

## RESEARCH, RESOURCES, AND LIBRARIANSHIP IN THE SOUTHEAST

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If Walter Hines Page could look upon the South today he would see much that would restore his faith in his "old home land." Three-quarters of a century ago the voice and pen of this North Carolinian, a brilliant editor and statesman, were active in behalf of education for the masses in the South, of university training for all who had the ability and aptitude for it, in behalf of industrial training, industry, libraries, and all the other good things he saw possessed by Americans outside the South. Twice he came back to the South to make it his home and help it overcome the depression into which it had fallen during the Civil War and Reconstruction, but it was not ready for him and received cordially neither him nor his ideas.

Page was acridly bitter and critical of his own and other southern states for not shaking off the effects of the war and moving ahead more rapidly. He was impatient of a South whose people did not read, whose libraries were scarcely worthy of the name, and whose universities supported little, if any, research. He had outgrown, by this time, his Southern bias with which he must have started life. Many of the things he saw in the South now irritated him: the atmosphere of shiftlessness that generally prevailed; the tobacco-chewing loafers; the plantation houses in need of repair; the unpainted and broken-down fences; and the rich soil so wastefully cultivated with a single crop. The young philosopher found himself comparing these vestiges of a half-moribund civilization with the vibrant cities of the North, the beautiful villages of New England and the fertile prairie farms of the West.<sup>1</sup> And the comparison was odious.

The South of that day remained the country where the old fashioned Southern gentleman was the controlling social influence, where knowledge of Greek and Latin made its possessor a person of consideration, where Emerson was a Yankee philosopher, and therefore not important, where Shakespeare and Milton were regarded almost as contemporary writers, and where the church and politics and the matrimonial history of friends and relatives formed the staple of conversation.<sup>2</sup>

Here and there in the 1880's and 1890's a Ph.D. was offered; but organized graduate programs were not to come for twenty years or more. The region lagged behind the remainder of the country in industry. Its manufactured products in 1880 were valued at \$295,000,000, while those of the remainder of the country were worth \$5,369,000,000. In 1900 the ratio was about the same, \$979,000,000 to \$13,039,000,000.<sup>3</sup>

Page was remembering a South that once was more industrial than New England; that had supplied much of the country's leadership; whose per capita value of property in 1860, including the slave population, was higher than that of New England; that was spending in education three times as much per capita as the North; a region with fewer than half the population of the North, but with more colleges, more professors and almost as many students (27,055 to 29,044).<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Burton J. Hendrick, *The Life and Letters of Walter H. Page* (2 vols.; New York: Doubleday, Page & Co., 1923). I, 30.

<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.* p. 15.

<sup>3</sup>U. S. Bureau of Census. Reports. 12th Census . . . 1900. *Manufactures. Part II* (States and Territories), pp. 982-989.

<sup>4</sup>Richard H. Edmonds, "The South of Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow," *Blue Book of Southern Progress* (Baltimore, Manufacturers Record, 1922 edition), pp. 5-14.

Although the South forgot about its industries with the invention of the cotton gin in 1810, and turned again to them and to a fuller utilization of its own natural resources only when the bottom fell out of cotton prices in the 1840's, still, when the war started, the region was outstripping the rest of the country in railroad building and was undergoing a renaissance in industry. Now, twenty to thirty years later, Page was needling this South that was exhausted—as completely exhausted as any country had ever been. Freeing the slaves cost an estimated five billion dollars. The freed slaves became a financial burden; and the war debts were staggering. But more irreparable was the manpower loss: the thousands who died in battle and the hundreds of thousands who moved to the North and West in the twenty-five years immediately following the war.<sup>5</sup> The South of Page's time was pulling itself up by its bootstraps, but its progress was so slow that one could scarcely tell whether it was advancing or retreating.

Conditions improved steadily below the Mason-Dixon line following World War I and during the 1920's. Just after the depression of the 1930's the region's most remarkable progress in development and trade was initiated. In 1936 and the first half of 1937, for example, \$450,000,000 was invested in constructing and improving Southern industries. During the previous five years one billion dollars had been invested for the same purpose.<sup>6</sup> The depression brought closer cooperation between agriculture and industry which, through scientific research, enabled the expansion of manufacturing in the South to make greater use of its raw materials. The combination of agriculture, industry and science was opening new industries and creating new wealth and employment opportunities.

