Government Documents

A subcommittee of the A.L.A. Public Documents Committee has been made responsible for a section in *College and Research Libraries* which will be devoted to various phases of work with government publications.

It is intended that the scope of the contributions which appear in the section shall include annotated lists of bibliographical aids, subject lists of public documents, and notes of general interest to persons engaged in work in this field.

The committee: Violet Abbott Cabeen, chairman, James B. Childs, Mary Brown Humphrey, Robert E. Scudder.

By ROBERT E. SCUDDER

Current Bibliographical Sources for Government Document Acquisition: An Annotated List

One of the great difficulties encountered in acquiring government documents in a library is the lack of a complete list of current publications in the various fields of federal, state, and local documents. Even federal documents are not fully listed in any one—or even half a dozen places. The listing of state and local government publications is much less complete than that of federal documents. Yet, if a library attempts to have a well-rounded and representative collection of official publications, the librarian responsible for such materials must exercise constant vigilance to keep up with this ever-increasing body of government documents.

For this reason, this list has been compiled in an attempt to bring together some of the most useful current bibliographies and lists of new government publications, particularly those which include processed documents, since the bibliography of near-print materials is much less complete than that of regularly printed publications.

Although the emphasis has perhaps been placed on federal documents by the number of entries which include only United States publications or which primarily cite federal material, a great many sources listed also include state and local publications. A few are devoted entirely to non-federal documents.

For the most part, the entries have been confined to current bibliographies or checklists, and have not included abstracting journals or reviewing periodicals. However, annotations and reviews have been indicated when included in a particular source. Checklists and bibliographies issued in processed form have been so indicated in the entries, since as a rule, this material is sent free to libraries on request. Some of the printed lists are also available free; others must be purchased.

Although a few of the sources cited are issued irregularly, frequency of publication has been used as the criterion for the inclusion of most of the items on this list. With one exception (an annual in a field not otherwise covered) semi-annual, or preferably, more frequent publication has been considered a requirement for a "current" source. For this reason, many lists of federal department and bureau publications which are revised and reissued every year or so have been omitted. In most
cases, there is a more frequently issued source for the material of these agencies in the list which follows. Publications which are not generally available to libraries have also been omitted in this list. As a result, many of the processed acquisition lists of government libraries have not been included, although they are excellent sources for document acquisition when available.

There has been no attempt to include here the various official checklists which a number of state agencies issue for the current publications of their own state, since these have been covered in the Manual on the Use of State Publications edited by Jerome K. Wilcox (Chicago, 1940). 1

Obviously, many of the lists which follow are not confined exclusively to documents but also list nongovernmental material on the same subject. However, about half of the lists include only publications issued by government agencies.

The Agricultural Index; Subject Index to a Selected List of Agricultural Periodicals, Books, and Bulletins. Vol. 1, 1916 to date. New York, Wilson, 1917 to date. Monthly, with various cumulations. Contains "List of Experiment Station Literature," "List of Agricultural Department Literature," "List of Selected Extension Publications," and "Check-list of Occasional Literature." Both near-print and printed federal and state publications on all phases of agriculture are included. Not annotated.


The Bibliographic Index, a Cumulative Bibliography of Bibliographies. Vol. 1, 1938 to date. New York, Wilson, 1938 to date. Quarterly, annual cumulations. Lists a great many official publications of federal, state, and municipal agencies which contain bibliographies. Covers all fields and includes both near-print and printed materials. Not annotated.


Chicago Municipal Reference Library. Check-list of Publications Issued by Local Governing Bodies in Chicago and Cook County. Vol. 1, No. 1, Jan./May 1936 to date. Chicago, 1936 to date. Monthly. Processed. Lists the official and quasi-official publications of Chicago and Cook County deposited in this library. Not annotated, but includes both printed and near-print publications.

District of Columbia Library Association. D. C. Libraries. Vol. 1, No. 1, Oct. 1929 to date. Washington, 1929 to date. Quarterly. Includes a section "Recent Bibliographies" which is chiefly devoted to listing the current bibliographies issued by governmental agencies. The list has a broad subject arrangement, is not annotated, but includes both printed and near-print material. Limited chiefly to bibliographies originating in Washington, D.C.

Joint Reference Library, Chicago, Ill. Re-

1 P. 76-91. Since the publication of the Manual, the publication of two new processed state lists has begun:


Lists new material on practically all phases of government activity, federal, state, and municipal. A subject arrangement, without annotations, but including processed as well as printed publications.


