

planning of many of the new libraries in colleges and universities throughout the country. Higher education in America is seeking for new solutions to the problems of curricula, instructional aims and methods, and faculty-student relations. President Virgil M. Hancher in the introduction to this pamphlet foresees the library in relation to those departments which use books and other written records for research and instruction, as laboratories are now successfully used by doctors, dentists, engineers, psychologists, artists, and musicians. The program is one of a pioneering university not as yet tied down by tradi-

tions in its buildings or in its thinking and yet one which has successfully pioneered in other fields. More and more emphasis is being placed on the instructional functions of the library in the curricula of our colleges and universities. The new building at the State University of Iowa is a step in this direction and its program should be read with care by all librarians in academic institutions and be brought to the attention of their administration. It is hoped that as the plans progress and the building materializes more detailed information will be published.—*Charles M. Adams.*

## American Historical Societies

*American Historical Societies, 1790-1860.* By Leslie W. Dunlap. Madison, Wis., Privately printed, 1944.

Mr. Dunlap, who defines a historical society as an association of individuals organized primarily to collect, preserve, and make available the materials for the history of the United States or a section of it, divides his informed and useful essay into two parts: first, a general account of the origin, diffusion, aims, activities, and struggles for existence of the sixty-five societies established in this country between 1790 and 1860; second, a particularized account of the founding and growth of each of the sixty-five societies. The latter, though it provides much convenient and useful data, was the easier and less important task. For the attempt to outline this particular segment of our cultural history as set forth in the first part is beset with all of the difficulties that face any historian who deals with cultural growth—the intangibles of motivation, influence, relationships, and institutional evolution.

Mr. Dunlap's essay is the most satisfactory account available for the early history of the societies founded before 1860, for he has grounded his work on an extensive examination of both the publications of these useful institutions and the minutes and correspondence in their archives. But the chapters forming the first part of his essay are less satisfying than the factual account of the societies in the second part. Both contain much interesting and fresh data—some of it no doubt informative even to those who now

have custody of these societies—yet the accumulation of facts is not the most valuable part of cultural history. On the important question of origins and causative factors, for example, Mr. Dunlap merely points to an incipient interest in American history (it was much earlier and much more vigorous than he indicates), to the need for preserving historical sources, to the absence of research libraries, and to the requirement of establishing new agencies—hence the formation of historical societies. This obviously leaves much to be desired in answer to the question why and when these interests and needs originated. Again, the changes of emphasis or interest that sometimes pass for growth in a society, though extremely difficult to chart, are unsatisfactorily presented. Mr. Dunlap, I fear, has less respect for the early founders than I have. Their circular letters asking for source material he finds indiscriminating; to me they appear to be remarkable for their catholicity, their broad and inclusive definition of history, and their sense of contemporaneity—qualities often sadly lacking in these same societies once they have acquired age, respectability, specialization of interest, and comfortable endowments with well-trained staffs.

The early societies were founded by vigorous, enlightened, public-spirited men. Even at the end of Mr. Dunlap's period there are signs of hardening of the arteries in some of the more venerable institutions. But the clinical analysis of this ageing process as performed by Mr. Dunlap is often less flattering to youth than to age, and wisdom does not

always come with years to institutions any more than it does to men. Yet the value of his essay is great and he has performed a

useful service to the institutions themselves and to historians of our cultural life.—*Julian P. Boyd.*

## The New Medical Classification for the Library of Congress and the Army Medical Library— A Progress Report

At the meeting of the Army Medical Library consultants in October 1944, Mary Louise Marshall reported (in the *Bulletin of the Medical Library Association* 33: 180-82, 1945) the initial steps which had been taken toward producing a system of classification suitable for the Army Medical Library. Working under the auspices of a committee representing this library, the Library of Congress, and the Army Medical Library Survey Committee, and with the counsel of physicians concerned with the various specialties of medicine, she had made the preliminary studies for new alternative schedules for Medicine, Class R, and for the preclinical sciences in Class Q for the Library of Congress system.

Since that time Miss Marshall has been hard at work putting the results of this study into effect. The schedule for each subject division has been drawn up and submitted for advice and correction to medical specialists and to members of the committee on classification. As may be imagined, this has proved a long process. The first draft of the whole is finished, and the Army Medical Library has begun to classify its collection by it. In the actual application of the schedules, it is expected that alterations, additions, and subtractions will be found necessary. Consequently, until such trial has been thoroughly made, it is judged wise not to make the

provisional first draft of the classification available for general distribution. The process of classifying the Army Medical Library collection should result in establishing the system in permanent form. It will then be possible to publish it as an integral part of the Library of Congress classification schedules.

It should be noted that the notation for these new schedules has been planned so that it will not conflict with the use of those in the original Library of Congress scheme for Class Q and Class R. The material from these classes has been assigned to hitherto unused portions of the alphabet, the new Q divisions occupying QS to QZ, while Medicine proper (the former R sections) utilizes the wholly vacant letter W. This will make it possible for libraries already using the present Library of Congress classification for medicine and related sciences to continue to do so or, if they prefer, to apply the new system, leaving their previous collections as they are. The Library of Congress will announce its policy with respect to use of the new schedules before they are published.

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