In 1935 the value of goods manufactured in the South was \$8,632,000,000. This total has now increased to more than seventy billion dollars. Of the 35,000 industries now operating in the South, two out of three have come in since 1935; and half of the plants are in some way related to agricultural activities or production. Between 25% and 30% of the food processing manufacturers in the United States are now located in the South; over half of the country's textile mills; nearly 90% of tobacco manufacturing; and 25% of the pulp paper industry.<sup>7</sup>

The chief source of intellectual progress in any country must be the universities, and the South had none of first rank in the 19th century. Little systematic graduate work was offered in the region before 1900, and most graduate departments were established after 1920. As late as 1931 the region was still without a first-rate university, according to Edwin R. Embree.<sup>8</sup> Only three Southern universities were members of the Association of American Universities. Four others have since been admitted. While there were evidences of sporadic research activities in the South from 1900 to 1925, only four institutions were actually granting doctorates with any regularity and only 150 degrees were conferred during the two and a half decades after the turn of the century.

From 1900 to 1930 American university presidents and their faculties devoted much attention and effort to the encouragement of research and to its establishment on a sounder basis. Research councils were established in such national scholarly bodies as the Association of American Universities, the Association of University Professors and the American Historical Association, to mention only a few. And out of these in 1919 came the American Council of Learned Societies whose assistance greatly stimulated research and publication in the South.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

<sup>6</sup>Blue Book of Southern Progress (Baltimore, Manufacturer's Record), 1937, p. 7.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., 1958, pp. 5-6.

<sup>8</sup>Edwin R. Embree, "The Place of Universities in the Southern Renaissance", *Proceedings of the 4th Southern Conference on Education*. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, Extension Bulletin, XI, no. 7, 1931) pp. 34-35.

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In 1934 the Committee on Graduate Instruction of the American Council on Education conducted a study to determine the universities of the nation equipped and staffed to grant doctorates. It found that of a total of 660 departments so equipped, only twenty-five were located in the eleven southern states, and all of these were concentrated in six institutions. Eight of these states were without a single department that was considered adequate for offering the doctorate.<sup>9</sup> Twenty-three institutions in the South are now granting the doctorate in 182 departments. Whether or not the Committee on Graduate Instruction would grade all of them favorably, it is obvious that this study encouraged the strengthening of faculties, and they in turn demanded better libraries.

In 1925-26 the undergraduate enrollment in southern universities was 32,878 and graduate, 5,642. These figures had increased in 1956-57 to 127,472 and 23,784. Faculty members increased from 3,157 in 1925-26 to 12,144 in 1956-57.<sup>10</sup> Further evidence of the renaissance is the increased attention given research. Many university faculty are "research" members and devote most of their time to research rather than to teaching. Southern universities granted 150 Ph.D.'s during the first quarter of the 20th century. In 1941 they granted 230,<sup>11</sup> and in 1954 687.

Research costs money, and the amount spent is another important barometer of the virility of a state or region. Back in 1938 fifty million dollars was spent by American universities for research. Of the six universities spending more than two million, none was in the South. One southern institution spent between 500,000 and a million. Total spent in the region was less than five million dollars.<sup>12</sup> In 1954 \$372,643,000 was spent in the institutions of higher education in the United States, of which 39 million was spent by southern institutions.

Foundations have made major contributions to the increase in research activities in the South, and one of the forms this has taken has been in the support of institutes through which universities have been able to extend the benefits of teaching and research to many phases of the citizen's life. In 1947 seventy-eight institutes were operating in southern universities.<sup>13</sup>

Published research is another barometer by which the creative spirit and ability of a region may be gauged. Thirty years ago one would have been hard-pressed to find a dozen scholars from the South included in *Chemical Abstracts*. In 1951 1,025 articles in chemistry abstracted for *Chemical Abstracts* originated in the South; in 1956 the number had increased to 1,776.<sup>14</sup>

Graduate work and research is not stimulated unless publication of the results is likely. Seven university presses are presently operating in these eleven states, the first having been established in 1922. In 1956 they published 82 books. They also

<sup>9</sup>Mary Bynum Pierson, *Graduate Work in the South* (Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 1947), pp. 179-80.

