

LEGACY OF Dr. S.R. RANGANATHAN

Professional librarians, documentationists and information scientists can derive a legitimate pride in their good fortune of being fellow countrymen of Dr. S. R. Ranganathan, whose birth centenary is being celebrated currently. It is often said that what Newton was to physics, Dr. Ranganathan was to library science. But Newton's efforts went only to extend the frontiers of a discipline already well established. On the other hand, Dr. Ranganathan's efforts helped to create a new discipline where none existed previously or existed only as a nebulous concept.

Dr. Ranganathan's contributions to library and information dissemination are unique and immense. He was a volcano of nascent thoughts and ideas. There is no field of library science which did not benefit from the impact of his personality. He gave the profession its celebrated five laws of library science. He is revered as the creator of Colon Classification. He provided new lead and insight into activities like facet analysis, chain indexing, canons of cataloguing, depth classification and so forth.

He was a prolific writer authoring over 50 works, 2000 papers and scores of library development plans including library legislations. As a teacher and educationist, he had few peers. No wonder that he is variously described as the 'Father of Library Science in India', 'Great Messiah of Library World' etc., even terms like prophet, seer, saint, etc., have been used for him by acknowledged leaders of world opinion from time to time. He richly deserves all this acclaim and accolade.

The Indian National Scientific Documentation Centre (INSDOC) had the good fortune of being associated with Dr. Ranganathan right from its inception in 1952 as the founder and the chairman of its first Advisory Committee. Dr. Ranganathan had made immense contribution in shaping the programmes and policies of INSDOC. His guidance was particularly useful to the Centre for overcoming its teething problems and getting its proper bearing and sense of direction during its formative years.

Building assiduously upon the lead and guidelines provided by Dr. Ranganathan, INSDOC has steadily acquired a status where it is counted among the leading centres for information retrieval in various fields of science and technology.

The Annals of Library Science and Documentation, originally published as Annals of Library Science had also the unique distinction that its Founder Editor was none other than Dr. Ranganathan himself. He had conceived this journal in the nature of a medium in which the leading lights of the profession could share their ideas and views on various issues of topical interest. It was also meant to be a channel for publication of original research studies. It remains a matter of credit for us that in his life time, Dr. S. R. Ranganathan had drawn extensively on the columns of this journal for propagating his numerous original contributions. He regarded the Annals as a primary sounding board to test check the validity of various hypotheses and theories advanced by him from time to time.

They say example is better than precept. Dr. Ranganathan's illustrious example of dedicated and selfless service which has left an indelible impress on the sands of time will continue to be a source of sustained inspiration for generations of librarians, documentalists and information scientists which follow. INSDOC and Annals of Library Science and Documentation can pay no greater homage to the memory of their great mentor than to renew their pledge to live upto the ideals and expectations cherished by him.