

Review Articles

The University Library

The University Library; the Organization, Administration, and Functions of Academic Libraries. By Louis Round Wilson and Maurice F. Tauber. 2d ed. New York: Columbia University Press, 1956. xiv, 641 p. \$7.50.

The redoubtable team of Wilson and Tauber, surveyors extraordinary, have undertaken to bring up to date their encyclopedic textbook on modern American university library practice. The approach is primarily by way of a systematic review of the pertinent literature, with frequent notes and extensive chapter bibliographies. Obviously the authors have drawn on their own uncommonly rich experience in surveying particular libraries during the last two decades or so, but basically this work is carefully, perhaps overzealously, documented. From this point of view the authors have done a thorough and current job of revisions; the chapter bibliographies appear to be completely rebuilt.

The purpose of the volume is indicated as being "to review the changes which have taken place in the university library in response to the demands made upon it by university growth; to consider systematically the principles and methods of university and library administration; and to formulate generalizations concerning the organization, administration, and functions of the university library."

Toward this end there are discussions beginning with the functions of the university and its library and ranging through several aspects of library administration and organization, personnel matters, the book collections—what they comprise and how they are developed—the teaching function of the library, cooperation and specialization, buildings and equipment, off-campus relations of the librarian, and public relations. A final chapter raises a number of university library problems that require further investigation and research. As this final chapter has been revised, one finds that in the years since the first edition of 1940 the problem of finance

has raised its ugly head to become a major problem today. Other quite new problems relate to bibliography and documentation. In this new edition the undergraduate library appears for the first time as a significant trend in academic libraries, and on the dismal side, we hear seriously for the first time about the problem of "labeling." It appears from the authors' final summary that since 1940 librarians have become "more introspective and have not been as willing as they have been in the past to accept the status quo or the opinion of the leaders in the profession." This is indeed heartening praise.

One would be hard put to find an aspect of the subject not reported in some degree. If one is concerned with the recreational value of afternoon tea for the staff or with programs of cooperative specialization in collection building, Wilson and Tauber will state the issues, describe the general trends in current practice, and give some good hints on further reading.

Throughout the book the authors find and state the need for further research, for more systematic scrutiny, and for the accumulation of better and more consistent data in the whole field of academic librarianship. Too frequently, they find, the university librarian must base his judgment on subjective impressions rather than on factual evidence. Even while recognizing that many administrative problems are perhaps best answered by subjective conclusions based in rich experience, one can only agree heartily with the authors that the amount of illuminating research into library problems is distressingly low. This serious shortcoming is the strongest argument for bringing into the profession, particularly into our library school faculties, people who have both a capacity and a desire for significant research.

Related to this matter of research is the authors' open-minded attitude toward major problems under discussion. Almost consistently they present a variety of approaches, leaving it to the individual proponent of one pattern, such as the divisional plan, to live or die by that pattern. Related also is their strong emphasis on the need for more thorough his-

torical studies into American university librarianship. Too frequently, it seems, we are making decisions without concern for the fact that the same problems have been faced many times before. In this regard it may be well to note that no historical or comparative look at academic libraries can avoid experience in other countries than our own. Even Wilson and Tauber look toward Europe only briefly when discussing trends in library education. That rich *History of the Bodleian Library* by Sir Edmund Craster, for example, ought to be read carefully by every American university librarian. As a professional group we are curiously non-historical and monolingual.

Another difficulty, it seems to this reviewer, that we face in discussing the university library in this country stems from inadequate information about the university that it serves. Wilson and Tauber touch on this in an early chapter, and they wisely recognize that local university administrative experience will basically effect the tendency in the local library. Discussions of the varying relationship of professional school libraries to the central library administration, for example, might be more fruitful if considered openly in the light of the varying relationship of professional schools and their deans to the central university administration. However, the average librarian learns about university power politics only through experience. But where else to learn? Our American university presidents are generally reticent about discussing the theory and practice of university education and administration. Consequently, in this country we unfortunately have no journal with the scope and dignity of the *British Universities Quarterly*.

The literature of librarianship, is, however, becoming extensive. This, coupled with the variety of practice and the frequency which practice changes, makes occasional syntheses essential. *Library Trends* was born recently because of this need. Wilson and Tauber answer the need for the whole broad field of American academic librarianship. What they set out to do they have done with clarity and thoroughness as we would expect of them.—*Robert Vosper, University of Kansas Libraries.*

Mass Communication

The Process and Effects of Mass Communication. Edited by Wilbur Schramm. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1954, 586 p.

Not long after beginning the reading of this volume a strong sense of having been over all of this ground before stimulated recall of the fact that the same editor and the same press had produced two previous anthologies of material in the general field of mass communication. A question about the need for a third one came naturally to mind and precipitated a re-examination of the two earlier volumes. The question proved to be not easily answered and led finally to a fairly detailed analysis of the content of all three volumes under four different criteria. A succinct summary of that analysis proving elusive, it is presented here as possibly constituting evidence of the extent of progress in the field of communication research and thinking during a six-year period.

The first volume edited by Mr. Schramm, published in 1948 and entitled *Communication in Modern Society*, differs from the other two in that the authors included came together and participated in the Illinois Institute of Communications Research. "Out of this conference grew the papers" in the 1948 anthology. Those 15 papers were thus original writing at that particular point in time.

The second of these florilegia edited by Mr. Schramm was entitled *Mass Communications* and was published in 1949. It is a more conventional anthology of pieces previously published in books and journals and brought together as "a book of readings selected and edited for the Institute of Communications Research in the University of Illinois," and tied together with a small amount of original connective tissue written by the editor. The volume presently under review follows this latter pattern with a somewhat greater amount of connective tissue.

Early writing in a new field quite normally and usually takes the form of the essay. It is made up of speculations as the result of thinking on the part of the author; all of this as opposed to the reporting of objective and empirical research. As a field develops the essay type of writing tends to decrease