

Perhaps we approach the end of a period. Many of these surveys occurred in an administrative interregnum, laying the foundation for a new program. Within the decade of these comprehensive surveys much change in chief administrative positions has taken place. It is conceivable that this crop of vigorous regimes will adopt a new attack. Two alternatives suggest themselves: the survey by non-librarians, supplementing modern administrative theory; and the limited, specific study of a single problem.

Most library surveys are made by librarians. Although they may add the weight of outside authority to locally-held views, they are drawn from a common reservoir of wisdom; a survey by experts is next door to a self-survey. It would be interesting to experiment with an examination of the end-products of library techniques and administration by the users, rather than the manufacturers.

An alert administration can readily identify a handful of specific local problems that will certainly yield to determined expert study, without being able to supply—from stock—the expertness required, or the time needed. This calls, not for the grand, comprehensive survey, but for a concentrated attack. What university administration will be so realistic as to employ a specialist in research, or a series of experts, to explore its community's needs for the subject cataloging of certain kinds of materials; the relation between undergraduate teaching methods and library services; or the analysis of the reference function in the large university library system? These are matters which commend themselves to the graduate library schools, but there is some doubt that libraries can await the necessarily slow processes of such agencies.—*Donald Coney, University of California Library, Berkeley.*

The Survey at Columbia

"Report of a Survey of the Technical Services of the Columbia University Libraries," by Maurice F. Tauber [and] L. Quincy Mumford. "A Report on Certain Problems of the Libraries and School of Library Service," by Louis R. Wilson, Keyes D. Metcalf [and] Donald Coney, chairman, New York N.Y., Columbia University Libraries, 1947. 57p., 85p. (Mimeographed).

These two publications, taken together, constitute a survey of the most important problems which confronted the new library administration at Columbia when it assumed responsibility for the libraries and the School of Library Service about five years ago. The release of these reports has been delayed because they were prepared in 1944 for the guidance of the university administration and the library administration, and these purposes could be served without publication. The reports have now been made available because it appeared that many of the problems faced at Columbia are not unlike those to be found in other large university library systems, and hence the solutions proposed by the surveyors for Columbia might be considered to have applications in other institutions. Even where the problems of an institution's libraries may seem quite unlike those at Columbia, it

is not unreasonable to expect that the recommendations made for Columbia may suggest solutions which might be suitable.

These survey reports may be considered as administrative reports, since they deal in very considerable part with problems which had been identified by the library administration, and for which, in at least some instances, tentative solutions had been proposed. They are concerned primarily with problems that fall within the jurisdiction of the administrative officers of the libraries and of the university rather than with matters of interest to members of the faculty or to the administrative officers of the various colleges and schools. Although this type of survey has apparently come into fairly common use by administrative officers of large libraries, the reports prepared as a result of these studies are seldom made available in published form, and are not widely known. These Columbia reports are the more welcome for this reason.

A second feature of these survey reports is the method by which they were prepared. They are not based so much on extensive compilations of data and extended series of conferences with faculty members and general university administrative officers as are some library surveys. Instead, the reports

appear to be based on data submitted by the library administration and by responsible library staff members through the form of written reports or conferences or both. Using these sources for data bearing on the problems, the surveyors have proceeded to outline their proposed solutions in the light of their personal experience and of general principles of library administration and operation. This type of survey was well adapted to Columbia since it was not faced with the problems which have confronted many other institutions that have used surveys as means of working toward the solution of their problems. In many institutions where surveys have been made it has been apparent not only that an impartial outside view on the problems of the library was desirable, but that, in addition, it was necessary, both in assembling the information on which the survey report was to be written and also through the instrument of the report itself, that strong support for the recommendations be developed among the faculty and administrative officers of the university.

The report dealing with the technical services is concerned largely with the clarification of lines of authority and responsibility. The identification of the functions to be performed by the various departments and divisions and the recommendations as to assignments of responsibility necessary in order to effect a proper ordering of all of the activities involved is dealt with in a thorough manner. The chief recommendation of this report is that a responsible administrative officer be placed in charge of the technical departments and that he be authorized to act for the director in these areas except in matters of broad policy with which the director might consider it desirable to concern himself. The analysis of the activities of these departments and of the staff required to perform them, in itself constitutes justification for the position.

The second report represents more completely than that on technical services the "general impression" survey rather than the detailed factual survey. It is concerned with the government and administration of the libraries, personnel, budget, accounting and fiscal procedures, the program for the library, the building needs of the library, library privileges, exhibits, and the School of Library Service. In the area of government, the re-

port considers the responsibilities of the library council and the representation of the libraries, in the person of the director, on the university council. Suggestions are also made for a closer integration of the libraries of the institutions associated with Columbia and the Columbia University libraries themselves.

