

Readex Microprint Publications 1950-1960.
[New York: Readex Microprint Corp., n.d.]
47p. On request.

This year is the tenth anniversary of the first publications of the Readex Microprint Corporation. Since June 1950 they have issued "more than 250,000 titles" on Microprint cards. This catalogue lists their publications by major categories, and includes a five-page index to help locate inclusive subject headings within these wide groupings.

Southwestern Newspapers on Microfilm. Dallas, Tex.: Microfilm Service & Sales Co. (P. O. Box 8066), [n.d.] 62p. On request.

Five states in the southwestern region of the United States (Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas) cover a wide area with Dallas roughly at its center. This catalogue lists some four hundred publications (or approximately twenty million filmed pages) microfilmed in this area. The arrangement is by state, broken down alphabetically by city. Coverage in Louisiana is very slight. Also listed are holdings of the Oklahoma Historical Society and the Arkansas History Commission. Queries about these items should be directed to them and not to the publisher.—Hubbard W. Ballou, *Photographic Services, Columbia University Libraries.*

Studies in Cataloging and Classification

Cataloging and Classification. By Maurice F. Tauber. *Subject Headings.* By Carlyle J. Frarey. (The State of the Library Art, Vol. 1, Parts 1-2) Ed. by Ralph R. Shaw. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Graduate School of Library Service, 1960. 271, 92 p.

This is part of the series forming Dean Ralph Shaw's review of "perhaps forty percent of the entire range of librarianship and bibliography," and it is a grand job. The

task of surveying the literature has been well done. The "state of the art" is clearly and comprehensively presented. The evaluation of this state is penetrating. And the consequent proposals for research projects are the sound result of mature understanding.

One example from the first section of the book may help describe the method of these studies. The literature on the question of a divided catalog is summarized in five pages and the evaluation is then:

Do the studies aid a librarian in making a decision in regard to the division of the catalog for a particular library? The answer must be no, unless a particular library catalog is examined in relation to particular groups of users. It would seem that what evidence is available supports division for almost any catalog of any size. The presence of guesswork and rationalization, however, suggests that further study of the arrangement of the catalog is desirable.

As a consequence, three proposals are made for further study—one a statistical study of entry duplication in divided catalogs of various sizes; a second to test a three-way split into authors, subjects, and titles; and the third an experiment in the horizontal division of the catalog by date periods. Later, in a summary chapter entitled "Program for the future," a fourth study is proposed to determine the administrative efficiency of filing in a divided catalog. The author expresses conviction that division of catalogs may lead "to the harmonious shift to printed catalogs for subjects for older portions of the collection"; and similarly penetrating observations are made under the other topics discussed.

The author's proposals for research projects were the motivation for the CLR grant: "The Council early considered the possibilities for basic research in library problems. A necessary preliminary step appeared to be a listing of the problems and a survey of the present state of knowledge regarding them in order to permit a selection of topics offering promise to investigation." This book suggests eighty-five of these topics in cataloging. They include seven each in the areas of descriptive cataloging, classification, "collectanea" files, and documents; and a lesser

number each for shelf lists, the sheaf catalog, expansion of card catalogs, centralized cataloging, and eleven other areas. It is notable that nine topics relate to the potentialities of book catalogs and ten to the use of card catalogs. Each of these proposals is thoughtfully designed; and they deserve the careful consideration of librarians in colleges, special libraries, library schools, and elsewhere.

The author of this first section has performed a superior job of achieving balance, has chosen topics with a sure sense of the important, and has turned in a fine piece of judgment on the cataloging art. It would be impossible for such a study as this to take into consideration all the literature, and cover all aspects of catalog work, and propose every substantial research project. But two observations may be offered.

Even accepting the general pattern for the eighteen studies in this Rutgers series, one may question the logic of devoting the bulk of each volume to a review of the literature instead of devoting a greater proportion of space to a detailed evaluation of the "state of the art" and to a somewhat more elaborate description of the proposals for research projects.

A more fundamental question concerns the omission of some areas of cataloging from this study. One might claim that a tolerable degree of sophistication has been achieved in such traditional areas as descriptive cataloging, shelf listing, temporary cataloging, recataloging, or union catalogs. Progress in these areas is still needed, but they are not the most troublesome areas. Rather, peripheral areas of cataloging may currently form the major blocks to efficient and economical processing and thus are deserving of more attention from librarians. Six areas may be suggested for consideration:

The teaching of cataloging, in library schools, where "a wider aim" is still called for.

Catalog department manuals and in-service training, where principles of personnel administration and coordination with library schools might be studied.

Serials, where formidable problems should not be ignored and where research may reveal further areas for cooperative treatment.

Non-book materials, where difficulties with manuscripts, maps, microfilm and archives make them excessively expensive to process.

Work flow or organization, which is often the key log on which the cataloging jam depends, and library surveys almost always point to the organization of work and people as a key.

