

tainly times when that risk is worth running.—*John J. Lund, Duke University Library.*

*Philadelphia Libraries and Their Holdings; Data Compiled as Part of a Report on Philadelphia Libraries to the Carnegie Corporation of New York.* Bibliographical Planning Committee of Philadelphia. University of Pennsylvania Press, 1941. pl., 46p. 50¢.

THE TOOLS of library cooperation are of two kinds, the line-and-reel variety and the net. If you are after one book at a time, the union catalog, *Union List of Serials*, or catalog of a library or a collection may land it for you. If, on the other hand, you seek all or much of the information on some topic, the mesh of any description of library resources is likely to seem too fine or too coarse. Moreover, with this sort of purpose you are apt to need the aid of someone skilled in tracking through the ramifications of print to the sources you require and consequently may find that a printed guide to library resources omits an essential factor of the bibliographical process, the names of librarians or experts who know how to manipulate the literature in your field. Descriptions of resources are a poor substitute for the organization of staff and book stock resources of the nation as a whole or of one of its subdivisions; but they are nevertheless a substitute which, in the hands of a resourceful librarian or a pertinacious student, will in the end help to connect print with the client.

The Bibliographical Planning Committee has compiled this list of special collections and fields of specialization primarily as a guide for library planning, and has published it as a reference tool for librarians in Philadelphia and elsewhere.

Since the list is a summary of the committee's resources-information file (mainly supplied by the libraries described), this particular list is not a substitute for a bibliographical center, since the committee is at present organizing one, but is one of the center's tools in handy form. As such, it gives librarians and scholars outside Philadelphia a rapid but not hasty survey of the Philadelphia library-stock situation. The major portion of the pamphlet contains abstracts of the descriptions on file arranged by broad classes. This arrangement, though not novel to this type of publication as the introduction claims, is obviously a good one for planning, since it shows gaps in subject fields which are covered, thinly presumably, only by general collections, and shows points of concentration at which the checking of bibliographies would indicate the need for coordinated purchasing. The abstracts are concise, seldom quantitative, occasionally vague, but their references to published inventories and catalogs, and the fact that more information is on file, make the list a useful tool for directing searchers in Philadelphia, a useful addition to the scattered resources-literature of the country at large. This section is a portrait—and a handsome one!—of Philadelphia library resources.

The rest of the pamphlet consists of recent (apparently 1939) book stock and expenditure figures for 31 libraries and departments; a chronology of Philadelphia libraries to 1900; and a classified list by subject specialization of libraries and departments. A good deal of hard clerical work has gone into the whole compilation, and in some places excellent professional work, such as the list of document collections; there are one or two oversights, such as the omission of periodicals while

newspaper files and public documents are included, but this is not a piece of research—it is a survey of the Philadelphia book stock, and as such an interesting and provocative work for non-Philadelphians.—*John VanMale, A.L.A. Fellow, Graduate Library School, University of Chicago.*

*Review Index; a Quarterly Guide to Professional Reviews for College and Reference Libraries.* Edited by Louis Kaplan and Clarence S. Paine. Chicago, Follett Book Co., December 1940 to date. \$3.50 per annum.

IF, AS POPE PUTS IT, "Index learning turns no student pale, yet holds the eel of science by the tail" the editors of the *Review Index* have done their profession a service in providing another grip on those elusive appraisals of current books which librarians seek for their own advantage and that of their patrons.

It is no substitute for the *Book Review Digest* because it gives no excerpts from reviews nor does it offer any symbols to indicate merit or the lack of it. Furthermore, it is a straight author list with no entries under subject or title and a minimum number of cross references. It gives the author's name in secondary fullness, a brief title, publisher, date, price, and, as a rule, a reference to one book review, although occasionally a second or even a third is cited.

While the *Book Review Digest* selects reviews of books more or less in the public eye from approximately 80 periodicals and newspapers, the *Review Index* lists all of the reviews, with a very few exceptions, in about 60 journals of a scholarly kind, and covers nearly 400 more titles than the other index in a three months period. As might be expected, there is some overlapping. Of the items in a

single column of the new index, 11 out of 31 titles were covered in the *Book Review Digest*, while of the 19 reviews of books in the September, 1940, issue of the *Geographical Journal*, 8 were included in both places. It seems fair to conclude that the *Review Index* will provide each year critical information on about 1500 more books than has been available in the past.

One is struck by the absence of the foreign reviews which are so greatly desired by research workers in certain fields. The *Bibliographie der Rezensionen*, which will continue to appear, one hopes, covers the foreign field quite comprehensively but scholars and library staff shy away from it. We like our information to come more easily. In any case, it is nonexistent for the period covered by the *Review Index*. Foreign reviews are needed now as never before since personal communications with Europe have almost ceased. During the latter part of 1940 few periodicals were received from continental Europe. They have begun to come again. Among important reviewing media seen during the past month have been: *Beiblatt zur Anglia*, *Deutsche Rundschau*, *Zeitschrift für Französische Sprache und Literatur* and *Nordisk Tidsskrift*, to mention but a few of many. Incidentally, an important foreign language journal published in this hemisphere but omitted from the *Review Index* is *Revista Iberoamericana* which contains valuable signed reviews. Among English language periodicals there are several important ones which are missing but they will most probably be added as a demand for them arises.

While one misses any subject approach to material it is undoubtedly true, as the editors explain in the preface to the first