<sup>10</sup>All statistics for the South are for the states of Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee and Virginia, the states represented in A.S.B.R.L., and the institutions included are the twenty-three degree-granting schools.

<sup>11</sup>Pierson *op. cit.* p. 218.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid. p. 5.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid. p. 99-101.

<sup>14</sup>*Blue Book of Southern Progress*, *op. cit.*, 1957. pp. 24-25.

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publish twenty or more journals, most of which are scholarly in character. Journals offer another excellent vehicle for the publication of research, and the fact that one is issued on a campus should stimulate research activity in that field. In 1957 809 periodicals were being published in the South, an increase of 108 since 1928.

Other good signs: 32 Guggenheim fellowships were awarded Southerners in 1958. One hundred and seventy southern applicants received National Science awards for 1957-58, 104 of whom were from the states included in this review. Twenty per cent of the country's faculty members qualified to do research in the physical sciences and engineering fields are teaching in southern universities.<sup>15</sup> Between 1900 and 1950 the percentage of southern biographees in WHO'S WHO IN AMERICA, those resident in the South, increased from 9% to 11%; in actual numbers from 809 to 5,047. As late as 1925 the number of biographees resident in the South continued to be less than the number born in the South but resident elsewhere—evidence that the old cancer that cost the region so many of its ablest and most ambitious men was still alive—but recent signs suggest that the trend is at last becoming more favorable to the South.

All of these favorable signs—these evidences of a reawakening in education, agriculture, industry and research—would have restored Page's faith—which he never quite lost—in the land of his birth. All of them, in a sense, are related to teaching and research, and have implications for libraries. Creative artists and scientists, scholars and research men alike, work effectively only when close to research libraries. The research man in the university must have his books and journals. And industry's dependence upon the printed record is well illustrated in the development of special libraries in its laboratories during the last quarter of a century. How well have the libraries of the new South been developed to meet these larger demands now being made of them? Let's look at them.

While librarians did not begin, as early as the teaching faculty, to discuss in their meetings the need for concentrated and cooperative action in strengthening their research facilities and in encouraging research, librarians individually were aware of their obligations to the scholar. This has been demonstrated in the growth of libraries. In 1900 the libraries of the 23 institutions that grant doctorates in the Southeast contained 407,000 volumes. Harvard already had more than half a million.<sup>16</sup> During the next twenty-five years these libraries added a million volumes, or 1,750 volumes per library per year. Harvard, meanwhile, added two million, or 80,000 volumes a year.

The pressure of increased enrollment in graduate and professional schools, with heavier demands for graduate instruction in a variety of fields, together with the influence of professional associations and councils, and with the assistance of foundations, brought increased funds to libraries. Between 1925-26 and 1956-57 ten million volumes were added to southern research libraries, bringing the total to more than eleven million. Five and a half million volumes have been added since World War II, and \$61,227,000 has been spent, of which 22 million went for books and journals.

Since 1935—between 1935-1955—the South has led the nation in the rate of growth of its research libraries. Seven of our states are ranked among the first nine in the United States in the percentage of increase in volumes in their research libraries; and the percentages range from 200% in Alabama to 471% in Florida. Ten of our states are among the first 19, all with increases of above 135 per cent. Three library centers in the South were among the first ten of the nation in the percentage of increase of their volumes during this period. The Chapel Hill-Durham center ranked third; Birmingham, seventh; and Atlanta, tenth.<sup>17</sup>

All this is evidence that librarians and faculties have been studying their programs and have been selecting the books and other materials most necessary to their institutions' program. These materials have been acquired as special collections—private libraries, representing decades and centuries of collecting by scholars and collectors and requiring special budgetary maneuvers to finance; they have come as single rare items long the library's desiderata list; or files of journals offered in dealers' catalogs from overseas and snatched via cable from other less alert and less fortunate libraries; as collections of papers of statesmen, industrialists, plantation owners or literary figures; as diaries of soldiers who intelligently recorded life about them as they moved up and down the South in the 1860's.

Staffs to acquire and process these materials and to assist the scholar in exploiting them have been

<sup>15</sup>Heath K. Riggs. "Southern College and University Faculty Research Resources in Physical Science", *The Scientific Monthly*, 77 (May 1953) pp. 91-94.

