

# Review Articles

## Farmington Plan

*Farmington Plan Handbook.* By Edwin E. Williams. Association of Research Libraries, 1953. 170 pp. \$2.50. Orders should be addressed to Office of the Executive Secretary, ARL, Indiana University Library, Bloomington, Indiana.)

If this were nothing more than a handbook of Farmington Plan practice, it would have even greater utility than the modest disclaimer in the Introduction which suggests that it "may be of some use to Farmington Plan dealers and their advisers, to the sixty-two participating libraries, to those who wish to locate recent foreign books in order to borrow them or obtain photographic copies, and to others who are interested in library cooperation and resources for research."

For handbook purposes Mr. Williams has provided a concise initial chapter on "What The Plan Is and How It Works" and then in the latter half of the booklet a succession of practical cross indexes which permit the user to work easily from several approaches. There is a list of the ninety-nine countries whose publications are procured under the Plan with indication of the procurement agent or library, a list of the participating libraries with report of the subject fields for which each is responsible, a fairly detailed alphabetical subject index that indicates the library responsible for each subject, and then a classified (L.C.) cross index.

In view of the complexity of the subject allocations and the considerable number of countries and libraries that are involved, it seemed obvious that after six years of operation it was worth while to publish these portions of the *Handbook* if only for the benefit of the libraries receiving books and the dealers sending them.

During the first five years of operation (1948-1952) the Plan brought in over 50,000 volumes, so already a large body of material that "might reasonably be expected to interest a research worker in the United States" has been added to the country's collections. Since under the terms of the Plan we can assume that much of this material might not otherwise be available here, and even though indi-

vidual titles are supposed to be listed promptly in the National Union Catalogue, this *Handbook* provides an important resources guide for all libraries in the country. Although responsibility for a subject under the Plan does not necessarily mean that the particular library has a major collection in the subject field, certainly this is a tendency. Thus scholars and reference librarians, as well as acquisitions librarians, will find the *Handbook* a useful bibliographical tool.

Happily, however, Mr. Williams has gone beyond the handbook stage and provided a historical and critical report on the Plan that is both impressive and readable, and also a full bibliography. This was well worth doing because the Farmington Plan is a truly monumental program, conceived in bold and generous terms, and because much of the source material is not easily accessible.

This portion of the *Handbook* has been prepared with the documentary skill and thoroughness, as well as the candor, that we expect of Mr. Williams, who has had the special advantage of working closely with the Plan almost since its inception. If the *Handbook* contains any of the small errors that are the badge of a scholarly review, this reviewer found none and would consider it supererogatory to list them anyway. If effective criticism of the Plan or research into it are stimulated on the basis of Mr. Williams' shrewd comments, he will consider his work well repaid. Even without such important projections, he has performed here an important service to scholarship as well as a good job of scholarship.—Robert Vosper, *University of Kansas Library.*

## Lamont Library Catalog

*Catalogue of the Lamont Library, Harvard College.* Prepared by Philip J. McNiff and members of the Library Staff. Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1953 x, 562 pp.

The *Catalogue of the Lamont Library* reflects accurately the main purpose of the Lamont Library which is to provide "... a live, working collection of books selected to serve the required and recommended reading