Because there are 20 labels per quarto gummed sheet, 5,000 such sheets would be required, costing about £35 retail, plus, say, £10 for carbons and copy paper, and about £15 for ribbons on an IBM machine. If the traditional cards are used, they will cost over £100, and no carbon copy results. In any event cards are dangerous for the compositor, and strictly should be numbered serially, which would be a major item of work. While the cards have the great advantage of building up the alphabet as one goes along, there is the labour of finding a card of the same topic as the entry, putting it into the machine, adding the page number, and putting it back in its proper place. In the pages of gummed labels there is none of this, all the operations are streamlined, and several people can be working on the routine work at the same time, all very efficiently, without deflecting the indexer from his creative task of selecting all the entries and starting right away in finalising and approving the final form.

If there are a number of columns, or even paragraphs, it is a good idea to label them A, B, C, etc., after the page entry, rejecting them if not required by a general direction to the compositor, the purpose being to facilitate the checking back of the entries. This is prompted by the observation that the actual time taken in typing is a relatively small fraction of the whole, so that added time in typing, which is a relatively unconscious task, is amply justified by reduction in time elsewhere.

The writer was fortunately not required to do the giant index, but the exercise of thought thereon was well rewarded because the suggested routine was adopted in more ordinary indexes (one in three parts), with considerable reduction in time, cost, and labour. It was also found that in larger indexes it pays handsomely to alphabetise much more finely than the traditional 26 letters, and if there are more than, say, 500 entries, to do this synthesis in two stages, so that the final groups of slips do not cover much more than a page each of the final manuscript. If small index books are used, there is not much chance of losing slips, and if they are stuck down in a single column there is ample space for adjustments if things go astray.

The really modern method is to type the proposed entries on a machine which also punches the standard cards which can be sorted in alphabetical order by a Hollerith machine. Having got the punched cards in alphabetical order they can be printed out on a Samastronic printer. All this apparatus would cost £30,000.

L. E. C. Hughes.

**BOOK REVIEWS**


The 1958 edition of this book was reviewed at length in our Summer 1958 issue (pp. 89-90), and Mr. Vickery is to be congratulated upon the rapid sale of
that printing, and the subsequent demand for a new edition. Quite obviously
the book was well-received, and has created extensive interest.

With the exception of the first three chapters and appendices the book has
been considerably revised and expanded, so that it is recommended even to those
who have so recently acquired the first edition. The proceedings of the International
Conference on Scientific Information held in Washington during November 1958
have, for example, been taken into account.

Mr. Vickery is concerned with the classification and indexing of information,
and not with compiling an index to a specific book, but his arguments and
examples are of vital interest to all working with the overwhelming multiplicity
of scientific literature pouring continuously from the press. Stressing the inter
dependence of classification and cataloguing, he discusses methods of constructing
classification schedules for indexing, with emphasis on "facet analysis". Readers
unfamiliar with recent developments in the terminology of librarianship will
rapidly lose themselves in attempting to follow the logical sequence of reasoning
here expressed, but should re-equip themselves as rapidly as possible. Techniques
must improve, and terminology must be adapted or invented if we are to keep
abreast of modern developments, not only in science but in all branches of know
ledge. This is emphasized when we reach Appendix A dealing with the historical
aspects of the classification of science. The older schemes appear woefully inade
quate, and the dreadful thought occurs to one that schemes of classification and
systems of information retrieval evolved today will be equally obsolete within less
than fifty years. But Mr. Vickery and his colleagues will endeavour to keep
abreast of advances, and future editions of this book should assist us to avoid
being completely overwhelmed.

J. L. T.

*A passion for books* by Lawrence Clark Powell.


Our first introduction to Dr. Powell's writings was through the Library
Association Annual Lecture delivered in 1957. Entitled "Books will be read",
it is included in this volume of collected essays and addresses, and reveals
something of the author's zest for printed and manuscript material. This is
contagious, but many librarians will envy the success of Dr. Powell in being
able to travel so widely, and to acquire for the University of California such
collections as Michael Sadleir's library of Victorian fiction, and C. K. Ogden's
monumental accumulation of 80,000 volumes.

Dr. Powell begins by warning readers that he has "an ax-proof neck and
a barb-thick skin", having suffered criticism on account of riding his hobby
horse ("I was born crazy about books") almost to its knees. Most librarians
will forgive anyone prepared to place books upon a pedestal above schemes of
classification, cataloguing codes, and general administration, for these latter are
but the mechanical tools devised to make available the books and their con-
tents. Far too little emphasis is placed upon books and subject bibliography in our training, but they are of supreme practical importance to any librarian. A thorough knowledge of the literature of a subject places a librarian on equal terms with the subject specialist who is engaged mainly in test-tube research.

This volume is replete with interesting stories and shrewd comments on many aspects of librarianship. Having read through the volume we decided to check back on certain subjects for quotation. Alas, there is no index! It is to be regretted that Dr. Powell's passion for books apparently blinds his eyes to the fact that few books are complete without an index. We would gladly have foregone the pages at the end outlining the author's distinguished career, or relegated this information to the dust jacket, if only we could have been provided with a guide to the personalities, places and events mentioned in the essays, for the titles listed in the table of contents convey little information to the reader. Should the index have been omitted deliberately to encourage one to read and re-read, it will certainly have the desired effect, but we hope that when the book is reprinted the publisher will ensure that an index is provided.

J. L. T.

Subject classifying and indexing of libraries and literature by John Metcalfe. Angus and Robertson, Sydney, London, etc., 1959, xii, 347 pp. 42s.

The Librarian of the new University of New South Wales, Mr. John Metcalfe is well-known as a writer on librarianship, and his Information indexing and subject cataloguing was published in 1957. That was considered an advanced treatise on the subject, while the book being reviewed is intended as a textbook for students of librarianship. It even includes a section devoted to questions based upon the text—fortunately with answers.

Based on extensive experience, wide discussion, and a keen appreciation of the intricacies of the subject, this volume should be read by every librarian interested in cataloguing and classification, but it cannot be recommended to students. The reader should be equipped to evaluate the material here presented, for it is not merely descriptive, but very critical. Indeed it would appear at times as if the author had dipped his pen in vitriol instead of ink. He is violently anti-Ranganathan, and criticises the disciples of the latter who have done so much to interpret Ranganathan's methods. In fact, Ranganathan is described as "the most complete plagiarist of ideas, devices and terms in the whole history of bibliographical classification". One regrets that this ingenious book adopts such a tone, for even sympathisers with Mr. Metcalfe's views will be antagonised by his forthright opinions.

Mr. Metcalfe covers all types of catalogue, and evaluates the various codes and schemes of classification in a comprehensive, comparative study. The sections on Current catalogues, indexes and bibliographies, and on Periodical indexes, abstracts and special bibliographies will be of particular interest to our readers, but most sections of the book contain information of interest and value to librarians.

J. L. T.