<sup>16</sup>Most of the statistics of volumes added, expenditures on libraries, etc. are from the Princeton University and Louisiana State University lists. Earlier figures are from miscellaneous U. S. reports.

<sup>17</sup>Robert B. Downs. "Distribution of American Library Resources", *College and Research Libraries*, 18 (May 1957) pp. 183-189, 235-237.



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assembled. The number of staff members in the twenty-three institutions was raised from 479 in 1939-40 to 1,199 in 1956-57, an increase of 30 staff members for each institution. These additional members provided the specialized services required of curators of rare books, of manuscripts, maps, documents and subject-trained personnel to work in highly specialized fields. The staff salaries budget increased from \$734,066 in 1939 to \$6,249,351 in 1957.

New buildings costing \$20,000,000 and more have been constructed since the war, and substantial additions have been made to others. Storage, study and operating space is needed on the greatly enlarged campuses to serve more undergraduates, graduate students and faculty. These new buildings provide easy access to books, and include space for organizing manuscripts, rare books and other materials for easy and intensive use. They include equipment and space for making and reading microreproductions, for storing and using audio-visual equipment, and for quick reproduction of material for class or research use.

Librarians have prepared lists to aid the scholar in locating and gaining access to special collections and other materials; as examples of this highly important assistance, we have guides to the manuscript collections; lists of newspaper files held; lists of newspapers on film; guides to the resources of single libraries; a list of chemical journals in southern libraries (as prepared by SIRF); scientific journals in the libraries of Duke-University of North Carolina-North Carolina State College and the Woman's College of the University of North Carolina; lists of books of a geographical area (for example, Thornton's North Carolina bibliography); and North Carolina fiction, prepared by the North Carolina Library Association and the North Carolina Association of Teachers of English; supplement to the Union List of Serials for the Southeast, (in progress); a guide to the microfilm collections of early state records, a monumental collecting and listing project directed by Prof. W. S. Jenkins of the University of North Carolina, to mention only a few.

In 1932 the major research libraries of the nation, about forty of them, formed the Association of Research Libraries to which seven libraries of the Southeast now belong—(Duke, the University of North Carolina, Universities of Florida, Virginia, Kentucky, Louisiana State University and the Joint University Libraries.) The organization studies the common problems of research libraries, discusses them and makes its findings serve effectively the scholars of the nation. The Library of Congress Catalog in book form, the Farmington Plan, and the Documents Expediting Project, are examples of projects the Association of Research Libraries has conceived and sponsored. In the South the newly-created Association of Southeastern Research Libraries, a smaller model of ARL, already has initiated several projects. Meanwhile southern librarians have made their collections freely accessible on interlibrary loan, and groups of them have banded together for the purpose of strengthening their library facilities and making them more easily accessible. This interest in strengthening library resources, avoiding unnecessary duplication, and in increasing accessibility was expressed in concrete action more than twenty years ago in the Duke-North Carolina Cooperative Agreement, the creation of the Joint University Library in Nashville, and in the Atlanta Center.

Perhaps it should be emphasized here that neither of these enterprises could have been launched without foundation help. This was in the early thirties, and attention had just been focused upon the inadequacy of facilities for higher education in the South. As foundations came to the assistance of universities the library was recognized as the logical approach, through cooperative effort, to the problem of improving higher education.

The most extensive plan for cooperation in the South was organized as the Georgia-Florida Committee for Planning Library Cooperation in 1954, which became the Southeastern Interlibrary Research Facility in June 1955, about which you will hear later. The Association of Southeastern Research Libraries, organized in 1956, is composed of the librarians of the twenty-three Ph.D.-granting institutions in the Southeast. The fact that we now have a discussion place for library problems common to the libraries of the region, and a working group within which problems can be initiated, assures us of a strong library program insofar as cooperation can make a contribution.

