

The surplus books are being handled in various ways:

1. Placed on temporary shelves in public corridors, exposed to theft.
2. Turned down in stacks to enable more shelves to be placed in a case.
3. Placed in the subbasement where the books are deteriorating from damp and mould.
4. Placed in cartons and stored in the attic and rendered not available to the public.
5. Shelved in one of the staff toilet rooms.
6. All unnecessary duplicates have been eliminated.

This overcrowding of the book collection produces the following bad results:

1. As over 38,000 volumes are shelved out of their regular order, from the subbasement to the attic, the service to the public is slowing up each year.
2. Valuable books are exposed to destruction by mould, mutilation, and theft.
3. In its present crowded condition it is impossible for the Library to attract the gifts or the bequests of the valuable collections of books that now exist in this area. It cannot promise any prospective donor that his gift will be given decent, not to say dignified, treatment. This is a very important point to a university library, for most libraries of this type depend on collectors and rich donors for their outstanding treasures.
4. The Library's book appropriation should be increased to bring the University's collection in line with those of other universities in this area, but it is useless to do so until there is assurance that the books can be made available.
5. The overcrowded condition of the Library is being made worse at the rate of 9,000 volumes per year. Without stack relief no administrative skill can prevent the condition becoming more chaotic.

Books without shelves cannot be preserved or found when wanted.

STORAGE ROOM

During the year 1937-'38 a room was excavated under the basement reading room. The presence of five pier footings, eight feet square, greatly reduces the actual storage capacity of the space. Careful planning provides storage space for about 50,000 volumes. The room can be used only for books rarely needed, as its center is 75 feet distant from the elevator. The danger from damp and mould to books stored here is still to be determined.

This storage space will be taken up within a year with the library's surplus books and newspaper files, plus the little-used sets that will be brought in to give shelf space to the crowded departmental libraries. This storage room, while a welcome addition, does not attempt to solve the stack problem of Watson Library. Active books to be effective must be shelved in stacks where they are readily accessible to students. An addition to the stacks, continuing the floor levels is the only solution.

REMEDY

The director of libraries urges that the library stack at the rear of Watson Library be extended 70 feet to the west in conformity with the original building plans and that this structure (70 feet by 50 feet) be filled to half its capacity with steel stacks. This will provide at once additional shelf space for 210,000 volumes