in 1896.⁴⁹ Also in 1872, the Senate resolved: 'That a complete Catalogue of the Books now in the Library (including the De Morgan and Grote collections) be prepared by a competent person to be employed for the purpose',⁵⁰ and the Treasury approved paying the compiler a fee of up to fifty pounds.⁵¹ The 'competent person' appointed was Thomas Nichols, a Senior Assistant in the Principal Librarian's Office of the British Museum, who had demonstrated his industry and his acquaintance with libraries in two books he had written pertaining to the British Museum.⁵² The work dragged on, with two successful requests from Mr Nichols for more remuneration, on the basis that the labour proved much greater than he had initially anticipated, 'partly in consequence of the large number of Volumes of Pamphlets (each pamphlet requiring a separate entry) in both the Grote and the De Morgan libraries, and partly through a number of additional books having been forwarded by Mrs Grote',⁵³ the ultimate payment for his services was £175.⁵⁴ The result of his labours, 795 pages long, appeared in 1876, and contained books in the library by the end of 1875. It was a short-title catalogue consisting of the author's name, a brief title, edition statement, place and date of printing, and format, and indicating which books came from the library of Augustus De Morgan, which from George Grote, which from the East India College Library, and which from the Public Record Office. Footnotes provided the sources of offprints. Cross-references were included. Locations were not; presumably they were written in a volume which served as the master copy, or on a slip catalogue.⁵⁵

As mentioned with respect to Dumont's translation of Bentham, authorized as a purchase in 1846, not all the books given to the university in the early years reached the Library shelves: for example, Peter Mark Roget's *Treatises on Physiology and Phrenology*, William Vincent's *Sermons*, and Thomas Webster's *Elements of Physics*, all given in 1838, are absent from the printed catalogue and subsequent ones. Occasionally monographs which did reach the Library shelves were missed when cataloguing, such as Charles Richardson's *A New Dictionary of the English Language*, also given in 1838.⁵⁶ And despite Nichols's explanation when requesting more money that individual pamphlets required separate catalogue entries, his catalogue frequently cut corners in this respect. Ten volumes of pamphlets, containing between seven and thirty-five distinct items per volume, were summarized in a single entry, under the heading: 'Révolution Française. A collection of Essays,

Pamphlets, Addresses, Plays [etc.], illustrative of the French Revolution, 1777–1795, made by George Grote, Esq. 10 vol. [G.G.] 8vo', with the entry beneath it, for another four such volumes, reading merely: 'Pièces diverses sur la Révolution Française'. Furthermore, Nichols sometimes omitted items within volumes of bound pamphlets. Lapses of attention could explain some omissions, such as Ayscoghe Boucherett's 20-page *A Few Observations on Corn, Currency, &c* (1840) and, harder to overlook, Robert Montgomery Martin's 100-page *Colonial Policy of the British Empire, Part I* (1837), and Robert H. Schomburgk's 155-page *A Description of British Guiana, Geographical and Statistical* (1840) from the Grote pamphlets.⁵⁷ Within the De Morgan pamphlets, Nichols was selective in his inclusion of booksellers' catalogues, tending to include sale catalogues of the libraries of named individuals but ignoring general sale catalogues.⁵⁸ Unnoticed at the time, the deficiencies were obvious by the early twentieth century. In a memorandum of 8 January 1907 the Librarian, Lawrence W. Haward, complained about the omissions—'If some [items] were accidentally overlooked others were purposely ignored and for pretty obvious reasons: they presented difficulties'—in addition to noting filing errors (e.g. Wycliffe's *Wicket* under 'Potts', not 'Wiclif'; Madame de Sévigné's Letters under 'Rabutin-Chantal'), mistakes in dates and authors' names and the failure to establish these from external sources when they were not readily ascertainable from the books themselves.⁵⁹

