

The Year Ahead

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THE PHILADELPHIA MEETING was a success, despite the inconsiderate weather, and the whole affair had a commendably bookish tone. Alphonse Trezza did a yeoman job with local arrangements; already George Rosner of the University of Miami is planning for Miami Beach, June 17 to 23, 1956. We hope then to coordinate ACRL program and business sessions so that there will be ample opportunity to enjoy the beach. Arthur Hamlin's boat trip in Philadelphia was a stroke of genius; we'll try to do as well in 1956 with, perhaps, a barbecue on the beach under the palms.

Until then, there's much to keep us busy. Various circumstances have given us three major tasks on which to concentrate this next year, and they deserve imagination and effort. The good intentions of the Report of the ALA Management Survey received general support. The working out of details requires vision, and these details will affect ACRL very closely. I said in Philadelphia that I hope we can approach this major policy shift with a degree of statesmanship, recognizing that the best interests of all libraries and librarians must be served unselfishly. ACRL is an important professional organization, rich in good works and in distinguished members. I am confident that it will become only more important. Those librarians who put it together so effectively and who started its programs performed a large service for librarianship in this country. The results of their work will endure. The time has now come, though, to think carefully about the distinguished position the ALA holds on the national and international level, as a peer among other professional, scholarly, and governmental bodies. A strong ALA, speaking for all librarians, is essential.

At our Philadelphia banquet Dr. Homer W. Turner turned over a \$30,000 check

to President Lyle as a grant from the U.S. Steel Foundation. With these funds we are to strengthen the college library program by using about one-fifth of the grant to support research into problems of college libraries and by distributing the bulk of the funds directly to college libraries in order to enhance their book collections and in other ways to provide better teaching tools through the library.

The use of the research funds is being considered by the ACRL Publications Committee. Anyone who wishes to undertake a research program or suggest one should write to the committee chairman, Jerrold C. Orne at Maxwell Air Force Base. Generally speaking, the research program should support college libraries, but beyond this there are no limitations. Funds could be used for equipment, assistance, travel, or for direct fellowship grants support.

Requests for direct grants for libraries will be considered by a special committee not yet appointed. This committee will set criteria and screen requests, taking into account not only need but also the imagination behind the request. Write to Arthur Hamlin at headquarters if you are interested. Grants, amounting to a few hundred dollars each, will be made particularly to liberal arts colleges that are primarily privately supported, in line with U.S. Steel Foundation policy. Since this is the first direct foundation support for library collections in many years, it behooves us to expend it not on a formula basis, but with foresight and imagination.

Arthur Hamlin's initiative has put our third task to us with his proposal for a college reading program, to be supported on an experimental basis by other foundation funds.

If these three tasks can be handled with distinction this next year, we will have done our share.