Review Articles

Patterns of Scholarship

Changing Patterns of Scholarship and the Future of Research Libraries: A symposium in celebration of the 200th Anniversary of the establishment of the University of Pennsylvania Library. [Rudolph Hirsch, editor] Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1951. 133p. $2.50.

This is an important contribution to the literature of research librarianship. While the individual papers contain little that is new, the cumulative effect of the papers under the special circumstances of the symposium is very interesting. Participating in the symposium was an experienced group of some eight major speakers and twelve discussants. Of the total group, thirteen are now, or until quite recently have been, associated directly with research library administration. The other seven contributors are principally engaged in teaching and research and related scholarly pursuits. Much of the interest grows out of the fact that the speakers were assigned their topics, in advance of the meetings, with specific and, in a number of instances, provocative commentaries. A fair share of interest in reading the symposium therefore, relates to the contrast between what those who are primarily librarians and what those who are primarily scholars have to say on some of these common topics. The papers are also interesting for the other variant views they contain and for what is not said.

The topics cannot all be equally important, but a very wide range of the critically current and important is covered. The commentaries in a number of instances are so phrased as to reveal an intentional or unintentional bias on the part of the organizer, Charles W. David, which the speakers sometimes accept, and sometimes depart from quite sharply.

It is neither necessary nor possible for this review to attempt to summarize all the aspects of this Symposium, but it is appropriate to indicate the nature of some of the topics and, where it seems possible, something concerning the kinds of answers that were presented. The general topics of the Symposium together with the principal speakers were as follows:

"Patterns of Research and Changing Library Needs," *Crane Brinton* and *Conway Zinkle.* Discussion by *Ralph A. Beals* and *George A. Hutchinson.*

"The Ever-Expanding Demand for Materials and the Threatened Decline of Support: How shall the Gap be Filled?", *Keyes D. Metcalf.* Discussion by *Luther Evans* and *Alfred H. Williams.*

"The Research Library in Contemporary Society: A Problem of the Proper Recognition of Services Rendered," *Carl M. White.* Discussion by *Kurt Peiser* and *Louis B. Wright.*

"The Balance of Conflicting Interests in the Building of Collections: Comprehensiveness versus Selectivity," *Verner W. Clapp* and *Ralph Ellsworth.* Discussion by *Albert C. Baugh* and *Donald Coney.*

"Libraries and Scholarship: Should Libraries Be Passive Instruments of, or Active Participants in, Research?", *Harry M. Lydenberg.* Discussion by *Conyers Read* and *Warner G. Rice.*

"What Type Research Librarian?", *Louis Round Wilson.* Discussion by *C. H. Brown* and *Donald F. Cameron.*

In the presentation these topics were divided into two major areas: "The Library" and "The Intellectual Process." As the topics were outlined and presented, this distinction was not very meaningful. The pattern of the symposium consisted in the presentation for each topic of a major, but brief, paper—in two instances, two papers were presented—followed by a more or less formal commentary or extension of remarks by two discussants. Following this there was usually some further very informal discussion including the program participants and the audience. Only the last element of the program is omitted from the published volume. It will be seen that the title of the book is a little misleading since it turns out that the papers deal with changing patterns of research in only a very limited way.

There are a few general observations that one may hazard on these interesting proceedings. First, the papers indicate that the scholars and the librarians—to set up a dichotomy that is common in our professional vocabularies but which is often non-existent in practice, as Wilson reveals very nicely in his paper —are, in a considerable measure, concerned

about the same things, but the answers to their concerns often take quite different directions.

There is a widely expressed concern with the physical growth of libraries and the increase in the costs of operation of large scholarly libraries. There is some mutual concern with bibliographical organization.

The humanistic scholar's approach to these problems is given by Messrs. Brinton, Baugh, and Read, and one can distinguish common and divergent attitudes even though each of these speakers participated in different topics. Brinton does not seem concerned with either the growth of literature or the bibliographical organization of it. He pleads for even greater coverage including what he recognizes as the apparently trivial and ephemeral, but is satisfied to leave library bibliographical organization at approximately its present levels. His views are succinctly put in the first paragraph where he says that the demand upon facilities ". . . is . . . almost infinite, wholly elastic. We shall take what you give us, and always ask for more."

Baugh, while stating the case for fairly comprehensive coverage, recognizes that some degree of selectivity in library acquisitions is inevitable and outlines the levels on which selectivity might well be approached. At the level of greatest specialization he joins with Coney in asserting that the collecting policies of the research library should reflect the current interests of the faculty.

Conyers Read in a series of forceful and refreshing remarks implies that exhaustive coverage in special subject fields might best emerge in the future from an increasing number of smaller specialized libraries such as the Folger and the Library of the College of Physicians. He hopes that such libraries can be established. These libraries could concentrate their collecting about a limited subject area and develop concurrently special bibliographical tools of great value to research personnel.

