OUR CONTRIBUTORS

Mr. F. R. Gurney was apprenticed to an electrical engineer and joined the R.A.F. as a photographer. During the latter part of his service in the R.A.F. he spent a considerable time on logistics and cataloguing. Later he worked for Smith's Aircraft Instruments Ltd. as a compiler producing parts catalogues, and subsequently opened a spares compiling section for Elliott Flight Automation Ltd., for whom he now works as an Information Officer.


Ronald Sturt, F.L.A. Senior Lecturer, College of Librarianship, Wales. Formerly on the staff of the North-Western Polytechnic, London, where he lectured on the history of libraries and librarianship, and of the Hertfordshire County and Westminster City libraries.

R. C. Wright, A.L.A. After experience in the public libraries of Bournemouth and Watford, serving in the R.A.F. during the war as pilot and flying instructor and working for several years as technical author for British European Airways, entered the Civil Service as librarian, first at the Royal Aircraft Establishment, and later in the Ministry of Supply Central Library. Was appointed Chief Librarian at the R.A.E. in 1956. Was member of Aslib Council 1957-60 and 1961-7 (Chairman of the Aslib Aeronautical Group, 1962-4), and Hon. Sec., Reference, Special and Information Section of the Library Association, 1961-2.

BOOK REVIEWS

Teach yourself librarianship, by Barbara Ruth Fuessli Kyle. E.U.P. xii, 140 pp. 1964. 7s. 6d.

There is a great deal of wisdom and candour in this book. To run briskly over many aspects of the personal and the professional library in 140 pages means also precision and selection.

Miss Kyle's quick, clean prose washes over the face of librarianship, and the result will be for many readers a brightened image and a richer awareness of their library. The book's raison d'être is simply put: 'Any intelligent household collects books and uses libraries: to get the most out of these two activities is to practise librarianship, and this you can teach yourself to do . . .'

The 'teaching' ranges over the library system of the country, the layout of a library, its daily routine, the general library and its classification and catalogues, the special library, and the future and past of librarianship. Book selection principles introduce a section on the personal library; and at the end is a chapter on training and qualifications.

Miss Kyle selects her examples with fair skill. She is not afraid of whetting the curiosity of her readers, as the comparison between the cost/issues relationships of similar libraries is intended to do. On the other hand the description of the old habit of employing the broad analysis of issues to aid book selection makes less satisfactory reading. Cataloguing and classification are introduced in arresting fashion: ' . . . their very success has to some extent made the public look upon them as obstacles between the books and themselves instead of as clues . . . ' It is refreshing also to read the logic of the special libraries' position in regard to the national co-operation scheme, although its general application would appear to reduce the library resources of the 'intelligent household'.

There are two extraordinary features in the book: the booklists and the index. The lists appear at the end of chapters; it is difficult to discover what immediate purpose they serve, as they include such works as the Vollans report, Vocabularium Bibliothecarii, Journal of Docu-
The index is disappointing. Its brevity is understandable but the erratic compilation is not. Surprising entries are those of chapter headings such as the Future in libraries, a Personal library, and Special libraries. In the last case a second reference on p. 83 does not appear in the index.

The references to paperbacks, to Penguins, and to the L.A. County libraries section's Reader's Guides are valuable to the book, but these are not indexed, although the National Book League is. Similar discrimination is shown by including the Institute of Information Scientists and by omitting University College, London; both are fully treated in the appendix on training.

Should such a book have an index? The attempt to provide one mars an otherwise engaging presentation of librarians and practice in all types of libraries. Mostly up-to-date, with much humour in word and line, Miss Kyle's venture deserves success in reaching a wide readership.

RONALD STURT.


This Standard has been prepared by the Documentation Sectional Committee of which Dr. S. R. Ranganathan is Convener; it provides 'terms and their meanings according to the Indian School of thought'.

It will be extremely useful to those studying classification, particularly the colon scheme.

L. M. HARROD.


It is a pity that this exposition, at considerable length, of the Five Laws (Books are for use, Every reader his book, Every book its reader, Save the time of the reader, Library is a growing organism) was not brought more up-to-date. To quote statistics which are up to fifty years old can be misleading and reduces confidence in and respect for other parts of the book. Needless to say, little mention is made of developments in library services which have taken place in recent years—and these are considerable in number and of great importance. These could quite well take the place of much that is in the book and which is now relatively speaking 'ancient history.' Basically of course the original thesis is still sound. Occasionally one comes across a strange phrase, as, 'But the twentieth century saw it [the seed of the library movement in the British Isles] manured by Andrew Carnegie'.

