

THIRTEENTH ANNUAL REPORT  
OF THE  
BUCK MEMORIAL LIBRARY  
FOR THE  
YEAR ENDING MAY 31, 1936.

Thirteenth Annual Report  
of  
The Buck Memorial Library  
For the year ending May 31, 1936.

To the President of Illinois Wesleyan University and members of the Board of Trustees this report is respectfully submitted.

Gifts

During the past year we have received a number of gifts of books. The most important collection is that of the private library bequeathed under the will of Lincoln Weldon. Mr. Weldon's books numbered over five hundred volumes and included several standard sets of literature and mythology. The Phi Mu Alpha fraternity and the Delta Omicron and Sigma Alpha Iota sororities have given a total of one hundred dollars toward enlarging our music collection to meet the minimum requirements of the National Association of Schools of Music. Professor Fetter of the University of Illinois contributed twenty-five dollars toward improvement of the Economics collection. Various other persons have given us private collections of varying value.

Use of the Library

As was reported to you last year, the calls at our loan desk number some two thousand eight hundred per week--running as high as one hundred fifty per hour in busy seasons. This year we have made a survey of the number of persons actually in the building per day and we find that some three hundred ninety persons use our facilities during the course of a regular school day. The library is very often crowded to capacity and frequently the number of people in the building during the day exceeds five hundred.

As you can readily understand, the routine of desk work is only one of the many processes involved in the operation of a library.

Book reviews must be watched and checked for possible purchases; titles to be ordered must be searched for the best and most economical method of buying. All new books received must be classified and properly cataloged (highly specialized processes requiring extensive knowledge of the various fields of learning) so that they be available for

use; gifts of private libraries must be inspected and the dead wood removed to keep our shelves from being filled with much useless material--which so often has destroyed the value of college libraries in the past. A careful record must be kept of all books in circulation to make sure that they are returned on time--or, if lost--that they are paid for. Books needing repair must be removed from use and mended, and some one specially trained in the resources of the library and in bibliographical methods must be available to unearth information concerning any conceivable subject. If such material is not available in our library, the librarian must know if and where in the United States it can be borrowed. The libraries from which we most usually borrow, aside from Wither's Public Library, include the libraries of the the University of Illinois, the University of Chicago, the Illinois State Library at Springfield, the Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. and the library of the U.S. Office of Education, Washington, D.C. I have made no mention of training a continually shifting student staff, of teaching a course for juniors and seniors in library science, of continual informal instruction of the student body in use of the library.

Obviously for the adequate conduct of work of such magnitude more than one trained librarian is a necessity. The economy measure of employing only one qualified person has for some time ceased to be an economy and become an educational liability. I, therefore, earnestly recommend that the University consider the employment of at least one full-time assistant librarian.

#### Needs of the Plant

Since 1933 your librarian has regularly called attention to the lack of catalog space existing in the library. This situation has now become acute and apparently our needs have been overlooked. At least we have received neither relief nor comment upon our problem. Our lack of space is not limited to the catalog, however, but relates to the housing of our collection, as well. When, in 1931, the commission on Survey of Educational Institutions of the Methodist Episcopal Church analysed our library, the examiners warned that the library would shortly reach its capacity limit of stack space. The estimated number of volumes which we could possibly shelve was then given as approximately forty thousand. At present we have passed the thirty-eight thousand mark and our situation is becoming serious. The University should, therefore, give immediate attention to expanding our stack space if we are not to be obliged to pile our books upon the floors. This can be done in one of three ways--(a) by extending southward the present stack room (as originally planned); (b) by altering the basement room now containing the museum; (c) by making architectural adjustments of the third floor to permit inclusion of the present rooms for library purposes. This outgrowth of our

building has been delayed by the depression; for, had we kept up our accessions as we should, we would long since have been obliged to expand. Indeed, after Buck Memorial Library had been opened only one year the University found it necessary to add the present third floor of the stacks and four new tables in the reading room.

### Binding

For the first time since 1931 we have been able to bind a few magazines. To date we have received from the binder one hundred forty-five bound volumes. This represents only a small fraction of the issues needing attention--an accumulation of five years. Thrift in management requires that we push the binding of our periodicals as rapidly as possible in order to avoid losses from mutilation and theft.

The library now contains approximately 38,000 volumes.

Finally, I wish to express my appreciation to those who have aided in furthering the work of the year.