The library opened in 1877. Opening hours were those of the university generally, except during examinations, vacations, and any other times appointed by the Senate. Membership was extended to members of the Senate, graduates, examiners, and undergraduates who had passed their first university examination. Members of the Senate could introduce other people. Library regulations, repeated regularly in university calendars, concerned writing one's name in a book when entering the library, removing books from shelves only in the presence of the librarian or his assistant, returning books to the librarian (to prevent misshelving), not defacing books, and reporting any faults in books to staff. Initially the library was intended to be for reference purposes only, but from 1880 borrowing rights were awarded to members of the Senate and of convocation, and other persons duly recommended by them (but not to university teachers, who had to wait until 1907 for this privilege). Up to six books, excluding reference or rare books, could be borrowed at once for a period of three calendar months upon the filling in of a loans slip, and all books were due back on 31 December.⁶⁰ The rules diverged

markedly from those of University College London and King's College London in the generosity of the loan periods (a week at University College and a fortnight at King's College, with books at King's College due at the end of the Easter and Michaelmas terms), a reflection of the different constituencies of the University library and those of the teaching Colleges.⁶¹ King's College London specified that users must wear academic dress, and University College (like Birmingham) required perfect silence in the library; otherwise the library rules of the three parts of the University of London were similar.⁶²

The value of a library is difficult to measure, especially when no records of use remain. Size, easy to quote, does not indicate relevance. Donation-driven libraries, dependent on what people choose to give and often, in the case of bequests, a generation behind research, can easily be irrelevant to institutional needs. Both the major collections acquired in 1871 had a certain antiquarian bias—De Morgan's deliberately so, Grote's incidentally—and from academic libraries that kept borrowing records, it is evident that what was read were recent publications.⁶³ Moreover, a collection of works devoted to mathematical history, with or without distinctive annotations, was too specialist to be of practical research value. In theory, relevance to the curriculum was unnecessary for the library of a university which did no teaching and whose main constituents had completed their formal education, and well into the twentieth century it was made clear that library holdings need not reflect coursework.⁶⁴ Yet as the early requests for purchases make clear, what served students also served examiners, such that curricular relevance is an appropriate yardstick. A saving grace, educationally speaking, was that both De Morgan and Grote acquired recent publications until very shortly before their deaths, ensuring modern books in their respective subject areas: even in De Morgan's case, over sixty per cent of the titles of his collection dated from the nineteenth century, with 1,739 titles printed between 1831 and 1871.⁶⁵ While his more modern titles included a large number of offprints and also booksellers' catalogues (see above), books by all his significant contemporaries were present: Isaac Todhunter; Francis Guthrie; George Biddell Airy; Richard P. Wright; William Rowan Hamilton; Dionysus Lardner; William Whewell; George Salmon; Peter Guthrie Tait; Duncan Farquharson Gregory; Edward Morris Reynolds; George Boole; George Peacock.⁶⁶ Moreover, the curriculum, however demanding it was judged to be, was geared to facts based on a handful of textbooks,⁶⁷ such that library needs were modest.⁶⁸ Of those subjects which relied on set texts—and mathematics,

the natural sciences, and much of law, did not—Classics, tested at the various levels from the first B.A. examination upwards, was thoroughly covered, largely although not exclusively as a result of George Grote's bequest.⁶⁹ The D.Lit. scripture examinations with their much narrower requirements were also covered in entirety. English literature and the modern foreign languages were mixed. Six of the seven English authors set for 1877 were present, with only *Piers Plowman* wanting,⁷⁰ but three of the four set textbooks were absent.⁷¹ The German authors selected—Lessing, Herder, Klopstock, Schiller, Goethe, Uhland—were all present (merely with Klopstock's *Oden* in a different edition from that recommended), because George Grote happened to have read and owned German literature, but most of the (often modern) French was not, Grote's extensive French reading having comprised primarily non-fiction.⁷² The social sciences were poorly represented. Only two of the four titles named for law are named in the 1876 catalogue,⁷³ and only one of the three titles named for the M.A. in political philosophy. Of the titles wanted, five were absent from the considerably better stocked library of University College London too. In summary, the library of England's third university, if by no means large, served its purpose better than might have been expected given the nature of its acquisitions. It still had some way to go. By comparison, the library of University College London at the time not only held all but five of the titles listed, but had some titles in multiple versions or editions (for example, six editions of *Piers Plowman*, not held at all by the University of London Library), in addition to representing various canonical authors not examined and not in the University of London Library catalogue: among them Racine, Rabelais, Montaigne, and Mme de Lafayette for French; Petrarca for Italian; and Sterne, Fielding, Defoe, and Samuel Richardson for English.⁷⁴

