

UNIVERSITY NEWS

In a recent issue there was news regarding what college, county, special, and public libraries in North Carolina were doing to meet the changing needs brought on by the war. There was no report at that time from either Duke or the University of North Carolina. Undoubtedly these two libraries are doing much the same as those other libraries in meeting war needs, but perhaps it is not out of place to say that in the case of the university libraries the matter is reciprocal. The war is also doing something for them, or maybe we should say *to* them!

Just as acutely as in any industry there is a manpower shortage today in the libraries. WPA has gone. NYA has dwindled almost to nothing, and regular self-help students are very hard to find. As for professional labor, the University of North Carolina has not had quite as much trouble as would be considered typical. Duke has lost a great number from the professional staff, and we are told that very few vacancies have been filled. In both institutions, clerical help has been scarce. This can be largely attributed to the inability to compete with higher paying jobs in business and industry. Students have played a big part in managing many of the routines of library service, and when they were suddenly drafted or urged to drop self-help work in order to speed up graduation, we felt it severely. Although there has been a decreased enrollment here, it has not come anywhere near the high percentage of circulation staff decrease. At the circulation desk of the University of North Carolina we had traditionally used boys until the recent exodus when the various Reserves began to be called. The boys were carrying so many hours that it meant hiring two or three girls for each vacancy in order to achieve the same number of hours. It has not been easy to move ahead with great efficiency with so much inexperienced help. This is not meant to intimate objections to girls as circulation desk workers. On the contrary, they are quite as efficient as the boys with the exception of work requiring greater physical strength.

The greatest change in the University's population, or that which has had the most telling effect on the library, is the

greatly diminished graduate school. In 1939-40 we had about 320 graduate carrel holders, and now we have about 60, or an 80 per cent decrease. Although the general enrollment is down about 25 per cent, normal library requests are of a bigger percentage. Much of the campus population has shifted into activity not requiring the normal library service. On the other hand, a 25 per cent decrease in the faculty has been somewhat compensated for by the academic department of the Naval Pre-Flight School. This makes for an increase of special demands such as those upon the library's War Information Center.

The Naval officers, students, and faculty are using the marvelous collection of materials at the War Information Center more and more. However, the director is somewhat disappointed in one trend. The library, in establishing the W. I. C., offered its resources to small libraries and community groups throughout the state. The greatest number of requests so far have been 18 in one month, and now only 2 or 3 come in. May we remind the public that the resources of the War Information Center are free for the asking.

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University Librarian Rush has just announced that a 25-year gap in the file of the New York Times will be filled by film. The order has just been placed for the years 1851-59 and 1874-92.

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An interesting note on new resources at Duke University is the opening of the new Rare Book Room. The formal opening took place Monday night, April 12, at a meeting of the Friends of the Library. One of the chief features of the room at present is the Trent Collection, presented by Dr. and Mrs. Josiah C. Trent in honor of their three children. The books, periodicals, manuscripts, proof-sheets, letters, pictures, sheet-music, and clippings are all related to the poet, Walt Whitman. The room will be open daily from 3:00 to 5:00 and at other hours by appointment.

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