REVIEWS OF BOOKS

Manual on the Use of State Publications, edited by Jerome K. Wilcox. Sponsored by the Committee on Public Documents of the American Library Association. (Chicago. American Library Association, 1940. x and 342 pages. $6.00.)

In 1935 the Committee on Public Documents of the American Library Association took cognizance of the increasing importance of state publications in scholarly research and the need of a manual of a general nature to facilitate their use. Such a manual was projected, and, after careful consideration of the nature of the problem, it was determined to assign each of the chapters outlined to a specialist and to reserve the sponsorship and general editorship to the Committee on Public Documents. The book, now published, consists of twenty-one chapters and is divided into five parts around the following headings: Importance, Character and Use; Bibliographical Aids; Basic State Publications; National Associations of State Officers and Their Publications; and Printing and Distribution.

Thirty tables and about the same number of lists provide the gist of the contribution this book makes. Each is introduced by a statement which analyses the data, sketches earlier published lists, evaluates the importance of the type of reporting that is tabulated, or provides information on the origin and use of the material. While these statements are not primarily included for purposes of reference, much can be learned from their use in connection with the tables and lists. The bibliographic aids in Part II bring together a mass of material that was heretofore scattered.

The division of the book into parts and chapters according to the function of government represented by the published report makes the finding of the desired reference an easy task. A ten-page subject index and a list of tables further facilitate use of the book. Archivists, librarians, and scholars who have occasion to refer to current state publications will find the *Manual* a valuable reference work.

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