Notable progress was made in library development, in research, and in higher education, generally, in the South in the last quarter century. By looking backward we can see how far we have come; but by looking about us we can see that the library resources of the region still suffer by comparison with those of other geographic regions. How are these deficiencies to be corrected? It appears to me that several steps must be taken if the differences are to be substantially reduced. (1) We must increase substantially the financial support of southern research libraries; (2) work out a cooperative program whose features will attract and hold all the research libraries of the South; (3) encourage publication of research completed in the region; (4) provide lists and descriptions which will enable the scholar to locate the materials that are available; (5) develop a more effective program of bringing new and well-qualified people into the profession.

Let's look first at the financial picture. In 1956-57 southern research libraries spent \$108,438 per institution for books. They have spent an average of \$79,700 per year since the end of World War II. The average expenditure of libraries in the Association of Research Libraries in 1956-57 was \$240,021; they have spent an average of \$171,468 per year since 1945. Southern libraries have added 20,650

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volumes per year during this period, while ARL libraries have added annually 35,022. The average size of southern libraries is 526,555 volumes, while ARL libraries contain 1,363,750 volumes. These are, for the most part, differences in quantity, but the differences are so great as to be highly significant. Some quality measurements may also be made. About fifteen years ago Charles H. Brown's well-known study of the holdings of the most cited journals in chemistry, mathematics, physics, botany and physiology revealed that only four libraries in the Southeast ranked among the first 55 libraries of the country, and these ranked 15th, 43d, 47th, and 50th.<sup>18</sup> At about the same time the Board of Resources of the American Library Association, under the chairmanship of Robert B. Downs, drew up a list of 75 subjects and asked about 500 authorities to state where, in their opinion, the best library collections were held. Fifty-three collections in the South were declared distinguished, but these were concentrated in only eight institutions, and thirty-seven of the collections were in two institutions.<sup>19</sup> This condition is obliged to have changed, with the addition of several million volumes since that date, but libraries in other areas have been strengthened too, so the comparisons must remain about the same.

How many volumes does a research library need? One can answer that question about as satisfactorily as the question "How far is up?" No statistical formula has been developed that will tell how much money is required annually to support work for the doctorate in a given field. Too many factors are involved. In 1956-57 Harvard and California gave degrees in 28 fields. Harvard has 177,347 volumes for each field in which it granted degrees; California 50,803. Ohio State gave degrees in 27 fields the same year and had only 27,216 volumes per field.<sup>20</sup> No institution in the South granted degrees that year with fewer than 38,000 supporting volumes for each field in which degrees were granted.

These figures are not very helpful. What we all know, however, is that in order for an institution to carry on graduate work and conduct research it must have, for the department concerned, the standard treatises, the basic journals, and a respectable collection of other source materials. Once the basic material is at hand the number of additional volumes actually available in a given field adds richness to the research that can be conducted and multiplies the specific projects within that field that can be carried on.

The difference in size of ARL and Southern libraries makes it fairly obvious that we are inadequately prepared to conduct graduate work and research in many of the fields of interest to the region. We have much to make up in the building of libraries. The first need of southern libraries, then is for more money. Every research library in the South should be spending annually in the next few years at least \$150,000 for books, periodicals and binding. The libraries of institutions granting degrees in 20-25 fields should be spending \$250,000. Last year only twelve spent as much as \$150,000 and none as much as \$250,000. If research is to be conducted and doctorates granted in the fields in which there is demand, institutional budgets must be substantially increased, with a proportionate share going to the library. One hears much of several factors which make it difficult for southern states to support their libraries and educational institutions more generously; for example, 1) research libraries in southern states are now receiving 3.6% of the total institutional budget; ARL libraries receive only 3.4%; 2) the per capita income of the Southeast was \$1,368 in 1956; the national average was \$1,940; 3) 17% of the country's population resides in these eleven southern states, but this includes 23% of the country's school and college students. These are financial problems peculiar to us, but they cannot be allowed to stand permanently between the region and first-rate research libraries. The presence of strong research libraries, as a matter of fact, would contribute to the early removal of some of these problems.

The head start libraries elsewhere have on the region can be made up only with great effort and much time; but librarians can do much to offset it by agreeing to add as heavily to library resources as finances will permit, giving priority always to the acquisition of important research resources not now in the South. Cooperation can take many forms. In view of the present limited facilities of the region, we would profit from top level cooperation in decisions relative to fields in which graduate work will be given, to the end that unnecessary training in certain subject areas is avoided and that all the fields important to the South are covered somewhere. Without agreement at that level, libraries cannot develop cooperatively long range programs of acquisitions in which commitments are made to build certain fields intensively; and without agreements to provide sound training the South will continue to send men to the North and West for advanced degrees and will increase thereby the prospect of their being lost to the region.