Includes a section "Checklist of Current American State Reports and Session Laws Exclusive of Side Reports" in each issue. In addition, special lists and bibliographies, containing state and federal legal documents, are frequently published in this periodical.


Includes "Government Reports" and "Notes," listing federal and state near-print and printed publications in the field of national planning. Extensive annotations.


Includes "Research Bureau Reports Received," "Books in Review," and "Additional Books and Pamphlets Received," listing federal, state, and municipal publications on municipal affairs, arranged under broad subjects. Not annotated; the more important items are reviewed.


Contains "List of New York City Publications" (issued since Vol. 1, No. 16, February 10, 1915) and "Current Civic Literature," an annotated list of publications of and about municipal agencies. Each list includes both processed and printed publications.


Contains a semiannual list "Publications of the Pan American Union," which includes near-print as well as printed material issued by the organization, with a running commentary.


Includes a great many federal, state, and municipal documents, both processed and printed, in a subject arrangement. Of particular importance is the list of documents of some twelve large American cities included under the heading "Municipal Documents." Occasional annotations or descriptive notes.


Does not publish lists of documents as a regular feature, but often includes special lists of government material, such as the recent "New York City Department of Health Periodicals and Serials Published 1866-1939" by Estelle Brodman (Vol. 31, Nos. 1-2, July/Aug.-Sept. 1939); "Aids to Public Document Use Since 1937" (Vol. 31, No. 9, Nov. 1940); "Aids to Foreign Public Document Use Since 1937" (Vol. 31, No. 10, Dec. 1940), all three by Jerome K. Wilcox.


Includes both federal and state documents on technology in agriculture. Lists both near-print and printed publications, often with annotations.


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Contains three lists of current documents in the general field of agriculture: "Bibliographies," "State Publications," a List of the Publications of the State Agricultural Colleges, Departments of Agriculture, Agricultural Experiment Stations, and Agricultural Extension Services" compiled by Mary F. Carpenter; "U.S. Department of Agriculture Publications, Economics in Character" compiled by Katharine Jacobs and Nadine G. Weaver. All three lists include both processed and printed publications. There are some annotations or content notes.


Includes a section "Literature on Agricultural Research Libraries"
Finance," which lists federal and state near-print and printed publications arranged under broad subjects—credit, insurance, land values and appraisal, taxation, and local government. Includes some annotations and content notes.


A section "List of Publications Reviewed and Received" contains material in the field of rural sociology, including both federal and state publications, processed and printed. Not annotated; many titles are reviewed in the periodical.


Includes a section "Books" and another section "For Your Attention" each of which lists new publications on land economics and land use, including both printed and processed federal and state documents with annotations or reviews.


Contains a section "Pertaining to Marketing" which lists the Agriculture Department's current publications (mostly processed) in the fields of marketing and standards. Not annotated.


Includes a section "Consumers' Bookshelf" appearing irregularly and listing new material in the field of consumer education. Lists federal and state documents, both near-print and printed, with annotations.

U.S. Agriculture Department. Experiment Stations Office. List of Station Publications Received during November 1903 to date. Washington, 1903 to date. Monthly. Processed.

A checklist of state agricultural experiment station publications received in the library of the U.S. Experiment Stations Office. Not annotated.


Lists federal and state documents, both processed and printed, on forestry, arranged under broad subjects, without annotations.


Confined to printed publications of the Agriculture Department. No annotations.


Contains three current document lists in the field of agriculture: "Bibliographies and Lists," "List of State Extension Publications Received," a monthly checklist, and "Selected List of Processed Publications of the U.S. Department of Agriculture." The first two lists include both printed and processed material. Occasional annotations.


Lists and annotates both near-print and printed federal and state documents on all aspects of the subject of cotton, arranged under broad subdivisions of this subject.


Includes a section "For Reference" (compiled by Etta G. Rogers) consisting of federal and state processed and printed publications on soil conservation, land use, and erosion. No annotations, but some items are reviewed.


Includes three current partially annotated lists of documents on the general subject of soil conservation: "State Experiment Station and Extension Publications," "U.S. Government Publications," and "Bibliographies and Lists." All include near-print as well as printed publications. The field and regional publications of the U.S. Soil Conservation Service included here, are seldom listed elsewhere.


