

mick's "Editors Today" draws a good picture but loads the volume a bit in the direction of editorship.

The reading of these studies raises the hope that equally capable speakers will continue the series with other topics deserving coverage, such as book distribution, censorship, book design, bestseller developments, and book production: machines and techniques. Impatient readers looking forward to the collection of the next seventeen lectures to appear a quarter of a century hence are reminded of the annual printings in pamphlet format.—*Frank L. Schick, Wayne State University Library.*

## Russian Transliteration

*Transkriptionsprobleme; die korrekte Wiedergabe russischer Namen im Deutschen*, [von] Günter Mühlpfordt. Berlin: Rütten & Loening, 1957. 175p.

Joining a long procession of librarians, translators, and teachers of Russian, Günter Mühlpfordt deals with the problem of Russian transliteration in Germany. He deplors the lack of uniformity in transliterating Russian on the part of publishers, particularly in journals, and some of the ludicrous forms of transliterated Russian names which occur in German publications (e.g., *Pjerjewjew*, which in ordinary English transliteration would be *Pereverzev*). After describing the Duden transcription developed by W. Steinitz as a unitary system for popular use, he points out its shortcomings. It does not, for example, lend itself to the restoration of the original Russian (retransliteration). Inaccuracies and confusion result, for example, for the use of *ss* for intervocalic Russian *c*, of *stsch* for three different possible letters and letter combinations, and of some non-German letter combinations (*sh* for the sound represented by the French *j*).

In place of the Duden transcription Mühlpfordt offers for scholarly and library purposes a "scientific," or library, transliteration, which meets the objections to the "popular" one. To users of English the following elements of this system are of particular interest, principally because they correspond to English transliteration: *v* instead of *w*; the prime  $\acute{}$ , as in English transliterations, instead of the *j*; *z* instead of intervocalic *s*.

On the other hand the use of *c* in the "scientific" transliteration for the Russian letter usually transliterated in English by *ts* or *tz* would lead to confusion when *c* occurs before *a*, *o*, *u*, or a consonant. The use of *z*,  $\acute{c}$ ,  $\acute{s}$ , and  $\acute{sc}$  is open to the same objections as Mühlpfordt expresses in regard to *sh* for the letter which is rendered in French by *j* (in English usually by *zh*): they are not distinguishable by most Germans from *z*, *c*, *s*, and *sc*. His position represents essentially the desire for an international, or universal, transliteration of the Cyrillic alphabet, which has been attempted by many, including the International Federation for Documentation, without appreciable success.

Most of the book—eighty-nine pages of it—is devoted to an aspect of transcription which is transliteration only in a limited sense. It includes: a list of retranscribed names of non-Russians—Germans, Englishmen, Frenchmen, and Italians—which occur in the works of Marx and Engels; a table of letter-equivalents by which such retranscription may be achieved; and a list of personal, geographic and ethnic names, and some common nouns, which occur in the text with their transcription according to both the Duden and library systems. These retranscription tables are a wilderness which would as often yield several variables as guide the user straight to his goal.

The principal value of the work to English-speaking transliterators of Russian is in the variety of problems it presents and of the examples it cites. This feature of the book may well lead to a thorough examination of the problems of transliteration of Russian for English-speaking users and to research resulting in lists of names of West Europeans in Russian accompanied by their vernacular forms—*David J. Haykin, Library of Congress.*

## English Common Reader

*The English Common Reader; a Social History of the Mass Reading Public 1800-1900.* By Richard D. Altick. Chicago: University of Chicago Press [c1957]. 430p. \$6.

If you think that "railway literature" has something to do with timetables, that "number-men" are bookies and that *Confidential* invented the idea of peeking into other peo-