In 1903, the Worshipful Company of Goldsmiths gave the Library some 30000 items on economic literature collected by Herbert Somerton Foxwell, thereby at a stroke doubling its holdings. Only then did it become a significant university library with a dedicated librarian which led the Colleges in holdings, professional practice, and collaborative operations. But several features of the 1877 library would remain indicative of its character for the next century and more: a high proportion of antiquarian material with respect to total holdings; the beneficiary of generous gifts because it was the University of London and the university of England's major city was seen as a worthy recipient; shared accommodation with administrative departments; poor funding; and

also a need to carve out its role and rationale.⁷⁵ Out of the child came the man.

University of London

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4. For specific institutions, see Hywel Berwyn Evans, *The Library over a Hundred Years (1880–1980)* ([Birmingham], 1981); Edward Fiddes, *Chapters in the History of Owens College and of Manchester University 1851–1914* (Manchester, 1937), 203, 207; Thomas Kelly, *For Advancement of Learning: The University of Liverpool 1881–1981* (Liverpool, 1981), 46–7, 82 and 537; James Thompson, *A Centennial History of the Library of the University of Birmingham, 1880–1995* (Birmingham, 2000). For an assessment of the general academic atmosphere of the homes of the civic universities, including library provision, see F.W. Ratcliffe, 'The Civic Universities and their Libraries', in *The Cambridge History of Libraries in Britain and Ireland*, iii: 1850–2000, 357–76, 357–65. For a connection between cities boasting institutions which became civic universities and public libraries, see David R. Jones, *The Origins of Civic Universities: Manchester, Leeds and Liverpool* (London, 1988), 20.
5. Bellot, *University College London*, 418.
6. The purpose of the university is stated in its charter of 1836, reproduced in University of London, *The Historical Record (1836–1912), Being a Supplement to the Calendar Completed to September 1913*, 1st issue (London, 1912), 26–30. For a more accessible summary, see Negley Harte, *The University of London 1836–1986: An Illustrated History* (London, 1986), 80.

7. *A Catalogue of the Library of the London Institution Systematically Classed, Preceded by an Historical and Bibliographical Account of the Establishment.*, i: *The General Library* (London, 1835), pp. vi–xxiii. For further information about the library of the London Institution, see K.A. Manley, ‘E.B. Nicholson and the London Institution’, *Journal of Librarianship* 5 (1973), 52–77.
8. See Edward Wedlake Brayley, *A Catalogue of the Library of the Russell Institution* (London, 1835) (for subject coverage); idem, *Appendix to the Catalogue of the Library of the Russell Institution* (London, 1837), p. vi (for size). Catalogues of the Royal Institution in Albemarle Street, in London’s West End, are silent about its extent: William Harris, *A Catalogue of the Library of the Royal Institution of Great Britain* (2nd edn, London, 1821); Benjamin Vincent, *A New Classified Catalogue of the Library of the Royal Institution of Great Britain* (London, 1857).
9. See William Baker, *The Early History of the London Library* (Lewiston, 1992), 72.
10. P.R. Harris, *A History of the British Museum Library 1753–1973* (London, 1998), 766.
11. Anonymous, ‘The University of London – its History and Position’, *The London University Magazine* 1 (1856), 257–64, 259–60.
12. *Ibid.*, 260–1.
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14. University of London Archive, UoL/ST/2/2/1: unnumbered Senate minute, 15 Nov. 1837.
15. *Catalogue of the Library of the University of London, Including the Libraries of George Grote and Augustus De Morgan* (London, 1876). The missing title is Victor Cousin, *École Normale: Règlements, Programmes et Rapports* (Paris, 1837).
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18. See F.M.L. Thompson, ‘The Humanities’, in idem (ed.), *The University of London and the World of Learning* (London, 1990), 57–79, 62.
19. ‘Convocation of the University of London’, *The Times*, 25 Nov. 1858, 10.
20. ‘University of London’, *The Times*, 12 May 1859, 12; editorial, ‘Man Proposes, but a Higher Power Disposes’, *The Times*, 13 May 1859, 8.
21. University of London Archive, UoL/ST/2/2/6: Senate minute 151, 6 July 1864. The following list of requirements underlines that the request is for a social space rather than a repository of books, not repeating the word ‘library’ but listing as point no. 20: ‘A Reading-Room, about 25 feet by