The administrative organization recommended for the libraries and put into effect shortly after the reports were written, provides for three assistant directors responsible for general administration, readers' services and technical services. The division of authority and responsibility set up for these positions is indicated only briefly in the report and has been worked out through experience over the past few years. The wisdom of this form of organization for a library system as large as Columbia's has now been demonstrated by experience.

The chapter devoted to the library program might be called the charter for the libraries. The importance, in such an undertaking, of assessing, first, the place of the libraries in the university, next, the place of the university libraries in the metropolitan area, and finally, the place of the university libraries in the national and international intellectual and cultural world, is presented with a clear realization that the potentialities of the Columbia libraries are very great and that they can be fully realized only if they are conceived on a high plane with clear perception of all the possibilities presented by the physical location and the position of leadership which has already been achieved. That it is easier to describe such a program in terms of its elements than actually to produce it, and that it is still more difficult to realize in actuality the program which may be set forth is readily acknowledged, yet the importance of the basic conception of the program is apprehended as vital to any accomplishment which is not to fall far short of the objectives which may be reasonably set up.

The chapter dealing with the School of Library Service identifies the chief problem of the school as a financial one, and suggests that the solution to many of its problems cannot be found until a stable annual budget can be assured. Means by which the educational program of the school may be expanded and strengthened so that a program leading to the

doctorate may be reasonably undertaken are outlined. In the discussion of the curriculum the analysis is not as thorough and detailed as might have been expected, nor does it concern itself fully with some of the questions which library school administrators and faculty members have had to face in the past few years. The question of the degree to be granted after a one-year course is settled in favor of the bachelor's degree and some doubt is expressed concerning the comprehensive examination program. The new curriculum which is being inaugurated at Columbia this fall undoubtedly drew some of its elements and its guiding principles from this chapter, particularly as regards the strengthening of the graduate program. The chapter, however, seems to accept the traditional first year program as settled, whereas the new program at Columbia represents significant departures from the first year program of the past twenty years.

As informed studies by experienced univer-

sity librarians of important problems in one of the major university library systems in the country, these reports are of value not only to the institution for which they were prepared, but as contributions to the literature of university librarianship. It is to be hoped that at some date in the not distant future a well-qualified person, perhaps one of the members of the original survey committee, will be invited back to Columbia to study the progress which has been made in dealing with these problems and to prepare a report showing the experience of the libraries in the ensuing five-year period in attempting to put into effect the recommendations contained in the survey reports.

All who are interested in or concerned with the administrative problems of large university libraries will read these reports with attention and possibly use with profit.—*Stephen A. McCarthy, Cornell University Library.*

Classification for International Law

"Classification for International Law." Based on Elsie Basset's *Outline of Topic Headings for Books on International Law and Relations in Classified Form* and expanded by Kurt Schwerin. Charlottesville, Va., University of Virginia Law Library, c1947.

It may not seem quite fair to appraise from the point of view of its general usefulness a tool which was developed primarily for the use of one particular library, and whose chief merit must be measured by the degree to which it fulfills the needs of that library. As the foreword suggests, however, it is hoped that the present classification scheme will find wider application; the following comments are therefore offered on the basis of this statement.

The classification follows Miss Basset's *Outline of Topic Headings for Books on International Law and Relations in Classified Form*, published as Appendix 2 of her *Cataloging Manual for Law Libraries* (New York, Wilson, 1942). Dr. Schwerin's contribution consists of the expansion of the notation and, in several instances, the interpolation and rearrangement of topics.

The scheme is divided into three sections:

Treatises on International Law, Treatises on International Relations, and Reports and Documents. A list of examples of call numbers taken from the catalog of the University of Virginia Law Library, a list of country symbols, and an outline of classification for private international law (conflict of laws) are appended. The section, *Treatises on International Law*, is subdivided into an introductory general part which is not limited to treatises but includes various forms of publications, e.g. case books, encyclopedias, bibliographies, etc., and into parts on the state, maritime law, diplomacy, treaties, international disputes, and war. The section, *International Relations*, has no formal subdivisions and includes a multitude of topics. It begins with general subjects of world politics, including the history of alliances and wars from the American Revolution down to the present reconstruction period. The history of the foreign relations of the United States and of other countries, with which the outline is continued, is followed by topics of peace, peace congresses, questions of disarmament and international congresses, the League of Nations, and the United Nations. Special topics