
With its companion volume, Dictionaries of foreign languages (recently issued by the same publishers) this exceedingly scholarly and comprehensive history of encyclopaedias has added greatly to Robert Collison's already impressive stature as a bibliographer. The theme is indeed treated 'throughout the ages' from the first recorded encyclopaedist, Plato's nephew Speusippos (c. 370 B.C.) down to the Concise Bulgarian encyclopaedia in five volumes (1963). It is, so far as I can ascertain, the only book that has been published, dealing exclusively with this subject, and I can well understand that it took the author a full five years to compile this valuable work.

All the great names are here—Bacon, Diderot, Sir David Brewster, Brockhaus, Samuel Taylor Coleridge (whose plan, on which the Encyclopaedia metropolitana was based, refreshingly appears in toto as an appendix of 55 pages), Noah Webster and W. & R. Chambers—as well as a host of less familiar ones.

I have called the book 'comprehensive' but there are two fairly important encyclopaedias which receive no mention at all and these omissions somewhat surprised and disappointed me. The first is the Encyclopaedia of the laws of England, which is still a standard work. It was first published in thirteen volumes (under the editorship of A. Wood Renton) between 1897 and 1903. A second edition in seventeen volumes appeared between 1906 and 1919. When a third edition was called for, five volumes were duly published between 1938 and 1940, under the editorship of E. R. Gell, but then the remainder of the work done was burnt and buried under German incendiary bombs, and the project had to be abandoned.

The second omission, the New universal encyclopaedia, has an equally interesting history. It is true that Mr. Collison does write about an encyclopaedia with this title, but that was a New York publication (1874-8) and has no connexion at all with the one to which I am referring. The English New universal was first published, I recall, in fortnightly parts by Harmsworth in 1905-6, the editors being the famous partnership of John Hammerton and Arthur Mee. In 1920-2 it first appeared in book form as the Harmsworth universal encyclopaedia (1920-2), its name being changed to the New universal in 1948, when a new edition was published under the sole editorship of Sir John Hammerton. This ten-volume edition I possess and, although I often curse it for its lack of an index, I find it a satisfactory work of reference; it has many notable contributors and is particularly rich in its biographies. The current edition in fifteen volumes, edited by Gordon Stowell (1958-63), is now the property of the Caxton Publishing Co.

On the subject of indexes to encyclopaedias, the author has (as might be expected) some words of wisdom to utter in
his learned but very readable introduction:

Encyclopaedias did not always have indexes, and the first good encyclopaedia indexes did not appear until the 1830's. The very function of indexing had hardly been understood many years previously, and yet it was an essential complement to the text of any good encyclopaedia. Although quite a number of encyclopaedias nowadays devote a whole volume to the index, one never hears a complaint from the users on this score, though any inadequacy of the index will quickly be resented. The reason is that for the great majority of its users, the encyclopaedia is a poor tool without its index.* The compilation of indexes for encyclopaedias is a highly skilled task, for if it is to do its work properly, it must analyse every name, every topic, every idea, every illustration, map, and diagram, etc. (For example, Arthur Mee's Children's encyclopaedia owes much of its immense success to its excellent index.) The references, moreover, should always be to a fairly exact part of the page for it is difficult to find a single allusion among some hundreds of words on a closely printed page unless some system of page division is utilized.

Mr. Collison's own index comprises only names, titles and sub-titles, although there are several subjects (e.g., indexes to encyclopaedias) that could usefully have been included. But, within its self-imposed limitations, it seems practically flawless and impeccable. I failed, however, to find any reference (under either author or title) to the title-pages of Conversationslexicon by R. G. Löbel and Ma'aseh Tobiyyah by Tobias Cohn, which are illustrated facing respectively p. 104 and p. 105.

I always admire this author's choice of quotations to adorn his chapter-headings.

G.N.K.

*A The italics are ours. It is to be hoped that this authoritative pronouncement will be taken to heart by future publishers of encyclopaedias.


A searcher is a member of a library staff who verifies the information available concerning a book it is proposed to purchase and then makes certain that the book is not already in stock. The preface to this book states that 'the guidelines presented in this manual are based in part on everyday practice of the Searching Unit of the Acquisitions Department of the Columbia University libraries. The aim of the work is to describe actual and desirable practice rather than to create rules or to reflect one institution's routines.'

Catalogues and their entries are described as a basis of the searcher's knowledge. Then follows a description of the techniques of searching (with accounts of methods used in other American university libraries) and descriptions of the many publications which can assist in the tracking down of bibliographical information. Examples of specific searches are given.

Dealing with general bibliographies, the author states that many of these are called catalogues and quotes as examples the Library of Congress and the British Museum catalogues. He then defines them as lists which record, describe or index the resources of a collection, a library, or a group of libraries. Librarians tend to think of catalogues as lists of books relating to the contents of one or more libraries, and of general bibliographies as lists of books without relationship to the contents of libraries. As the field of library studies expands both in breadth and in depth, one hopes that terms will be used with increasing precision rather than with the confusion that is here exhibited. There is similar confusion over national bibliographies which 'could technically be considered trade biblio-
Indexes are allotted their place in the time schedule of production, and an explanation is given of the sources of those delays which so often alter the schedule. No mention is made of indexes in discussing the costs of a book. It is somewhat startling to read of the amounts spent on dust jackets, which are regarded as aids to sales—a form of advertising.