- 20, with such other Apartments of smaller size as can be conveniently introduced for the occasional use of Members of the University' (minute 152).
22. University of London Archive, UoL/ULC/PC28/24; reproduced in Harte, *University of London*, 124.
 23. University of London Archive, UoL/ST/3/2/7, Library committee minutes of May 14 1872. The resolution thus to protect the books is recorded in Senate minute 194, 26 June 1871.
 24. 'The University of London', *The Times*, 9 May 1870, 6. Three days later, *The Times* reported Queen Victoria passing through the Library and the Examination-room when opening the University ('Court Circular', 9).
 25. For discontent with the divorce between teaching and examinations, see Harte, *University of London*, 139ff; F.M.G. Willson, *The University of London, 1858–1900: The Politics of Senate and Convocation* (Woodbridge, 2004), 221–4.
 26. University of London Archive, UoL/ST/3/2/8, Senate minute 96, 22 Apr. 1874.
 27. University of London Archive, UoL/ST/3/2/8, Senate minute 53, 15 Mar. 1871.
 28. The National Archives, 'Currency Converter', available at: <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/currency/> (accessed 14 Sept. 2012).
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 30. 'News of the Week', *The Spectator*, 1 Apr. 1871, 371; see also 'Miscellaneous', *Birmingham Daily Post*, 7 Apr. 1871, 6; 'Multiple News Items', *The Sheffield and Rotherham Independent*, 7 Apr. 1871, 3.
 31. 'News of the Week', *The Spectator*, 13 May 1871, 563.
 32. University of London Archive, UoL/ST/3/2/8, Senate minute 156, 14 June 1871; letter from Lord Overstone to W.B. Carpenter, Registrar, 10 June 1871; cited in *Catalogue of the Library of the University of London*, p. [iv].
 33. *Catalogue of the Library of the University of London*, p. [iii]. Praise of De Morgan's library continues into the twentieth century: for example, A.N.L. Munby, as a librarian interested in the history of collecting, termed De Morgan's library 'one of the best surviving collections of early scientific books formed at this date' and 'one of the major surviving collections formed before the present [i.e. twentieth] century' (A.N.L. Munby, *The History and Bibliography of Science in England: The First Phase, 1833–1845* (Berkeley, 1968), 12) and Adrian Rice, a mathematical historian, praised it as 'one of the finest accumulations of books on the history of

- mathematics in the country' ('Augustus De Morgan: Historian of Science', *History of Science*, 34 (1996), 201–40, 222).
34. University of London Archive, UoL/ST/3/2/8: Senate minutes 1871, 125, 'Presents'.
 35. Rye, Reginald Arthur, *The Libraries of London: A Guide for Students* (London, 1908), 24. This is the source that has been followed since.
 36. *Ibid.*, 24.
 37. A twenty-second book, Johannes de Muris, *Arithmetices Compendium ex Boetij Libris* ([Central Germany, c.1520]) is included in Senate House Library's incunabula collection and has been described with the incunabula (Margery F. Wild, *Incunabula in the Libraries of the University of London: A Hand-List* (London, 1964), no. 67), on the basis of De Morgan's tentative attribution to the book of incunabular status ('certainly of the very earliest part of the sixteenth century, if not of the fifteenth', Augustus De Morgan, *Arithmetical Books from the Invention of Printing to the Present Time: Being Brief Notices of a Large Number of Works Drawn up from Actual Inspection* (London, 1847), 3).
 38. Yvonne Fernillot uncovered a second copy in the Sorbonne in 1995. See Yvonne Fernillot, *Catalogues Régionaux des Incunables des Bibliothèques Publiques de France*, xii: *Bibliothèque de la Sorbonne...* (Paris, 1995), no. 287 (118).
 39. Sophia Elizabeth De Morgan, *Memoir of Augustus De Morgan* (London, 1881), 58.
 40. For extracts from Grote's diaries from 1818–19 showing the breadth of his reading, see Harriet Grote, *The Personal Life of George Grote* (2nd edn, London, 1873), 29–37; these have been transcribed in 'The Reading Experience Database (RED), 1450–1945', available at: <http://www.open.ac.uk/Arts/reading/UK/>. For more general reference, see also M.L. Clarke, *George Grote: A Biography* (London, 1962), 17–18; 174–5. Grote's bookishness is also noted in: Joseph Hamburger, 'Grote, George (1794–1871)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004); online edn, May 2008: <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/11677> (accessed 11 Sept. 2013). For a comparison of De Morgan's and Grote's book collecting, see K.E. Attar, 'Victorian Readers and their Library Records Today', in Matthew Bradley & Juliet John (eds), *Reading and the Victorians* (Farnham, forthcoming).
 41. Rye, *Libraries of London*, 24.
 42. E.g. John Barrow, *An Account of Travels into the Interior of Southern Africa in the Years 1897 and 1798* (London, 1801); Mary Carpenter, *Six Months in India* (London, 1868); Morris Birkbeck, *Letters from Illinois* (3rd edn, London, 1818); Joseph Businger, *Luzern und seine Umgebungen* (Lucerne, 1833); Samuel Marwell, *Narrative of Voyages to New South Wales and the East Indies in 1840, 1841, 1842, and 1843, and to New York and the West Indies, in 1843 and 1844* (London, 1846).