Lists and annotates new government material on housing and slum clearance. Includes both near-print and printed publications of federal, state, and municipal agencies.


Includes a section "New Publications" limited for the most part to the processed publications on vital statistics of the Census Bureau. Not annotated.

Includes irregularly a brief section "New Aeronautical Publications" confined to the processed and printed publications of various federal agencies. Partially annotated.


Includes a section "New Business Books and Reports" compiled by F. Stirling Wilson. Contains both near-print and printed publications with annotations. Occasionally, there is in addition, a special list: "Miscellaneous Publications of the Department of Agriculture" devoted chiefly to processed material.

— Domestic Commerce News. No. 1, Nov. 5, 1937 to date. Chicago, [etc.] 1937 to date. Processed.

Lists new publications (chiefly processed) of the Commerce Department, in particular, material issued by the Census and Foreign and Domestic Commerce Bureaus. Partially annotated. Issued independently by several of the district offices of the bureau.


Emphasizes near-print publications of the agencies in the Commerce Department—new census releases, additions to the various information services of the Foreign and Domestic Commerce Bureau, as well as other processed (and printed) materials. Includes publications not elsewhere listed. Partially annotated.


Has a section "New Books and Reports" by F. Stirling Wilson, which lists new material on foreign trade. Includes both near-print and printed items, with annotations. From time to time includes "Trade Lists Available," a list (not elsewhere duplicated) of material to be obtained from the Commercial Intelligence Division.


Has a section "Publications" which lists new federal material in the fields of navigation and shipping, including the processed Circular Letters of the Marine Inspection and Navigation Bureau. Not annotated.

U.S. Commerce Department. National Bu-
Security Yearbook has a section "Publications" which lists processed and printed federal material on social security.


Compiled by the library staff of the Public Roads Administration and includes federal, state, and municipal near-print and printed publications on highways, motor vehicles, and related subjects. Partially annotated.


A list of W.P.A. research projects, arranged under broad subject classifications. Includes both processed and printed municipal, state, and federal publications. Much of this material is not elsewhere recorded. Not annotated.


Lists the current publications of the U.S. Geological Survey. Confined mostly to printed publications, but includes maps and charts. Includes annotations.


Includes a section "Current Bibliography" (compiled by Irmine B. Kennedy) of material on recreation, national parks, and conservation. Includes federal, state, and local government publications, both processed and printed. Not annotated.


Includes a section "Travel Literature" listing state and local publications and maps, both near-print and printed, on travel, recreation, parks, etc. Partially annotated.


Includes "Book Notes" listing processed and printed federal and state material on various phases of child welfare, with annotations.


Has a section "New Publications" which lists near-print and printed publications of federal and state governments, in the field of labor standards, with annotations.


Includes a section "Recent Publications of Labor Interest" which lists new processed and printed foreign and United States federal, state, and municipal documents in various labor fields—consumers, cooperative movement, cost of living, employment, industrial hygiene, labor legislation, wages, etc., with annotations.
Accrediting Associations and the College Library

(Continued from page 210)

individual library reports that more periodicals are now received on the average by college libraries than was the case five years ago. To maintain the same relative standing on holdings of periodicals that it had five years ago, it was necessary therefore for any given institution to increase the number of periodicals received. One college, for instance, has substantially the same percentile rank now that it had in 1934, but at present it receives 145 periodicals that appear on our checklist, as compared with 93 on the 1934 list. In 1934 this library subscribed for a total of 199 periodicals; now it receives 260. We have found a sufficiently close agreement between the number of holdings on our periodical checklist and the total number of periodical subscriptions to be satisfied that in this field our checklist is a valid measure. It is of course much easier to validate a measure of periodical holdings than of book holdings because the total number of periodicals available is comparatively small.

I have made this somewhat lengthy and detailed statement for several reasons: First, to inform college librarians of the techniques we have employed in developing checklists of books and periodicals as a measuring device; second, to let the librarians know that we recognize the soundness of some criticisms of the checklists that they have made; third, to provide information upon the basis of which the criticisms of some faculty members and administrative officers may be answered; fourth, to assure librarians and administrative officers that we make no arbitrary or unwarranted use of the data which we secure through our checklists; fifth, to enlist the continuation of the cooperation which librarians have so generously given us in attacking the difficult problem of developing adequate measures of the relative excellence of college libraries.