

This very handsome volume, with its fine plates, has been produced with the artistry and care characteristic of recent Cambridge University Press books. One could not imagine a more appropriate format for this brief but useful contribution to the history of publishing.—Rollo G. Silver, *School of Library Science, Simmons College.*

Bibliographies of Bibliographies

A History of Bibliographies of Bibliographies.

By Archer Taylor. New Brunswick, N. J.: Scarecrow Press, 1955. ix, 147 p. \$3.50.

In this notable contribution to professional literature, Professor Taylor returns to the consideration of that "essence of an essence," that "sophisticated tool" which, within narrower limits, he discussed with so much grace and learning, a decade ago, in his *Renaissance Guides to Books*. Now he traces the history of bibliographies of bibliographies from Jerome the canonized to Besterman the blessed and beset. He has restricted himself to "works of universal scope"; some 50 names or titles appear in the index.

To Conrad Gesner's *Pandectae* (1548) he gives credit for "an auspicious beginning of a very difficult aspect of bibliography," and for constituting "the first modern bibliography of bibliographies," which "aimed at comprehensiveness and included works of all ages as far as they came to his knowledge." Francis Sweerts' *Athenae Belgicae* (1628) is said to have been not only "the first classified bibliography of bibliographies" but also "the first independent or almost independent bibliography of bibliographies," a qualified primacy which, in its fullest sense, he reserves for Philip Labbé's *Bibliotheca Bibliothecarum* (1652).

There are interesting accounts of the efforts (so far fruitless) to recover Jodocus Dudinck's vanished *Bibliothecariographia* (1643), of the unpublished *Bibliotheca Bibliothecarum* of Cornelius a Beughem, and of the lost manuscript of Charles Moëtte's *Bibliotheca Alphabetica*, this last the only treatise on the subject which "can be dated in the eighteenth century."

Professor Taylor refers to "the temptation that comes to every bibliographer to wander afield and include works of little pertinence

to the task," and insists that "accuracy, industry, and learning are not the only virtues required of a bibliographer," adding that "a bibliographer must be a practical man who sees how his book will be used." He concedes that "any definition of a bibliography is difficult to formulate and even more difficult to adhere to." The penultimate chapter is devoted to modern "Periodical and Cooperative Enterprises." The conclusion reached is that "with all their faults and insufficiencies—and what human works lack them?—bibliographies of bibliographies are very valuable aids to scholars." "Each age," Professor Taylor avers, "must create its own bibliography of bibliographies."

Professor Taylor alludes to his study as an "historical summary," but it is more than that: it is criticism at its finest and soundest, too.—David C. Mearns, *Library of Congress.*

Books, Libraries & Librarians

Books, Libraries, Librarians. Contributions to Library Literature. Selected by John David Marshall, Wayne Shirley and Louis Shores. Hamden, Conn.: Shoe String Press, 1955. 432p. \$6.

The compilation offered by Mr. Marshall and his associates is intended to include a "representative selection" from the "body of professional literature" which possesses the "quality of readability," to provide "a source of pleasure and of profit to the profession's tyro and veteran alike," and to be "read by librarians and library school students seeking recreation, instruction and perhaps even inspiration." (Introduction, p. [xi]) Inasmuch as more than a quarter of the authors are non-librarians, the meaning given to "body of professional literature" is a rather unusual and certainly a very broad one. But let it stand without argument.

The work is divided into four sections: "Books and Reading," with 13 papers; "Libraries," with 11; "Librarians and Librarianship," with 16; and four notable statements of the librarian's profession, "The Freedom to Read," "The Library Bill of Rights," "The ALA Statement on Labeling," and the "Code of Ethics."

This is, in several respects, an astonishing florilegium. Of the 40 articles and essays,