43. 'Presents', Senate minutes 1873, p. 132; Senate minute 148, 21 June 1876; Senate minute 279, 27 Oct. 1880; 'Presents', Senate minutes 1884, p. 164.
44. The range of prices for academic books is taken from advertisements for books published by Macmillan and by Oxford University Press at the front of University of London calendars from the 1870s.
45. Wing (2nd edn) M2492; ESTC R201294.
46. University of London Archive, UoL/ST/3/2/7: University of London, Minutes of Committees, 1867–1880.
47. University of London Archive, UoL/ST/2/2/10: Senate minute 76, 30 March 1881.
48. University of London Archive, UoL/ST/2/2/8: Senate minutes 312–3, 18 Dec. 1872.
49. See Willson, *University of London* for brief information about Milman and the other nineteenth-century Assistant Registrars. Further information about Milman is to be found in Senate minute 57, 13 Mar. 1873, 26–7.
50. University of London Archive, UoL/ST/2/2/8: Senate minute 96, 15 May 1872.
51. Letter from Treasury Chambers, 31 May 1872, reported in University of London Archive, UoL/ST/2/2/8: Senate minute 151, 24 July 1872.
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53. University of London Archive, UoL/ST/2/2/8: Senate minute 62, 13 Mar 1873. The number of volumes of bound pamphlets was probably 317: see volumes currently classified at (B.P.) 1–303; * (IV) Cd (B.P.1–14); [DeM] Z (B.P. 304–334), [DeM] Z (B.P. 354–363); [DeM] Z (B.P. 366); [DeM] Z (B.P. 370); [DeM] K (B.P.1–2); [DeM] L (B.P.1) SSR; [DeM] L (B.P.21) SSR; [DeM] L.1 (B.P.1) fol.; [DeM] L.1 [B.P.1] SSR.
54. University of London Archive, UoL/ST/3/2/8: Report of the Library Committee presented to the Senate at its meeting of 18 Nov. 1874. As an indication of the difference the payment made to Nichols's income, in 1874 the salary for Senior Assistants in the British Museum ranged from £200 to £400 (Harris, *History of the British Museum Library*, 294).
55. Senate minute 311 of 18 December 1872 ordered: 'That the Catalogue now being prepared be printed in slip, the type remaining undistributed until further orders' (University of London Archive, UoL/ST/3/2/8). No clue remains of the earliest catalogue as a finding aid.