<sup>18</sup>This study was made for the Association of Research Libraries by the librarian of Iowa State College.

<sup>19</sup>Robert B. Downs. "Leading American Library Collections", *Library Quarterly*, 12 (July 1942) pp. 457-473.

<sup>20</sup>From tables in *Libraries of the Southeast, A Report of the Southeastern States Cooperative Library Survey, 1946-47*, edited by Louis R. Wilson and Marion A. Milczewski. (Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 1949) p. 166.

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Library cooperation that is concerned only with mobilizing and using existing resources is not the answer. Most southern libraries have lacked the books and journals needed to support graduate work in certain fields. Last year half of the industries locating in the South were related to agricultural activities and production, yet Downs in his "Leading American Library Collections" found only one library in the entire area possessing an outstanding collection in agricultural sciences. Nothing is achieved by bringing together a group of relatively weak libraries, all of which contain essentially the same materials.

What is needed is a realistic and positive program of building and sharing collections. The Joint ASERL-SREB Committee on Research Library Cooperation in the South has stated clearly the objectives of regional library cooperation: 1) provide the research materials essential to quality graduate and professional education; 2) make these materials as accessible as possible; and 3) reduce unnecessary duplication.

The projects already completed, in process, or on the drawing board, under the direction of SIRF or ASERL, will contribute to the accessibility and reduce duplication. The list of chemical journals; Southeastern Supplement to the Union List; survey of holdings of foreign documents; description of special collections; report on microcopy projects; and others like them, covering the region or single library holdings, demonstrate that the spirit and the know-how are present, and that a positive and aggressive program of building up southern collections cooperatively should flourish. The dissemination of information about holdings should be extended and continued; guides to manuscript collections should be published and kept up-to-date; lists of newspapers, special collections, and major acquisitions, in whatever form, should be made available routinely to the other research libraries of the region. The library and the graduate school should be on such terms that their representatives could discuss the preparation and publication of such lists, descriptions and other materials as would enable the research staff of the university more completely to exploit the resources of the library in its research.

If university presses are to provide the stimulus to research for which they have a tremendous potential, they should keep in mind the purpose for which they were organized. They should continue to be concerned with publication of the scholarly work of the university, rather than with showing a profit and with placing titles on best-seller lists. They should have the kind of financial support that would permit directors to keep their sights on original objectives. This support should take into account also the advantage to the university of permitting the library liberal discounts on books and journals sent out on exchange.

Finally, the effectiveness of any library is dependent in large measure upon personnel—upon those responsible for bringing books and people together. There exists in the South a scarcity of technically-trained librarians, but just as critical is the scarcity of librarians with competence in subject fields and in languages, and with experience in handling special materials like manuscripts, rare books, documents, archives, maps and audio visual materials. We need, therefore, new librarians with ability, training, and with experience in the book trade—librarians familiar with foreign book markets and dealers—if libraries are to be built with the materials sorely needed in the southern states. The training of these people is a responsibility of the region; we are well-equipped to grant the Master's degree to as many as are likely to be recruited. The South does not have, however, a doctoral program in librarianship. Perhaps the matter should receive sympathetic attention and study. Such a program should draw heavily upon other divisions of the university—the humanities, social and natural sciences, and should stimulate the cross-fertilization of librarianship with other professions. Among the practical advantages of such a program for the South are these: 1) More problems peculiar to the South could be studied; 2) More teachers with intensive training in research methods would become available for teaching posts in southern library schools and for staff positions in southern libraries; 3) Able persons who, for a variety of reasons, could not go to library school outside the region, would enroll for the doctorate; 4) More first-rate people would be drawn into the first-year school.

As we think together of resources and research in this first Southern College and Research Library Workshop, it is well to view our present resources against a background such as I have tried to present. Regardless of where the South stands today in relation to the remainder of the country, the progress it has made during the last half century should convince us that the unfavorable regional differences that have plagued us for almost a hundred years can be overcome. Such meetings as this will hasten the day.