

selections. The verification of titles, the ordering of Library of Congress cards for bibliographical information, the finding of prices, etc., were time-consuming details. Manuscript commenced to be made ready in the late spring of 1930 and went to the printer more or less continuously from that time to September. Fourteen of the shorter sections of the list were issued and distributed by the Carnegie Corporation in August. The remaining sections were distributed about the first of October.

The list has certain limitations. It does not pretend to be complete or exhaustive in any division of any subject. The needs of the graduate student and the research worker were ruled out at the start. It consciously tries to include only those books which the undergraduate student could reasonably be expected to use in the pursuit of his work in courses commonly offered in the various liberal arts colleges. Even with so definite an aim as this there have been complications and there are inequalities.

What, for example, about works in foreign languages? In most of our colleges few undergraduates read with facility technical works in foreign languages. The mathematician, however, may feel that it is essential for the advanced undergraduate student in mathematics to have access to books and journals in at least French and German. The botanist, on the other hand, may feel that works in English are enough. The practical solution has to be a compromise. Or where, for another example, shall we draw the line on those books or journals which the teacher must have to keep up to date but which would seldom or never be consulted by the undergraduate?

Another difficulty has been the actual number of titles to be listed for each subject. The Advisory Group was emphatic in its wish to keep away from specific numbers--this is not, for example, a list of the best five hundred books on philosophy. The most definite statement that was made that the list should include only those titles which the collaborator regarded as essential or highly desirable for the proper conduct of undergraduate teaching in his subject. This statement naturally gave a considerable leeway to contributors, especially to all (and this bars out few college teachers) enthusiasts about their own subjects. In an attempt to establish some sort of measuring stick the compiler sent to about twenty college librarians a statement of the project and a request for a distribution of 12,000 titles among the various subjects included. The results of this distribution showed remarkable variations. For example, the number of books to be allotted to chemistry ranged from 90 to 680; to political science, from 200 to 1,000; to French, from 100 to 1,100. The number of periodical titles showed the same variation--chemistry, economics, and education all ranging from 2 to 20; history, from 2 to 25; zoölogy, from 1 to 20. The averages, however, yielded what seemed to the compiler fairly reasonable figures, and it is interesting to note that the printed list does not show a great margin of departure from these averages.