

Bookman par excellence was Bowker. His other interests, however, were numerous and varied; and he used his facile pen to focus America's attention on those causes in which he believed so firmly. He was a strong advocate of civil service reform, free trade, and anti-imperialism. He was a leader in the campaign of 1884 to elect Grover Cleveland President of the United States. He fought Tammany Hall in New York local politics with zeal and not a little success. In addition, Bowker was a successful industrial executive, serving as general manager and vice-president of the Edison Electric Illuminating Company of New York from 1890 to 1898.

Education and the role of libraries in the educative process were consuming interests of Bowker. On one occasion he declared, "The library and the school together make the safeguards of America." A graduate of the College of the City of New York, Bowker maintained an active interest in the life and affairs of this college after his graduation. He was once invited but declined to allow his name to be considered for the presidency of City College.

Bowker's last 30 years were extremely active years, but they were conditioned by the hard fact of almost total blindness. From 1900 to 1933 he was without his eyesight, but "he rose above this handicap and determined to live out his life as though no defect were there." That he was able to do this to a large extent is evident in the pages of Dr. Fleming's very fine biography of this militant liberal who was poet, author, editor, publisher, "literary ambassador at the Court of Fleet Street," political reformer, business executive, inventor, and world traveler. "We have in this book," writes Allan Nevins in his Introduction, "much more than the portrait of an arresting personality and the record of a noble career; we have a vigorous study of some of the principal strands of American liberalism in a period which needed all the liberalism that it could find."—*John David Marshall, Clemson College.*

## Financing College Libraries

*Financing Higher Education in the United States.* By John D. Millett, New York, Columbia University Press, for the Commission on Financing Higher Education, 1952. xix, 503p. \$5.00.

This volume, which is called "The Staff Report of the Commission on Financing Higher Education," supplements the general report of the Commission, *Nature and Needs of Higher Education*, by presenting a summary of the information, gathered through seventeen research projects undertaken by members of the Commission. The book is divided into four major sections, covering the objectives, costs, sources of income, and possibilities for the future financing of higher education. There can be no doubt of the importance of the information gathered here, although it might be questioned whether conclusions based largely on statistics covering a decade of depression and a decade of inflation (most of the 82 tables present comparative figures for 1930, 1940 and 1950) are sufficiently soundly established.

But our concern here is particularly with the section devoted to library expenditures. These four pages (122 to 126) are perhaps not out of proportion to the space devoted to other aspects of college and university finances, but it is unfortunate that they are devoted almost wholly to consideration of the problem of the proper size of the book collections and are permeated by an apparent dislike of librarians, a scolding tone found nowhere else in the volume. From the first paragraph, which concludes "again and again at the institutions we have visited we have found dissatisfaction with and confusion about the library services of higher education" to the last "it is safe to predict that library operating costs will grow as one of the important expense problems of both colleges and universities," there is hardly a word of recognition that librarians have been at all concerned with the costs of operation.

Let us first consider the remarks on librarians. "Librarians constitutionally hate to throw anything away. . . . They are always chagrined when they cannot at once produce what is wanted." Since the two main purposes of a library are the preservation and the making available of books we may, for the moment, allow this impeachment and admit that when we cannot do what we exist to do, we feel some chagrin. "Librarians rate the importance of their jobs and examine their salary scale in the light of the size of their book collections, the number of their employees and their total expenditures." (If you prick us, do we not bleed? If you tickle us, do we

not laugh? If you poison us, do we not die? And if you wrong us, shall we not revenge?") Wherein do we differ here from deans, college presidents, or executive directors of such commissions as the present one? "The librarian [sic] profession as such puts little emphasis on economy; the pressure comes from college presidents and deans when they make up the annual budget." Since in the decade 1940-1950 the proportion of the educational budget devoted to libraries declined by four tenths of one percentage point while the proportion devoted to administration increased by exactly the same amount, it seems as if the administrators put the pressure on the libraries to take it off themselves.

But we should consider Dr. Millett's various points seriously. Although the library expenditures of the institutions investigated doubled from 1930 to 1940 and increased nearly three times from 1940 to 1950, the expenditures per student for these dates were \$9.59, \$13.54, and \$22.35. When these figures are expressed in terms of constant 1940 dollars, so as to show the effect of the changes in the general price level, they become respectively \$8.49, \$13.54 and \$12.68. Although the libraries have not kept pace with rising costs during the last decade, it is impossible to tell whether service to the library users has suffered or not on the basis of such a crude overall figure. Library meetings throughout the decade have devoted a great deal of time to consideration of various economies in operation and if some part of this talk has been converted into action, the slight reduction in real expenditure may mark an actual increase in service.

Dr. Millett recognizes the importance of the library in the general educational program and elsewhere in this work notes "the extensive browsing and the wide reading now indispensable to a liberal education." Nevertheless he has "found general agreement as a rule of thumb that a 'good' liberal arts college ought to operate with a book collection of under 100,000 volumes, many of which would be duplicates," and devotes a full page to urging the weeding of collections. This is of course not new to college librarians, many of whom have had regular weeding programs in operation for years. It does no harm to have the need of weeding emphasized by an outside observer, however, and this may help to make us more aware of the problem.

