

Review Articles

Postwar Teachers' College Libraries

Tomorrow's Libraries for Teachers Colleges: a Checklist to Aid in Securing Library Plant and Equipment Equal to the Expected Demands of These Institutions; Prepared for the Committee on Standards and Surveys of the American Association of Teachers Colleges. Carter Alexander. 60p.

To say that this publication is timely is to make an understatement. One might better suggest that it is long overdue. Overdue not only as far as its primary purpose as a guide and aid in planning a library building program for a teachers' college is concerned, but overdue in suggesting past and present inadequacies in teachers' college library facilities.

At the present time one cannot predict with any degree of certainty what the postwar demands on our teachers' colleges will be. We can be reasonably sure, however, that the demands in terms of student load will be tremendous. Men and women discharged from the services, encouraged and aided financially by the federal government, will be pouring into our teachers' colleges as well as into our other educational institutions. Existing library facilities will be taxed to the limit and those libraries which were inadequate in peacetime will be in a precarious position. Not only will the burden be tremendous as far as student load is concerned, but we can expect increasing demands in the part libraries will be expected to play in the educational programs of these institutions.

When the introduction to *Tomorrow's Libraries for Teachers Colleges* suggested that the postwar period would need a new kind of teacher, it anticipated further the greater part the library must play. If experience before and during the present national emergency is any teacher, we should have learned the importance of training students to locate, sift, organize, and interpret information *when it is needed*. This is one of the directions that the new education must inevitably follow. The library functioning as an "in-

tellectual laboratory" and as a "method in education" is regnant by the very nature of newer methods in education. It follows that success in the practice of modern educational methods absolutely depends upon adequate library facilities. This has been continually apparent as the newer educational methods have developed, and is one of the important reasons for the existing inadequacies in teachers' college libraries.

The teachers' college library carries a definite responsibility to the whole educational system in this respect, because of its strategic position to assist in developing the use of the library as an integral part of the educational method of all our schools. It is in the use of these teachers' college libraries that teachers during their professional training get the concept of the part the library plays in teaching. It is but natural that they will carry with them into the schools in which they teach, whatever ideas, methods, and techniques of the library's part in teaching they have received in college.

It already has been suggested that *Tomorrow's Libraries for Teachers Colleges* is timely, and in view of the responsibility of the teachers' college library as suggested above, the results hoped for and suggested by the checklist are urgent. The report is both a guide to procedure in the steps to follow in preparing for a building program, and a checklist of factors to be considered. In each, recognition is given to the premise suggested in the introduction, that the building should be designed to fit the peculiar needs of the particular institution. In line with this, the report takes the form of listing all possible factors in any building program which should not be overlooked, gives procedure to follow in making decisions, and states acceptable or desirable standards.

The questions in the checklist follow the order in which they would presumably arise in planning a building program. The main headings include:

1. Library quarters needed by a particular teachers' college.

Gives basis for determining the need and nature of the building.

2. The organization for planning the library quarters.

Gives alternate suggestions regarding the nature of the planning committee; its function and organization.

3. Probable "load" on the library.

Gives basis for determining the effect of numbers and maturity-level of users on library load; effect of nature of instruction on college library load; effect of library service program on library load; and effect of centralization of library administration on library load.

4. Specific services of library.

Gives checklist of services as a basis for

determining requirements and special features.

5. Specific quarters needed in new library.

Gives checklist of detailed requirements regarding quarters.

6. Site and general architecture of building.

Gives checklist to solve questions involved in site and quarters.

One may hope that the appearance of this publication will in itself provide the impetus needed for the start in planning library building programs in teachers' colleges where they are needed, and certainly the work of any building committee will be greatly facilitated by the use of the checklist.—*George C. Allez, director, Library School, University of Wisconsin, Madison, Wis.*

Subject Headings in Physics

Subject Headings in Physics. Melvin J. Voigt. Chicago, American Library Association, 1944. XII, 151p.

At a time when discontinuance of subject entries in favor of bibliographies is in the air, particular interest attaches to the appearance of this volume. Must it not be construed as a token that subject entries have proved of real service to physicists, at least at the University of Michigan, where this list was developed? There is certainly general warrant in experience for this position. Every productive scientist finds himself frequently in a situation where the most intimate familiarity with his own field does not avail; possibly the abler he is, the more likely the occurrence. Some experimental or mathematical detail, either so radically new or so incidental as to be foreign to his experience and yet essential to his progress, must be cleared up before he can go on. The secret of his success is in no small part an imagination which is quick at sensing and converting to his own uses techniques and lines of approach developed in some widely different field. He may be able to turn for advice to some specialist in this new area, but again the library may be his nearest and best friend. His question then is: What have we at hand sufficient to cope with this situation? He wants to look at the subject cards, rarely to look at a complete bibliography, much of which would be too spe-

cialized for his purpose or not immediately accessible, or perhaps not up to date enough, and which in any case would entail further search of author cards. The case of tables of numerical values of functions for computational purposes illustrates nicely the distinction in use of subject cards and bibliographies. Occasionally the question comes: Is there any existing table which meets this requirement? Then the best bibliography is none too good. Ordinarily, however, any one of several tables will suffice, and subject cards indicate most directly the choice one has. Moreover, it is likewise true in any library that not only these experts in some one more or less narrow province but also persons who have not yet reached full competence in any field must be served, and unless these persons are to be too dependent upon their superiors for advice as to what to read, their surest guide, even with a well-classed, open-shelf collection, is the subject catalog.

Granted that subjects are important, it still remains to provide proper heads if they are to give good service. On this ground the list in hand should be warmly welcomed by all the many catalogers who are under the necessity of handling physics titles without adequate knowledge of the science. An extensive preface emphasizes that, if catalogs are to command the confidence of physicists, there is need both for more intelligent use