

treatment, though condensed, is not trivial or sketchy.

Although prices are not generally noted, they are occasionally in the case of long and expensive sets. Bibliographies are listed in some cases; and in almost every case there is a final paragraph appraising the strengths or weaknesses of the library in the field being discussed.—*Fremont Rider, Olin Library, Wesleyan University, Middletown, Conn.*

Report of a Survey of the University of Florida Library for the University of Florida, February-May, 1940, by a committee of Louis R. Wilson, Chairman, A. F. Kuhlman, and Guy R. Lyle, on behalf of the American Library Association. American Library Association, 1940. 120p. \$2. (Mimeographed)

THE FLORIDA University Library survey is one of three surveys of university libraries prepared and published recently under the auspices of the American Library Association. A forerunner of these was Raney's *The University Libraries*, Volume VII of the University of Chicago Survey (1933). One of the authors of the present volume, A. F. Kuhlman, contributed various chapters to the Chicago survey. The other two authors, Dean Louis R. Wilson and Guy R. Lyle were associated with Branscomb and Dunbar in one of the other American Library Association surveys, *A Survey of the University of Georgia Library* (1938).¹ The Florida survey is thus the work of a committee of men who have already helped to set the pattern in this important new trend in university library administration.

In its own words,

¹ The third A.L.A. survey is *A Survey of the Indiana University Library* by Coney-Henkle-Purdy (1940).

The committee has undertaken (1) to set the Library in the perspective of the history of the university, state, and region; (2) to discover ways and means of enabling it to improve its organization and administration as a part of the general administration of the university; (3) to formulate a plan of library development designed to promote the effectiveness of the university's general program of instruction, research, and extension; and (4) to indicate means by which the library resources of the university may be more effectively related and integrated with the libraries of Florida, of the Southeast, and the nation.

Starting with introductory chapters on the "History and Background" and the "Essentials of a Library Program in a State University," the survey takes up in order the government of the library, its integration on the campus, in Florida, and in the Southeast, financial support, use, administration and organization, holdings, personnel, and physical plant. Conclusions and recommendations are presented in each section of the survey, and these are summarized in a final chapter of "Recommendations."

The committee followed the plan of stating general principles, describing the situation, and making recommendations in each section of the report. Standards were indicated occasionally by the opinion of the committee alone, but more often by the familiar comparative method, with data on other institutions and references to publications in point. In view of the Florida University Library's many needs, the survey includes extensive detailed recommendations and requires some painstaking effort to read and digest. To facilitate practical use, it would help if conclusions and recommendations were sorted out and clearly labeled in each section, and if some of the tables—of a total of twenty-nine—were eliminated or

removed to appendices following the text. The report is practically a case book of university library problems. It will certainly be used extensively for many years by interested librarians and by the faculty and administration responsible for the development of the University of Florida Library.—*Peyton Hurt, Williams College, Williamstown, Mass.*

Report of a Survey of the University of Georgia Library for the University of Georgia, September-December, 1938. Louis R. Wilson, Harvie Branscomb, Ralph M. Dunbar, and Guy R. Lyle, on behalf of the American Library Association. American Library Association, 1939. 74p. \$1. (Mimeographed)

THIS REPORT presents the results of the first of three surveys of state university libraries conducted by the American Library Association during the last year. It is important as the report of a pioneer appraisal of a university library by an American Library Association committee and for its emphasis upon local problems and local needs as evaluative criteria.

A library survey is rarely a research study. With a program of action the end product of the survey, missionary zeal almost inevitably makes disinterested objectivity impossible, and perhaps, at the present stage of measurement in librarianship, undesirable. The immediate function of an American Library Association survey is evaluation; the final objective a program of improvement. Evaluation necessitates standards—"measuring sticks." The standards most relevant in any library survey are local optima, in so far as they can be determined. The survey committee, under the chairmanship of Dean Wilson, gave unusually careful at-

tention to the local scene—the regional and local environment of the university library.

The committee, in effect, sought answers to three questions: 1. What should be the contribution of the university library to the educational and research program of the University of Georgia? 2. In what specific respects is the university library falling short of optimum fulfillment of its obligations? 3. What specific steps need to be taken to make university library service more consistent with the library needs of the university?

Of the three questions the first is the most difficult, particularly to an outside committee, and least adequately dealt with. A satisfactory answer can be evolved only over a period of years and by the staff of the university itself. Comparisons with other universities and with norms are useful chiefly as corroborative evidence and for "sales" purposes. While the committee recognized this limitation, it was forced by the lack of better measuring devices to seek answers to all three questions largely in terms of comparisons.

The chief value of the report to other surveyors, as well as to the University of Georgia, however, lies in its analysis of local needs in relation to local objectives. This analysis involves a large element of subjective judgment—opinions of the committee, the faculty, and the student body. The resulting evaluation leaves little doubt in the mind of this reviewer as to its essential accuracy. Deficiencies were not difficult to find. The same techniques would almost certainly result in less convincing conclusions if applied to a more highly developed library.

The survey committee is to be commended for a thorough and realistic re-