And, finally, cataloging in the context of librarianship, since it is now clear that, in comparison with the past fifty years, the next fifty will see a considerably changed relationship of card files to lists, indexes, and other means of bibliographic control.

The last point suggested for consideration may be extremely summarized as "Why catalog?" In the second edition of *The University Library*, Wilson and Tauber quote a statement to the effect that, although the dictionary catalog has served libraries well, "the next fifty years may well tell a different story, if timely and adequate steps are not taken. It would be courting disaster to go on into the second half of the twentieth century without fundamental rethinking of the nature and function of the dictionary catalog." And the Council on Library Resources in its first annual report saw librarians as being dismayed by the profusion of publications and confounded by "the difficulties of learning about the existence of particular books. . . . So also with the finding media (bibliographies, indexes, etc.): the librarian complains of their number, their planlessness on an over-all basis, their enormous duplication yet enormous gaps, their lack of specific adaptation to the contents of his own collections. . . ." And card catalogs are part of this web; but where is the over-all plan? Will book catalogs serve in part? Will part of the record be stored in machines? Can national lists carry a greater burden? How little local cataloging can be effective? How can syndetic devices fuse these parts into an effective instrument of local bibliographic control? Fundamental work on providing access to book collections might today produce fresh paths.

The section on *Subject Headings* is handled with equal competence, and Professor Frarey has so usurped this field that a reviewer may be excused for having little to say. This is a model of organization. The literature summary is lucid and its evaluation is sharp and perceptive. The proposed research is based on the general conclusion that "our library economy now accepts as axiomatic the role of the subject catalog as

a member of a team. . . . It is clear that available evidence points to a limited and circumscribed role for the subject catalog in the team play, and that a definition of this role is essential to a determination of function, the prescription of rules and techniques, and an evaluation of effectiveness." Further, the subject catalog appears to satisfy about 75 percent of its users, despite its imperfections, and it "is likely to continue to be an essential feature in effective library service. The evidence suggests further that there is an excellent chance that a highly effective subject catalog can be perfected."

The author maps out a major campaign to achieve this effectiveness; and it includes the necessity to understand classification, bibliography, and indexes at the very least. The seven proposed studies are monumental in scope, but they are fundamental to real advancement in the techniques of subject access. This is a sound and scholarly piece of work.

Professors Tauber and Frarey show clear evidence of the complexity of what is both an art and a science. Cataloging is the backbone of librarianship and its effectiveness is today challenged by larger and more specialized book collections. There are innumerable areas of librarianship needing study; some of these are worthy of foundation support and a few will prove fruitful. It takes wisdom to select the significant few, and the Rutgers Library School is to be commended on commissioning such superior products.—*David C. Weber, Harvard University Library.*

A Librarian About Books

Books in My Baggage. By Lawrence Clark Powell. Cleveland: World Publishing Company, 1960. 255 p. \$4.50.

This most recent book by Lawrence Powell collects and revises essays previously published in limited editions entitled: *Islands of Books*, *The Alchemy of Books*, and *Books West Southwest*, and moreover includes half a dozen new pieces. Therefore this book makes available more Powell speeches and

essays, thus performing a real service.

Lawrence Powell is one of the very few librarians who can write well and enthusiastically about books. Most librarians write about the physical book—some on methods of classification and processing while others have the bibliographical approach. Powell writes unashamedly about the contents of books without hesitating to commit himself by praising them. He wastes no time excoriating those he does not like—those have been rejected prior to writing. He does not pass as a literary critic; he is a librarian writing about books. His purpose is to induce people to read those books he enjoys.

The literary world is indebted to him for his early discovery and championship of Lawrence Durrell. He has had continuing ardor and support for Robinson Jeffers, Frank Dobie, and Henry Miller. His long-time enjoyment of D. H. Lawrence is expected by those who know of his catalog of the Lawrence manuscripts and of his long friendship with Frieda Lawrence. His enthusiasm for James Joyce follows naturally this taste as discerned in these articles on his favorite literature of the 20's and 30's.

Lawrence Powell acquires books with zeal and discrimination, in spite of dealing in large figures. He has done the West Coast a service of magnitude and permanence in building up the UCLA collections by more than a million volumes during his seventeen years as University Librarian. Tales of some of his adventures in this process, found in the section "Bookman in Britain" make fascinating reading.

Many people associate the circumstances of their first reading of a particular book with their appreciation of the text. Not always does this added experience add enjoyment or deeper understanding for another reader. As a critical device it is extraneous and cannot shed much new enlightenment on classics already extensively treated by eminent scholars. One of the least successful sections of this collection recounts the time and place of Powell's own introduction to some very good books. More useful are some of his "bookscapes," brief essays about American writers identified with a particular area, such as Jeffers in Carmel, Norris and Sterling in Northern California, Steinbeck in Southern California, and Dobie in Texas.