56. Present in the Library's card catalogue, and stated there to be a presentation copy. See University of London Library card catalogue, <http://cards.ucl.ac.uk>, drawer Rich to Richa, card 371.
57. B.P. 145 (Boucherett); B.P. 148 (Martin and Schomburgk).
58. [before DeM] Z (B.P.355–9). There are exceptions, such as an entry for a Mallet-Bachelier catalogue of 1860 in 'DeM] Z (B.P.357), although not for two other Mallet-Bachelier catalogues in the same volume.
59. University of London Archive, UoL/UL/1/1/1: Minutes of the Library and Gazette and Calendar Committee, 21 Jan. 1907.
60. See University of London, *The Calendar for the Year 1877* (London, 1877), 175, and subsequent years. For the first presentation of the new rules allowing for loans, see University of London, *The Calendar for the Year 1880* (London, 1880), 190–2.
61. See University College London, *Calendar, Session MDCCCLXXVII–LXXVIII* (London, 1877), 225–6; King's College, London, *The Calendar of King's College, London, for 1846* (London, 1846).
62. Rules are also readily accessible for Mason's Science College Library, Birmingham (Thompson, *Centennial History*, 6–7). Loan conditions at Birmingham were three books for fifteen days. Only teaching staff and those permitted by the trustees could borrow books.
63. See Rosemary Dixon, 'Libraries: Presbyterian/Unitarian', in Isabel Rivers & David Wykes (ed.), *A History of the Dissenting Academies in the British Isles, 1660–1860* (Cambridge University Press, forthcoming).
64. For example, in a survey of 1909, 'Organisation of the University Libraries', the University of London Library stated as its constituents 'Especially Members of Convocation, Post-graduate Students and External Students', and Library Committee minute 79 of 27 June 1910, suggesting that the University Library should hold a copy of every book set as a Special Subject for university examinations, added: 'It is of course not intended that such a plan should apply to the ordinary Classical books or common text books' (University of London Archive, UoL/UL/1/1). A summary of the function of the University Library in 1930, repeating a scheme laid before the Senate in 1923, mentions post-graduates and special students' books but not undergraduates ('Report on the University Library, B: Function and Purpose since 1900', University of London Archive, UoL/UL/1/4).
65. These are 449 titles printed 1831–40 (the beginning of the machine-press period), 586 printed 1841–50, 383 printed 1851–60 and 321 printed 1861–71. The titles admittedly include a large number of offprints and some sale catalogues. Grote's books are harder to quantify because the only source of information is the 1877 printed catalogue.
66. For the Victorian mathematical scene, see Raymond Flood, Adrian Rice & Robin Wilson (eds), *Mathematics in Victorian Britain* (Oxford, 2011).
67. Thompson, 'The Humanities', 61–2.

68. Information about the curriculum and examinations is taken from University of London, *The Calendar for the Year 1877*; references to requirements for 1876 are from University of London, *The Calendar for the Year 1875*.
69. Required authors were Virgil, Horace, Cicero, Livy, Tacitus, Homer, Xenophon, Plautus, Terence, Lucretius, Homer, Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides, Herodotus, Thucydides, Plato, Xenophon, and Demosthenes.
70. Authors present were Milton, Chaucer, Pope, Bacon, Spenser, and Shakespeare. If the examination is extended to 1876, three further authors are wanting: Ascham, *Toxophilus* and *The Schoolmaster*, Cowper, and Tennyson's *Arthurian Poems*.
71. If the curricula for 1875 and 1876 are taken into account, two textbooks are present and five absent.
72. The library held Guizot's *Essai sur l'histoire de France* but not works by Alfred de Vigny, Casimir Delavigne, Montesquieu, Cardinal de Retz, Victor Hugo, nor Saint-Marc Girardin's *Cours de littérature dramatique*.
73. One of these, *Histoire de la législation romaine et généralisation du droit romain* (the Institutes of Justinian with Ortolan's commentary) is listed in the catalogue of 1900.
74. See *Catalogue of Books in the General Library and in the South Library of University College London* and, for Whitney, *Supplement to the Catalogue of Books . . .* (London, 1897). The five examination authors/titles not held by University College London were Kington Oliphant, *Sources of Standard English* (1873); William Dwight Whitney, *Language and its Study* (1876); Alfred de Vigny, *Eloa* and *Moïse*; Saint-Marc Girardin, *Cours de littérature dramatique* (1845 or later editions); and Walter Bagehot, *Physics and Politics* (1872).
75. The most significant gifts whose donors particularly wanted London to be the recipient were the Goldsmiths' Library of Economic Literature (1903) and the Sterling Library (1956); see Karen Attar, 'Senate House Library: The First Hundred Years', in Christopher Pressler & Karen Attar (eds), *Senate House Library, University of London* (London, 2012), x–xxi. For the establishment of the University of London Library's role, see quinquennial reports held in the University of London Archive: UoL/UL/1/1.

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