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The Libraries of the Legal Profession: A Study Prepared for the Survey of the Legal Profession, by William R. Roalfe (1953)

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BOOK REVIEWS

THE LIBRARIES OF THE LEGAL PROFESSION; a study prepared for the Survey of the Legal Profession, by William R. Roalfe, West Publishing Co., 1935. Pp. 471, \$6.00.

A survey justifies its expense and serves a useful purpose only if read by the Right People: those who do not know, but *ought* to know the facts about the situation surveyed (a condition of being which sometimes, but not often, coincides with *wanting* to know the facts), and who are in a position to employ knowledge of those facts to improve the situation. Aside from a few law book custodians whose claim to distinction lies in the high quality of their inertia, the Right People to read this Survey are lawyers, who use, and can exercise ultimate control over, the libraries of the legal profession.

Unfortunately, those who can be depended upon to read it are the Wrong People: law library board members and librarians who habitually collect information about other libraries with improvement of their own as the goal, and for whom the book holds few surprises. They may be able to use the Survey to influence certain of the Right People, with resulting improvements in service in specific law libraries; but that influence probably will be exercised more by their own arguments, bolstered by Survey statistics, than by mass persuasion of lawyers and inert librarians to reading the book.

The statistics, and the author's conclusions, make good bolstering material because they are as authoritative as it is possible to obtain. Mr. Roalfe has a fine reputation among lawyers and librarians as a law library oracle, partly because of this training and experience, and partly because he never seems to have an axe to grind. He will tell you where he stands personally, and then proceed to outline arguments on both sides of the question. In preparing this Survey, he has deviated from form only in limiting expression of personal opinion to the minimum which must creep into any author's summary of collected facts.

The Survey covers specifically these types of law libraries: Law Office, Company, County, State, State Court, Federal Court, and Federal Departmental or Administrative Agency. School law libraries are omitted, but the material will be used as one of the best available bases of comparison for that class also, since facts about school libraries, originally intended for inclusion in the Survey of Legal Education, apparently has become lost in the confusion caused by an incomprehensible questionnaire.

The introductory chapter, designed to notify the reader that there is a problem, accomplishes its purpose in a manner less hysterical than is common to Surveys, and incidentally gives some facts about the geographical distribution of law libraries. Washington lawyers may be interested in knowing that a 1950 census of law libraries with 5,000 or more volumes (including school libraries) placed Washington in 10th place with 13, and Seattle, with 9 of the 13, surpassed or equalled in number of law libraries by only Boston, Chicago, Los Angeles, New York City, San Francisco, and Washington, D. C. These statistics gave Washington 101 law books per lawyer, and Seattle 141 law books per lawyer, happy grazing figures surpassed or equalled by 16 states and Alaska, and by 8 cities of over 200,000 population. Mr. Roalfe characteristically and rightfully warns readers to remember the incidence of response and accuracy involved in statistical questionnaires.

The first major division after the introductory chapter summarizes, by means of statistical charts and explanatory comments, information collected from all types

surveyed, concerning book collections, quarters and equipment, personnel (including qualifications and salaries), and services rendered. The have-not personnel budget planners (but not the book-budget planners) will find useful comparative figures, but if there is any "must" reading in this division, it is the must for administrators who are contemplating, without benefit of advice by an expert law librarian, new quarters for the library. Pages 80-82 provide good basic rules for planning the quarters, including footnote references to further reading. This is one of the few places in which Mr. Roalfe can gracefully direct a concrete solution to problems made evident by the facts collected.

The lawyer who ordinarily does not participate in budget or building planning may not be interested in comparing the salary paid his librarian, or the number and ages of his degrees, with those of other librarians, or in the proper placement of the control desk, but he should be interested in knowing whether he is getting his money's worth in terms of service. If he is not allowed to take books out of the library, he may be solaced or infuriated by learning that 23 out of 86 county law libraries make no loans and that 14 make loans only to particular persons or of particular books; that 14 of 24 state court libraries, and 8 of 12 federal court libraries make no loans; that of all types surveyed, 59 out of the 148 responding to the question do no lend their books to anyone.

If he expects of his library something more than availability of books, he may find the Survey suitable for waving under someone's nose. It tells him how many libraries answering the question do not have a catalog of any sort, how many do not assist readers in locating or assembling books, do not help locate references, explain the use of unfamiliar books, give refresher courses in legal bibliography, or do any type of legal research.

If he has a feeling that as a library patron he is entitled to more comfort and convenience, a feeling so vague that he refrains from specific demands, he may receive inspiration from a knowledge of the number of libraries furnishing consultation rooms, typewriters, and dictaphones (the last report by one county law library only, although another pointed with pride to plugs where the attorney might attach his own model).

The second major division of the book, classified by types of libraries, outlines their distinctive qualities and their particular problems. The value of the comment about any one of the types will be greater to the reader who refers to the statistics and explanatory remarks collected in the first division, than to him who reads the "type" summary alone.

The lawyer who browses through the first division, and that part of the second division dealing with his type library, will not know all that is right or wrong with his library, but he will know whether it is a credit to or a reflection on him and the others who ultimately control its policies.

The remainder of the Survey is of limited interest except to law library administrators and librarians, and in it, the chapter on Cooperation among Libraries is most nearly calculated to light a fire under them. There is probably no administrator or law librarian too skilled or too experienced to profit from reading it.

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ADMINISTRATION OF CRIMINAL LAW, by Ernest W. Puttkammer, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1953. Pp. 249, \$5.00.

Our few great treatises on adjective criminal law have now received a worthwhile companion. The field of criminal procedure proper has been dealt with by such competent authors as Orfield (*Criminal Procedure from Arrest to Appeal*, and *Criminal*

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