The scientists, Zirkle and Hutchinson, seem in some ways closer to the thinking of the librarians. Zirkle and Hutchinson both recognize the fundamentally critical aspects of the present rates of growth. Zirkle recognizes the problem essentially in terms of the need for a far more elaborate and efficient bibliographical organization of literature, but Hutchinson points out more clearly than anyone else in the symposium that a large amount of the growth is wasteful and redundant and recognizes that among the fundamental solutions is a requirement that research personnel write only when they have something worth saying and then do so clearly and succinctly. But Mr. Hutchinson makes another observation of importance that may easily be overlooked, for he does not stress the point. He urges that ". . . a great deal more effort should be put into making comprehensive monographs and summaries that really do render most copies of everything that went before quite unnecessary, at least in the sciences." It has been for a long time one of the most firmly established scholarly traditions that an author should always go to the original sources—if he can. A basic change in the methods of scholarship of the kind outlined would obviously be difficult to carry through, yet, in the opinion of the reviewer, such a change in many fields of knowledge may well become imperative. The sheer growth of knowledge will require that scholars be increasingly concerned about the efficient disposition of their time, and they will more and more find it impossible to read and digest all of the relevant original works bearing on a piece of investigation—even if the original works are isolated by an efficient bibliographical apparatus.

The librarians believe that individual libraries cannot be complete on all aspects of knowledge, but there appears to be no consistent agreement among them on the effects of this observation and the ways in which it should be recognized and met. It is said that libraries will, and should, continue to be as complete as their individual resources will permit, that they can solve the problem either at the national or regional level through cooperation in storage and acquisition, that interlibrary loan is not an adequate substitute for immediate access, that the importance of immediate access is tangible but quantitatively and qualitatively unknown, that the solution is not one of contraction in collecting and services, but greater public recognition and support, that federal and industrial support of large research libraries may be a partial answer, that the relation of collections to bibliography—local, regional, national, subject—is important, but imperfectly understood.

From all of this it becomes clear that both the librarians and the scholars are conscious of critical problems affecting research libraries. On the whole the librarians are more conscious of the ramifications of the problems than are the scholars. While there are a large number of solutions and partial solutions suggested, there is no real unanimity on the direction in which solutions are most likely to be found. Furthermore it is important to note that many of the proffered answers are unlikely to be within our grasp in the immediate future. Above all it is apparent that there are major gaps in our general knowledge of scholarly needs and behavior that urgently require filling, if we are to find appropriate answers. It is in the stimulus to such thinking that the principal value of this book rests. We congratulate the University of Pennsylvania on this highly constructive observation of the 200th anniversary of the founding of its library.—*Herman H. Fussler, University of Chicago Library.*

Philosophy of Professional Education

Social Work Education in the United States; the report of a study made for the National Council on Social Work Education. By Ernest V. Hollis and Alice L. Taylor. New York, Columbia University Press, 1951. xviii, 422p. $5.50.

Librarians familiar with the activities leading to presentation of standards for accreditation by the American Library Association's Board of Education for Librarianship to the Association's Council last summer, will remember the senior author of this study, Ernest V. Hollis, for his two appearances before groups of the library profession in the interests of clarifying basic issues and reaching an understanding of the proper role of an accrediting body within a profession. In the opinion of this reviewer, then chairman of the Board of Education for Librarianship, Hollis' steadying hand based on wide experience and study of professional education was a significant factor in producing a document which received the Council's unanimous approval (reported in *American Library Association Bulletin* 46: 48-9, February, 1952).

This study of social work education was done with the assistance of Alice L. Taylor, training consultant, Bureau of Public Assistance, Federal Security Agency, and in consultation with many others in the field of higher education in general and social work education in particular. Titles of the three major sections describe its scope: I. Foundations for Educational Planning; II. Charting a course for Social Work Education; and III. Implications: Translating the report into action. The book is reviewed here, not so much for its contribution to the field of Social Work Education, which will no doubt be considerable, but rather for its relevance to current problems in developing a sound program of professional education for librarianship. The questions in common with librarianship are many including: (1) need for a more thorough understanding of the evolution of education for librarianship; (2) need to define more clearly the scope and status of library work and to take cognizance of the probable future role of librarians in a highly complex society; (3) decisions as to the respective roles of the undergraduate and graduate colleges in the professional education of librarians and the desirable administrative structure within institutions of higher education; (4) educational responsibilities of professional associations; (5) accreditation. Except for some elision and the substitution of library work for social work, the above topics are actually the chapter headings of the Hollis-Taylor study.

Working backwards with respect to the above list of topics, six different organizations are now engaged in some form of accreditation of social work education or have expressed such intentions: (1) American Association of Medical Social Workers; (2) American Association of Psychiatric Social Workers; (3) American Association of Group Workers; (4) National Association of School Social Workers; (5) American Association of Schools of Social Work (54 schools accredited up to 1950); and (6) National Association of Schools of Social Work Administration (listing 39 members in 1950). The first four are individual membership organizations, the last two, associations of institutions. A fundamental cleavage between the latter stems from differences of opinion on the amount of general education that should precede the professional program and on the nature of preprofessional