PROFESSORS' ORDERS ARE THE MAIN SOURCES OF BOOKS IN LIBRARIES

Over $16,000 Spent Annually for 4,000 New Volumes in Central Library and Its Branches.

In an interview with Miss Marian Smith, reference librarian of the Institute Central Library, a number of facts concerning the buying of books for the library were uncovered.

Three general phases of the question have to be considered: the amount of money available from the regular library budget and the endowment funds, the demands for books from the various departments, and the system by which the books are finally decided upon and entered upon the buying list.

Over $16,000 Dollars Spent Yearly

On an average, 14,000 dollars from the library budget and 2,500 dollars from endowment funds are spent annually for reading material. About half of the appropriation from the library budget is used in obtaining periodicals and in binding worn books. The remainder and almost the entire endowment fund are invested in new books of which approximately 2,000 are bought. This makes the average price of the books about $3.50. Between 2,000 and 3,000 more books are acquired by binding and gifts.

According to Miss Smith the second thing to be considered is the most important and difficult problem, the dividing of the available money so as to fit the needs and demands of each department as nearly as possible. The number of students and professors in each course, the relative cost of books in the different courses, and also the relative need for new books, she stated, all have to be taken into account.

By way of example, the departments of Chemistry and Business and Engineering Administration were cited. Miss Smith showed that new books in theoretical chemistry, while very expensive, are demanded infrequently, and that recent books on economics and business management are being continually called for. As a result, more books are bought for Course XV.

In the case of the Electrical Engineering Department the large number of students taking the course is the governing factor, with the added fact that the Val Funff is spent entirely upon electrical books.

Twofold Buying Process

The process by which the buying list is made is twofold. First, the orders of the professors are taken into consideration. Each professor is given order blanks with space for titles, publishers' names, prices, and the professor's signature. In addition, there is a space provided for the approval and signature of the department head. If the budget allotment for that department has not been exhausted the requested book is put on the list. Second, a set of Library of Congress catalogue cards of all new publications is sent to Miss Smith periodically. She goes through them and picks out books of value to the Central Library and sets them aside until time for the buying list. Then whatever remains of the budget, if any, is spent in buying these books. In this manner the Institute Library is constantly being enriched and kept up to date.

Virginia Gold Rush

The glittering hope for sudden wealth kept the department of metallurgy at the V. P. I. unusually busy during the early summer. But not for the reason one might suppose. The search for gold and other "pay dirt" created a stir in the metallurgy department for the Val Funff. In this manner the Institute Library is constantly being enriched and kept up to date.

New Students to Attend All-Tech Smoker on Oct. 6

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Committee and Ushers Named

The committee follows:

John B. Dunning, Chairman; Benham K. Crainey, Assistant; Hoyt P. Steele, Assistant; Edward P. Browne, Refreshments; Henry D. Humbrechts, Entertainments; John N. Marx, Speakers; Marvin J. Silberman, Publicity; Lewis P. Bolslady, Treasurer; William H. Mills, Program.


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