

that he has made in developing their ability to analyze library problems.

In the survey of the libraries of the Alabama Polytechnic Institute, Dean Wilson and Mr. Orr provide a workable blueprint of library action for the future. The surveyors display a keen grasp of the numerous and varied problems of an expanding land-grant institution and suggest constructive solutions which should be understandable to the administration and library staff of A.P.I. The survey is also notable for its inclusion of up-to-date developments in library practice as applied to the A.P.I. situation. There appears to be no question that many of the land-grant college libraries have not fared too well in support, collections, buildings, personnel and organization. A number of the findings of Dean Wilson and Mr. Orr are similar to those gathered at the Virginia Polytechnic Institute libraries, which were surveyed recently by William H. Jesse and your reviewer.¹ The Wilson-Orr report should aid considerably in the understanding of land-grant college library problems. The aimlessness in some land-grant college library programs should not be allowed to continue.

It is perhaps worth noting that the A.P.I. survey is attractively printed, in addition to being well organized and well written. It can be used to advantage by librarians of other institutions, especially land-grant colleges, who are concerned with their library programs.

The New Hampshire survey by Dr. McCarthy considers detailed problems of government and administration, services, collections, personnel, budget and budget procedure, and building. Dr. McCarthy demonstrates that he has a clear recognition of the library problems at New Hampshire, and his recommendations for improving the services are moderate and thoughtful. One of the best statements this reviewer has seen on "The Place of the Library in the University" appears in Section IX. Although Dr. McCarthy does not employ the method of statistical comparison with other institutions, he uses standards wherever necessary in order to provide a basis for recommendations. The report should prove helpful to the New Hampshire administration in its solution of its library problems.—*Maurice F. Tauber, Columbia University.*

L.C. Subject Headings

Subject Headings Used in the Dictionary Catalogs of the Library of Congress. 5th ed. Edited by Nella Jane Martin. Washington, U.S. Government Printing Office, 1948, viii, 1204p. \$6.50.

A completely new format which should enhance its efficiency and usefulness distinguishes the fifth edition of the Library of Congress subject list for which librarians have been waiting since mid-1947. Through the use of double columns on a larger page, suitable abbreviations, and a smaller, though easily legible type face, the subject heading list has been confined to a single volume. Although the resulting book is bulky, its eight pounds only exceeds the weight of the first volume of the fourth edition by one, and this edition is far more convenient to use.

¹ Tauber, Maurice F. and Jesse, William H. *Report of a Survey of the Libraries of the Virginia Polytechnic Institute, for the Virginia Polytechnic Institute, January-May, 1949.* Blacksburg, Virginia Polytechnic Institute, 1949. 120p.

By using boldface for main headings and lightface roman type for references and subdivisions (the latter formerly distinguished by italics) and by grouping all references to and from a heading under its single listing, the editor has contributed substantially to a saving in the user's time. The form to which librarians became accustomed in the H. W. Wilson supplements to the fourth edition has now been adopted with but little change for the main work. Similarly, by incorporating the rules for geographic subdivision in the preface, and by continuing to show specifications as to type of subdivision following each heading, the need for one auxiliary list (*Subject Headings with Local Subdivisions*. 5th ed. 1935) has now been erased for all but the occasional user. The resulting product is indeed an impressive example of a well-designed and efficiently arranged library tool. Particularly noteworthy is its freedom from error, both in content and typography. A few

errors have crept in, to be sure, but remarkably few for a work so difficult to compile and to edit. And these errors, it should be noted, are being corrected in the supplements as soon as they are noted.

No major changes have been made in the content of the list itself, except, of course, for the sizable increase in new headings which have been introduced since the publication of the fourth edition. This expansion is particularly noticeable in headings relating to music and to the late war and reconstruction. Essentially the same headings are excluded as in previous editions. No attempt is made here to evaluate the adequacy or inadequacy of the headings themselves, for these are relative terms for each library, depending upon its collections and its clientele. It is apparent both from the fifth edition itself and the supplements which have been issued to it that constant effort is being directed toward modernizing terminology and revising all subject headings in the light of a changing world and the books it produces.

There are, of course, minor defects. In all copies thus far seen by this reviewer, it is evident that the binding is not sturdy enough for a book so bulky and subject to such intensive use as this one. It is regrettable that the binding could not have achieved the same standard of excellence as the list itself and

the paper on which it is printed. Apparently the editors have not hesitated on occasion to make changes in subject entries as listed in the fifth edition without having noted them in one of the supplements. Fortunately, these changes have been minor in nature and not too numerous, but their introduction without warning imposes a greater burden on those catalogers who attempt conformity to Library of Congress usage in the interest of economy. One wonders too why the editor did not consider incorporating the list of subdivisions (*Subject Subdivisions*, 6th ed. 1924) now somewhat out of date in a 1936 reprint either into the basic list where appropriate annotations could distinguish subdivision forms, or at least in a supplementary section in the same volume.

But these are relatively minor matters. The fifth edition of this standard subject heading list marks an important step in its evolution. Of all the editions to date, this is the best designed for efficient use. Librarians everywhere owe a debt of gratitude to the editor and her staff whose patience and care have produced so excellent a product and to the Library of Congress which once again has evidenced its intent of providing maximum assistance at minimum cost to libraries the nation over.—*Carlyle J. Frarey, College of the City of New York Library.*

Philosophy of Literature

Philosophy of Literature. By Gustav E. Mueller. New York, Philosophical Library, [1948], 226p. \$3.50.

The Philosophical Library has done a useful service in making available a goodly number of summarizing or surveying volumes. It has also tended to publish under similar titles volumes that are in fact eccentric or specialized pleas, so that its imprint does not certify the book to be of one scholarly class, and its titles may be misleading. The present book by Professor Mueller is of the second class. Its simple title, *Philosophy of Literature*, lacking even a definite article, suggests a sober and inclusive general position. Instead, we have a relativistic attempt to demonstrate a cyclical, sociological development of the creative imagination. "The chosen poets from Homer to Dostoevsky are beacons illu-

minating the rhythmic 'up' and 'down' of the Western civilization during the last three thousand years." It is difficult to believe that such a theory can define the true greatness of these poets, however useful the sociological study of the cultural background of literature may sometimes prove.

Such a book may well serve some purpose in the world of specialized philosophers. But although its title would seem to recommend it to the undergraduate's general shelf, I fear it will have little usefulness there. Much of the writing seems to be addressed to undergraduates (elementary explanations without footnotes of the facts of Dante's life, elementary definitions of words like "plot" and "content," and oversimplified assertions that "the Renaissance is a transition and a compromise between a religious and a secular