L. M. HARROD.


This book covers indexing, coding, and search devices. The theories of index terminology and indexing methods are discussed. Indexing is defined as the art of assigning one or more terms to an 'item of information' so as to characterize it.

Topics covered include evolution of terminology, the possibility of a 'Universal Index Terminology', integration of continuum, and basic principles of information retrieval devices.

The author states that each field of science must develop its own standardized terminology. He indicates that present day information retrieval machines do not create any new capabilities but only mechanize certain previously manual functions.

References are given at the end of each chapter. A summation of examples of eight basic systems of information retrieval devices is included.

GERALD A. WILLEY.

A guide to the world's abstracting and indexing services in science and technology, National Federation of Science Abstracting and Indexing Services, 324 East Capitol Street, Washington 3, D.C. 183 pp. 1963. $5.00.

This reference work was published under a grant from the National Science Foundation.

The names and addresses of 1,855 indexing and abstracting services are given. Services can easily be found by a country index or a subject index.

The services are arranged by Universal Decimal Classification and they are also arranged alphabetically. Some example entries are Chemical Abstracts, various indexes as Index Medicus and Library Literature, and Semiconductor Abstracts.

GERALD A. WILLEY.

In 1951 was published Technical libraries: their organization and management, edited by Lucille J. Strauss assisted by her two collaborators in this work which is the logical development of the former.

It is a guide to present practices in the United States, providing an introduction to the organizational procedures and essential functions of a special library or information service.

In the course of doing so it refers to much American, and some British, literature on the subjects covered and provides plans, a few illustrations of libraries and reproductions of stationery forms.

The chapter on indexing and filing non-book materials deals with the various methods and systems in use for retrieving information contained in printed publications, other than books, correspondence files, maps, photographs, pictures, slides, and photocopies.

It is a most useful guide to practising librarians and to students of librarianship, but much of its value is lost as a reference book by most inadequate and inconsistent entries in the subject and author indexes.

L. M. Harrod.

Science, humanism and libraries, by D. J. Foskett.
London: Crosby Lockwood. ix, 246 pp. 26s.

There cannot be many librarians whose articles contributed to the professional press, and papers read at meetings and conferences, over a period of fourteen years bear re-printing in book form and yet are as useful as when they were prepared. Yet this is the case with the contents of this book, only one of whose eighteen contributions has not appeared in print before. This one, and by much the longest, deals with the writings of distinguished scientists, and is an original contribution to the literature of the subject. The others mostly deal with important aspects of book classification, documentation, and non-public librarianship.

The index, though comprehensive, would have been a much better guide to the contents of the book if inclusive pagination had been given to the constantly occurring ‘ff’, and if sub-headings had been provided. It is little help to the user to find 12 page references (of which three are followed by ‘ff’) under the heading ‘Notation’, 12 under Royal Society, 11 under ‘Reference service’ (four ‘ff’) and so on.

Many librarians and students will be pleased to have these excellent articles in book form.

L. M. Harrod.


This is an excellent guide to the functions of a newspaper library and to the routines used in different libraries to fulfil those functions. The book has a slightly wider scope than the subtitle suggests, having chapters on microfilm, on books, pamphlets, and bound files, on supplementary records, and on newspaper indexing, amongst others.

Over a dozen well-chosen illustrations give the atmosphere of a ‘newspaper library’ and illustrate some of the equipment and methods referred to in the text. Photographs or drawings of some of the files and other equipment described would have been useful.

The book has been prepared with care, and only two minor errors have been noticed: ‘i.e.’ should have been ‘e.g.’ on page 80 and ‘Malayan’ should read ‘Burmese’ on p. 105.

The keeping of a subject index on cards is recommended. Where speed of consultation is of importance, as it is in the library of a newspaper, entries on strip index types of visible index have much to commend them. At least two manufacturers make ‘frames’ which hold two columns of strips on each side.

Chapters which will be of particular interest to indexers are those on subject division and on file headings; those responsible for any kind of reference, special, or information library will find the book suggestive and helpful.

L. M. Harrod.

A useful article, ‘Introducing the indexer’, by Fielden Hughes appeared in the autumn 1964 issue of The Author. It was the subject of a leader in the Times Literary Supplement of December 31, 1964.