

REVIEWS OF BOOKS

Bibliographies in American History: Guide to Materials for Research, by Henry Putney Beers. (New York. The H. W. Wilson Company, 1938. \$3.50.)

At a time when the country is being indulged with survey projects of every sort and their resulting inventories, it is fitting that there should appear a new and comprehensive compilation of bibliographical materials for the study of American history as a whole. The compiler of the above guide brings to his work earlier experience as a bibliographer. As a member of the staff of the National Archives, he assisted in the Survey of Federal Archives, compiling specifically a bibliography of the Navy Department and the naval shore establishment. His Pennsylvania bibliographies had been published previously.

Including in all 7692 items, this new aid to research is well organized into fourteen chapters which open naturally enough with the general aids. The next two divisions are chronological, one chapter dealing with: Colonial Period, Revolution and Confederation; the next with the United States, the latter being devoted chiefly to public documents grouped under various departments or divisions of the government. Secondary works for the United States are grouped into periods before, during, and after the World War. Such phases as diplomatic and economic history each have their chapters, the latter by the way bulking largest with the exception of that on the states.

The compiler's intention of interpreting history broadly may, as he says, be observed in the chapter headings. Thus we find chapter seven: Political Science, Constitutional, Legal; and eleven: Social, Cultural, Scientific.

The closing chapter deals with the states, both in regional groupings and separately. Here too there has been some subdivision, for the states whose materials are most extensive have such sections as: Archives, Printed Sources, General, Local, Newspapers, etc.

An addenda of six pages follows the final chapter and includes such timely entries as a selected reading list on the social security act (item 7544) and books about jobs, a bibliography of occupational literature (item 7632). Use of the addenda serves to remind the reader of how soon other addenda are necessary. One has only to consider how fast the county inventories already mentioned are making their appearance to realize the weakness of any bibliographical aid.

A thirty-nine page triple-columned index is an adequate key to the guides. One slight error showed up in the reviewer's test of the book's usability. On page 244, item 6142, the author's name should read "Franklin William Scott" instead of "William Franklin," and the consequent two items of the index should be consolidated under "Scott, F. W."

Public Documents with Archives and Libraries, edited by Jerome K. Wilcox and A. F. Kuhlman. (Chicago. American Library Association, 1937. \$3.25.)

A steadily growing interest in the development of archival work in the United States is evidenced by the fact that the American Library Association, in its fifth volume of a series dealing with various problems of public documents, for the first time devotes a portion of the publication to nine papers on archives and libraries, some of which were presented at the New York meeting (1937) of the American Library Association Committee on Archives and Libraries. Of these, one by Mr. Philip C. Brooks, secretary of the Society of American Archivists, introduced the newly formed society to the American Library Association and discussed organization and activity to date. Two of the papers and a portion of a third had been presented at the first annual meeting of the Society. President A. R. Newsome's address on "Objectives of the Society of American Archivists," Miss Margaret C. Norton's "Scope and Functions of a State Archives Department," and Mr. V. H. Paltsits, "Pioneering for a Science of Archives in the United States" (in part), were first published (November, 1937) in the *Proceedings* of the latter meeting.

The portion of the book dealing with archives is divided into the following general topics: development of public archival work in the United States; the Society of American Archivists; essentials in public archival work; the cataloguing of archives; and the training of archivists. Under these heads come articles by Messrs. Thomas P. Martin, Philip C. Brooks, Dorsey W. Hyde, Jr., Luther H. Evans, and John R. Russell. An introduction by Mr. A. F. Kuhlman, American Library Association Committee on Archives and Libraries, who edits the *Archives and Libraries* division of the volume, precedes the articles themselves. Mr. Kuhlman discusses the present great interest in archives in this country and the need for courses in archive training.

The more extensive portion of the volume includes papers presented to the Committee on Public Documents at this same conference of the American Library Association. These, edited by Mr. Jerome K. Wilcox, chairman of the committee, fall under two general headings: federal, state and general problems; and municipal and foreign documents.

Particularly indicative of the growing consciousness of the importance of making government documents more readily accessible is the fact that on March 9, 1937, there was introduced into the House of Representatives a bill known as H.R. 5471, whose purpose, according to Mr. Wilcox, who discusses the subject, is to bring "to all depository libraries desiring them, copies of all Senate and House bills, the Senate and House journals and all of the publications resulting from Congressional committee activities which should include hearings. In addition, it calls for distribution of all of the various maps issued by all agencies and the publications printed or reproduced elsewhere than at the Government printing office."