BOOK REVIEWS


Almost half of this third issue of *Progress in library science* is taken up by a most useful detailed monograph on the provision and content of house journals. The result is that several contributions are held over to the next issue. The remaining eight contributions cover a varied field of interests.

Dr. R. T. Bottle writes of current provision for training scientists to use scientific and technical information in various European countries.

Dr. Louis Shores, editor of *Collier's encyclopaedia*, deals with encyclopaedias and information systems design, and D. A. Matthews with library services (mainly in the U.K.) for the blind.

Much development in library services in Canada has taken place in the last two or three years, and much more is likely to be seen in the future. The situation early in 1967 is described by H. C. Campbell, Chief Librarian of the Toronto Public Libraries.

One of London's recently retired 'bookmen' librarians, Mr. W. B. Stevenson, writes on the important part librarians who have a personal interest in 'quality' literature can play in building up a stock of good books. It would be useful in these days when so many librarians are administrators of large systems rather than book-selectors, if they, and their book-selecting assistants, had to read this essay as a challenge to self-analysis in selection methods bearing the needs of their readers in mind.

The role of the antiquarian bookseller, and a comparison of past practice and present tendencies in buying and selling second-hand books, is considered by G. Edward Harris.

J. D. Pearson indicates some of the more useful and important books published since his *Oriental and Asian bibliography* appeared in 1966. Editors and indexers of books, as well as students of Far Eastern literature and librarians, will find several items of interest here.

Lastly, Mr. R. L. Collison himself deals with the activities of the British Standards Institution in the field of documentation, and provides annotated lists of publications issued by B.S.I. and also by the International Organization for Standardization.


Data study, as defined by the author, 'deals with the relations between things and their characteristics, with how these may be represented upon data vehicles, and with how the vehicles may be handled as a substitute for handling the things themselves'; as here presented, this involves mainly the study of non-conventional methods of indexing and information retrieval. Although theory (some of it fairly tough) predominates, there is some useful discussion of data vehicles and retrieval mechanisms. The publishers misleadingly claim this to be 'the first book devoting an important part to punched feature cards', but Mr. Jolley can hardly be blamed for this.

Within its size-limit the book ranges fairly widely into related fields such as set theory, the semantic continuum and integrative levels; and often has to use terminology which one hopes will not go to the heads of examiners (e.g., ambitem, ambisubterm, idempotency, medi-co-ordination and the holotheme).

It is not easy to judge the kind of reader for whom this book is intended, as the overall impression is that the author has had to compress a great deal into a small compass. In view of the World University Library's international publishing programme and general aims ('authoritative introductory books for university students which will be of interest also to the general reader'), one feels that the author has been constricted in his presentation by two factors: compatibility with the series' price-range and attractively generous typography and production, with emphasis on illustrations; and the unsuitability of producing, for this series, anything too like a student textbook. No one can question Mr. Jolley's knowledge and experience in this field, and space-limitation is certainly not the only reason for his rather original approach; but the impression is that inside this book, which the beginner will not find easy, there is a much more extended work wanting to get out.

Undoubtedly those involved in indexing and information retrieval will find a great deal to interest and stimulate them here. Non-specialists interested enough in the subject to read this book, and wishing to explore it further, may regret that the limits set have sometimes apparently precluded the pursuit of some of its aspects in greater range and depth. With this in mind the bibliography could probably have usefully included more titles on information retrieval, co-ordinate indexing and the like.

Mr. Jolley modestly presents his index as 'essentially the working index created as the book was written, to allow the author to find his way about the pages as they came from the typewriter'. In fact, it is a very well presented and reasonably exhaustive relative index, and appears to be a most useful tool. (It includes, by the way, the delightfully dreamlike entry 'Collapse in the field as a textile'.)

The publishers of this series deserve praise for producing alternative paperback editions which are
generally splendid bargains and which may be realistically recommended therefore to students and other readers of modest means. T. S. Morgan.

Miftuach (Indexing), by M. Z. Barkay. Jerusalem, Merkaz Hahadracha L’Sifrioth Tsiburioth (Public Library Guidance Centre), 1968. 79 pp. LL.5—

In Israel, where some one thousand new titles are published in a year, there is a growing recognition for the need of good indexes. Yet the time has not gone by when a publisher will prepare an elaborate table of contents, place it at the back of the volume, and expect it to do duty for an index.

In producing the first Hebrew manual on the making of indexes, Mr. Barkay, a professional indexer of wide experience, has rendered a signal service to the Israeli book trade. The book's chief drawback perhaps, is that so much is attempted in such a slim volume. Some attention is given to different kinds of indexes, those for monographs, encyclopaedias, newspapers and periodicals. The examples and illustrations are apt. However, the description of the practical side of the craft is somewhat brief. For example, nothing is mentioned about the marking up of texts, whether as a step in producing the index, or as a device of the indexer for making provisional marginal notes.

It is only fair to say that Mr. Barkay has managed to elucidate his subject skilfully, given the limitations of space. Yet English readers will find it of interest to learn that a Hebrew text, because of the highly inflected character of its verbs and nouns, will run some 25 per cent shorter than the same text in English.

It has always seemed to this reviewer that indexing is a difficult subject to write about, in any language. The mental process by which a thorough index is produced is not readily amenable to description. Forms of entry, filing rules and the like are after all only the minutiae of the job and in the end a good index must be put together in a somewhat virtuoso-like manner.

In stating that his exposition is aimed particularly at librarians without making the distinction between indexing and library techniques, Mr. Barkay misses making a useful definition. While the cataloguer's task is essentially the description of books and for this purpose he uses a list of headings and a classification scheme somewhat as one does a map and compass, the indexer must describe the contents of books analytically—and this, generally speaking, without the benefit of set headings.

On the old and interesting question whether a book would not be indexed best by its author, Mr. Barkay concludes that this would be so only if the author were an experienced indexer. Clearly, here is a stiff demand to meet. But at least this book comes with an impeccable index prepared by its author-indexer.

S. Sager.


Since 1908, most librarians have catalogued books according to the AA Code. This code was drawn up by the American and British Library Associations; in 1936 co-operation was renewed with a view to preparing a revised edition, but the war caused this work to be suspended. The American Library Association produced a second edition consequent upon their continued work of revision alone. This present edition, a very much larger and more detailed work with more and better examples of the rules, was drawn up by the American, British and Canadian Library Associations and the Library of Congress. The Americans have published their own North American Text, and in this a few of the rules are different.

The rules are concerned with cataloguing books and other materials normally to be found in a library, but are concerned only with author and title entries.

This is the most comprehensive code there is, and it will be widely used as the most reliable and up-to-date tool wherever books have to be catalogued.

Although intended, obviously, for librarians, the sections of the rules dealing with names (especially non-European) will be found by indexers to be a most helpful guide.

The volume is quarto in size; it is well printed with generous margins, and strongly bound.

L.M.H.