

THE COMPILATION OF "A LIST OF BOOKS  
FOR COLLEGE LIBRARIES"

The Carnegie Corporation of New York, which has for many years evinced a generous interest in the public libraries of the country, has recently extended its interest to include American college and university libraries. In order that its benefactions might be made upon the basis of authoritative counsel the Corporation has organized an Advisory Group on College Libraries. This Advisory Group, under the chairmanship of W. W. Bishop, librarian of the University of Michigan, includes among the librarian members Andrew Keogh, librarian of Yale University; Carl H. Milam, secretary of the American Library Association; and L. R. Wilson, librarian of the University of North Carolina. Among the college executives who are members of the group are President Frank Aydelotte of Swarthmore College; Dean Virginia Gildersleeve of Barnard College; President Meta Glass of Sweet Briar College; Dr. Robert L. Kelly, executive secretary of the Association of American Colleges; President William Mather Lewis of Lafayette College; and President E. H. Wilkins of Oberlin College.

Many colleges have applied to the Carnegie Corporation for grants to aid their libraries. Early in its existence the Advisory Group formulated a searching questionnaire which was sent to all institutions applying for such consideration. Under twenty-six headings information was requested which would yield a relatively complete and detailed picture of the material resources of the institution and its library. This report on material resources was checked and supplemented by information on such intangibles as scholarly enthusiasm, academic esprit de corps, library interest, etc., through visits from an Advisory Group representative (generally Dr. W. M. Randall of the University of Chicago Library School faculty) who spent at least a few hours and perhaps a few days at each of the institutions. The only factor lacking in a reasonably complete picture was a qualitative estimate of the library's resources. To permit this qualitative estimate the Group decided on the compilation of a list of probably not less than eight thousand nor more than fifteen thousand books which might be regarded as a statement of the minimum holdings of every well-stocked college library. It was further decided that this compilation should be made under the direction of a librarian, and that this compiler should make up an original list which would be checked and improved by such a homogeneous group as the faculty of his own institution. Further steps will be described later. I was asked to undertake the compilation, and the Swarthmore College faculty comprised the first group of authorities to inspect the list. >>