Whether the optimum size of a college library should be 25,000, 100,000, or more, however, must be determined by the methods of instruction in the particular institution. A college with a vigorous program of senior theses will require many more books than one devoted to an education based on classroom instruction. The emphasis given to faculty research and publication will also exert pressure on the size of the library. To hold to any figure means, in the long run, discarding an early volume of a periodical for every current volume added—a program not apt to meet with much encouragement from either librarians or faculty members. As Branscomb says in *Teaching with Books*, "An arbitrary limit to a college library fixed at a point which involves eliminating all except the immediately active material seems to create more problems than it solves. Discarding should be as constant and as normal a process as additions, but it would seem wiser to let this be determined by the uselessness of the material or its availability in a nearby institution rather than by a determination to keep the library small."

The Lamont Library at Harvard is given deserved words of praise, although whether the fact that the students "receive little reference . . . assistance," if it is a fact, is praiseworthy might be debated. Some recognition of the existence of the Widener Library next door as an influence on the type of collection and service given at Lamont might be expected if this is held up as an example for other college libraries.

The particular problem of the university library is the gigantic growth of research collections. Acknowledgement of the efforts to meet this problem by cooperative activities, the Farmington Plan, and the various deposit centers is made, although a fuller description of the Midwest Inter-Library Center is given in the chapter dealing with institutional cooperation. The efforts of libraries to reduce both acquisition and storage charges by the use of microfilms and microcards are dismissed as "minor experiments."

Attention is drawn to the doubling of library collections every twenty years. "If this were to continue unchecked, and if much more income is not provided universities, they will soon be in the position of having to drop one or two professors each year in order to keep up the library. This is an obvious absurdity." This apparently is a paraphrase from

K. D. Metcalf's "Universities Libraries Face the Future" (*Library Quarterly* 22: 6-7). "... In our libraries we have a section of our universities that tends, year in and year out, in good times and bad, to increase in cost geometrically, while the rest of the institution grows arithmetically. It is obvious that this cannot go on without the library's taking an ever increasing percentage of our total resources. That, expressed in other terms means that . . . each year . . . professors will have to be dropped so that the money from their salaries can be spent for library purposes." The nub of the matter here is whether library costs increase geometrically while university resources increase arithmetically. If total library expenditures are by 1950 only 3.4 per cent of the total educational expenditures, such a process cannot have gone on for long. The experience of my own institution, shown on the following table, does not indicate any such discrepancy between the growth of the library and the growth of the college as a whole. Each tended to double every decade until the depression and each has roughly doubled in twenty years since. Is the long run experience of other institutions different? Dr. Millett concludes his book with a cautious optimism about the future support of higher education. Is there reason to be less optimistic about the future support of the libraries in this field?

that costs have increased much more rapidly. Has this been true for a century or more? Have library costs in the past century increased more rapidly than general university expenditures? Has the increase in costs been equally distributed among the service branches, the technical processes, the cost of books and periodicals, or are there discrepancies among these parts of the library budget? How far are the increased costs a reflection of additional services and a more adequate acquisition policy, and how far are they a reflection of higher salaries and higher book prices? If we can secure answers to such questions we would really begin to know something about the financial aspects of our college and university libraries. The figures may be impossible to obtain over very many years, but I hope some library school candidate will make the attempt.—*Wyllis E. Wright, Williams College Library.*

## Lexikon des Buchwesens

*Lexikon des Buchwesens.* Herausgegeben von Joachim Kirchner. Stuttgart, Hiersemann Verlag, 1952. Vol. I. 405 p. DM28.00.

Libraries which were so unfortunate as not to have purchased the three volumes of the *Lexikon des gesamten Buchwesens* (1935-1937) edited by Joachim Kirchner and the late Karl Löffler have had a difficult time lo-

	1902	1912	1922	1932	1942	1952
Total institutional expenditure	\$107,313	\$225,159	\$413,858	\$825,020	\$924,068	\$1,767,285
Library expenditure	4,659	9,195	17,271	39,307	51,206	67,014
Percentage	4.3	4.1	4.2	4.8	5.5	3.8
Number of students	390	533	587	809	873	1,057
Library costs per student	\$11.95	\$17.25	\$29.42	\$48.59	\$58.66	\$63.40

The library is a minor part of the whole field of the financial aspects of higher education and one cannot criticise an author for writing his own book. Nevertheless, a study of the brief remarks on library finances raises many questions which need to be considered. The only statistics dealing with any considerable number of libraries over an extended period of time with which I am acquainted are those which show the growth of book stock and indicate a widespread tendency to double every sixteen to twenty years. The figures given for two decades by Dr. Millett, as well as those cited from Williams, suggest

cataloging a copy, and then only at a price of around \$75.00. The answer to this problem has been provided in the form of a new edition by Kirchner with a slight changed title and a somewhat more modest format. However, the editor has undertaken such extensive textual revision that the term "second edition" seemed inapplicable, and accordingly he has even changed the title.

While the present work contains substantially the same information that is in the earlier one, the changes are obvious. For example, the articles on Chinese printing and book trade, Indian and Indonesian book trade