M.D.A.


This report covers indexes compiled by machine, indexes generated by machine, automatic assignment indexing techniques, and automatic classification and categorization. Other topics covered include potentially related research problems of evaluation (including the Cranfield Project and O'Connor investigations) and operational considerations.

An appraisal of the state of the art in automatic indexing is given as a conclusion.

There is an appendix list of references and bibliography of 662 items.

This report was compiled by the Research Information Center and Advisory Service on Information Processing, Information Technology Division, Institute for Applied Technology, National Bureau of Standards.

Consideration is given to citation indexes and key-work-in-context (KWIC) and other similar techniques.

Among the related research efforts described are automatic classification and categorization, computer use of thesauri, statistical association techniques, and linguistic data processing. The report con-
cludes that indexes based on words extracted from text are practical for many purposes today, and that automatic assignment indexing and classification experiments show promise for future progress.

Gerald A. Willey.


Librarianship has developed enormously in many directions in recent years; so much, in fact, as to justify a variety of new periodical publications, some of them very specialized, and also Library Science Abstracts. The last volume of Five years’ work in librarianship was a larger guide to five years’ literature than the previous one. Yet there was room for another guide to the literature of librarianship, and one now anticipates that Progress in library science, 1965 is the first of a number of similar annual—or at least biennial—publications.

It contains fifteen chapters, each dealing with a different aspect of librarianship, and each written by an expert, e.g. J. L. Thornton on Indexing, Miss I. Darlington on Archives and archivists, 1964, J. H. Davies on Recent trends in music librarianship, J. Farradane on Training for information science, R. L. Collison on Bibliographies and catalogues, Cadness Page on Subscription libraries and library suppliers. Space forbids the mention of others—these are enough to indicate both the scope of the material included and the quality of the contributors, each of whom has apparently been allowed to deal with his subject as he chose with the result that the lengths of the chapters vary, and some contributors make more reference to the literature of their subject than do others, and some give bibliographical references to the literature in the text and others at the end of their chapters.

A chronology of library happenings during 1964 is provided.

The index, as one would expect, is all that it should be. One is pleased to see that the compilers’ names are printed at its head.

The book is well produced, but if I hadn’t seen the date on the jacket I might have thought I was looking at a book of 1905 for there are twenty-five pages of advertisements at front and back!

L.M.H.


A stimulating book from Australia, written by an educationist, on the rôle of reading, books and libraries in the education of children. To illustrate his theme, Dr. Roe includes a number of case-histories which show the varying influences on a child’s reading habits. He speaks plainly and challengingly of practices which can be ‘pernicious’, such as projects, library lessons and other accepted activities, which become too closely associated in the child’s mind with formal education. Too often, also, the librarian has the wrong attitude towards education and little knowledge of its methods. It is essential to extend the influence of the library to the unconverted, and student teachers need to be trained in the use of libraries and the knowledge of books for children.

What will happen in the future with the spread of literacy and the increase of leisure? Will libraries continue to be irrelevant to large sections of the public? Libraries could be the source of self-educ-
cation as opposed to the training provided by the programmed learning of the future.

The extensive bibliography shows on what wide reading and knowledge the author has based his comments and conclusions. He has written a thoughtful and provocative book which, although it is based on Australian library practice and experience, has relevance for librarians everywhere.

EILEEN COLWELL.


This is an excellent manual for its purpose, being clearly designed, laid out and written, with many examples of Library of Congress and other catalogue cards to illustrate the text. It covers the whole field of cataloguing and includes non-book and near-book materials as well as books. It is surprising in these days of the amplitude of trade lists and bibliographical resources, of the shortage of library staffs and of the high salaries that have to be paid, to read that 'title cards are made out for most or, in some [American] libraries, all titles'.

The author is Chief of the Processing Division of the Enoch Pratt Free Library in Baltimore and editor of Library Resources and Technical Services.

The indexing has been reasonably well done but not with the comprehensiveness one would have wished, e.g. anonymous works are dealt with on p. 32 (in which the definition of an anonymous classic is quoted from the A.L.A. glossary of library terms) and anonymous standard works on p. 47. The index refers to the Glossary only under 'A.L.A.', not under the entry 'Terminology, library' or under Glossary; p. 47 is referred to under 'classics'; both are referred to under 'Anonymous works'. Unfortunately there are no sub-divisions under any of the headings, with the result that there may be as many as eight references: this is time-wasting and therefore annoying to the user who normally looks up an index for specific guidance.

The physical production of the book is excellent.

L.M.H.

OUR CONTRIBUTORS

Mrs. M. D. Anderson is Hon. Treasurer and Hon. Membership Secretary of the Society.


Mrs. M. Beryl Bailey is Librarian of the Rockefeller Medical Library, Institute of Neurology, National Hospital, London.

Mr. E. J. Coates is Editor of the British Technology Index, author of Subject catalogues and compiler of the faceted classification which is used for the British Catalogue of Music.

Mr. Theodore C. Hines is on the staff of the School of Library Service at Columbia University, New York.

Mr. John Martyn is Leader of the Operations and Techniques Section of ASLIB's Research Department. He has had experience of operational research, military librarianship and teaching.

Brig. E. E. G. L. Searight is Editor of Keesing's contemporary archives.