

2. That an exchange of senior personnel be effected between the schools and the practicing field of librarianship.

3. That a definite (and specified) system of training for the subprofessional and clerical workers in libraries be instituted, with all its implications for the profession generally.

4. That a research program in librarianship be planned, at least within each advanced school, for the most effective and economical development of knowledge in the field.

5. That library schools jointly develop a series of examinations to test the possession of a general education by the applicant for admission.

6. That library schools inaugurate a system of intensive (and specified) preparation for special librarianship.

7. That library schools reorganize their programs to take account of the concept of continuing education throughout the librarian's professional career.

8. That the basic specialized professional training of librarians working with the young (children's and young people's librarians in public libraries, school librarians, and teacher-librarians) be the same.

The series of annual conferences sponsored by the Graduate Library School has provided a significant vehicle for the focusing of attention upon professional areas of major concern. The report of this last conference upholds the tradition of provocative and informed discussion of perhaps what is now the most critical area of the profession. To the body of recent literature and to other conferences on the subject, it provides perhaps the most complete general summary that has appeared to date. If one is to find fault with the report of the conference at all, it might lie in a regret for the overlong interval between the conference itself, and the publication of the printed volume covering it.—*Kenneth R. Shaffer, School of Library Science, Simmons College.*

*Librarianship: Essays on Applied Bibliography.* By Raymond Irwin. London, Grafton, 1949, 131p. 8s.6d.

Were this reviewer not a regular reader of the British library journals he might have taken Mr. Irwin seriously. For one might well get the impression from the initial chapters that while American librarians are still naïvely asking questions about library training

their British colleagues have expertly found the answers. Judging from the articles, editorials and correspondence in the British journals it is evident that the pros and cons of library education are vigorously being debated there. In the field of library training, both in the United States and in England, educators are raising questions, seeking answers, and projecting further questions leading from the speculative answers. And so the unsuspecting reader of this book should not carry away the impression as cautioned above. Mr. Irwin does make some harsh statements but then rallies with such expressions as "These words are perhaps unfairly hard . . ." More of his likes and dislikes later, however.

The author dissects the persistent American pursuit for a "philosophy" of librarianship and arrives at the conclusion that we are victims of some will-o'-the-wisp. For, as he sees it, there is no such thing. If there is no "philosophy" of librarianship, what *are* we seeking? Upon what foundation shall our programs of library education be based? Mr. Irwin is of the opinion that we should seek the purposive directions in librarianship, the necessary underpinning, its locale, its limitations. Evidently he holds a very pragmatic view, for the one question which dominates throughout is: Will it work? That still begs the central question. Since we are an academic profession and, to be sure, the curriculum in library science is offered in an academic institution, there still remains the question: Do we know, at least, what shall be the corpus of knowledge which will provide the underpinning for prospective librarians? Quite simple. The answer is "applied bibliography." And, Mr. Irwin proceeds to define applied bibliography so that it includes precisely those subjects which constitute the traditional curriculum in American library schools. It is not quite up to date, however, for there is no provision for subjects which deal with reading interests and abilities or mass media of communication.

The author inflates his work in the very first sentence of the "Prologue," thus: "These essays grew out of a study of the writings of American librarians during the last 30 years on the subject of professional training for librarianship." This "study" consists merely of a few snatches from the works of Danton and Wheeler. No mention is made of the contributions of Williamson, Howe, Reece,

Hostetter, Wilson, White and others. There is but a sentence taken from the Metcalf-Osborn-Russell volume on library education. It is, therefore, neither a summary, nor an overview, nor an analysis, nor a critique of American library education. It is merely a propounding by the author of his own thoughts on the substance of training courses for librarians.

Mr. Irwin is pleased with several things: the relationship of education and librarianship; the library's responsibility in the adult education movement; the potential values of subject departmentation in libraries; and, with his own educational program at the University of London School of Librarianship. Mr. Irwin seems to find displeasure in other things relative to programs of library education in the United States; psychological foundations; statistical investigations and measurement in libraries; public administration; and, evidently, the spirit of scientific inquiry so well advanced by the Graduate Library School of the University of Chicago.

This reviewer hopes that our British friends will not, through reading Mr. Irwin's book,

get the impression that all of the 34 library schools in the United States are engaged in soul-searching. Nothing could be farther from the truth. Unfortunately, we should have to admit to our British friends that there has been more band-wagon-jumping than soul-searching among the schools.

One third of the volume is devoted to discussions on classification of books and the essential freedoms in which librarianship thrives. They are commendable discussions but quite unrelated to the central theme of the book. The rationalized explanation in the "Epilogue" is unconvincing on this point.

On the whole this is a pedestrian work, especially when placed beside Pierce Butler's book and the recent volume on *Education for Librarianship* under Dr. Berelson's excellent editorship. It is a temperamental discourse, highly subjective, and lacking in depth. Mr. Irwin is undoubtedly capable of a far better performance and let us hope that his rich experiences as director of the University of London School of Librarianship will find expression in a better book.—*Nathaniel Stewart, Pratt Institute Library School.*



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