or other early Ohio Valley printers. The early tribulations of the frontier printer and his ultimate emergence as a community leader follow a fairly routine pattern. Charless is almost a prototype, although the others are all worthy of a biography. Professor Kaser refers to Joseph Charless as “a relatively unimportant man.” Viewed from a perspective of world history, this comment is true; but viewed from the history of Lexington or St. Louis, Charless was an important man, a founding father of the community. Henry Clay thought Bradford and Charless were important enough to include them on his select list of card-playing companions.

With this captious note the present reviewer has exhausted any adverse criticism of Professor Kaser’s work. Step by step, from the parish register of Killucan in County Westmeath, through the advertisements of Charless’ St. Louis hostelry in his own Missouri Gazette, the source material on Charless has been excavated, interpreted, and put together to give a full picture of one of St. Louis’ most important early citizens. As a practitioner of “the black art” Charless was a typical frontier printer and publisher but this rôle takes away none of his individuality.

The chapter on “The Kentucky Country” fills in the history of early printing, book-selling, and publishing in Lexington with several important details. If this chapter is any measure of the accuracy of other sections dealing with Charless against a local background (Ireland, Pennsylvania, or Missouri), Professor Kaser’s use and interpretation of his sources cannot be questioned. The portrait of St. Louis in the first half of the nineteenth century is a chapter of western history which ought to be a point of departure for studies of the plains, Rockies, and far west. The merchants, factors, trappers, military men, politicians, and adventurers who created the mosaic of early nineteenth-century St. Louis are a part of this colorful picture of the first city of the trans-Mississippi west. The Story of Charless’ feud with Thomas Hart Benton is a minor classic of American politics and journalism.

There are two appendices, one on Charless’ family, giving short biographies of each of the five children, and the other giving a list of Charless imprints. Locations and full bibliographical descriptions of the latter would have been helpful, but most of this information can be found elsewhere and inclusion in this work would have expanded it to a point beyond which the commercially oriented university presses will not go without fat subsidies. Perhaps such a subsidy should be sought unless we want to wait for the next depression when we will again have an employers’ market. There is a full index.

If the proto-typography of every North American jurisdiction were as well documented as is that of St. Louis with this study, life would be far easier for students of nineteenth-century American publishing, printing, and book-selling. The Ohio Valley, the “old Southwest,” and the plains, Rockies, and Pacific coast urgently need this type of study. There are many rather superficial masters’ essays and articles in state and regional historical journals on the life and work of individual early printers, but studies of the scope and quality of Professor Kaser’s work are the exception. We may hope that a trend has been started with this work.—Lawrence S. Thompson, University of Kentucky.


The disclaimer on the dust jacket of this book, that it “is primarily for the newcomer to medical librarianship,” is scarcely adequate to excuse the thinness of its contents. It is largely reportorial, citing miscellaneous facts and figures about hundreds of institutions, publications, and medical bibliographers. The Medico-Chirurgical Society of Aberdeen was founded in 1789, and among other things preserves the minutes of the society since that date; in 1947 the British Medical Association launched two abstracting journals, one of which lasted for only a few years; the name of Conrad Gesner’s uncle was Hans Frick. These nuggets are interspersed with frequent rhetorical questions, pious homilies, and conventional exhortations. One-sixth of the volume is devoted to an alphabetical listing of 700 medical libraries, with dates of founding.

There is naturally a British bias to the
material, but even so one is surprised to find
the chapter on "Libraries in Hospitals" deal­
ing with all sorts of libraries, medical school
libraries as well as medical sections of pub­
lic libraries. There is little in the chapter on
"Cataloguing and Classification" except out­
lines of various medical classification
schemes, the finding that in 1957 nine out
of 109 British medical libraries were using
sheaf catalogs, and the fact that author cata­
logs are essential.

Mr. Thornton, the medical librarian at St.
Bart's in London, has provided us with some
useful works, but the book under review is
not one of them. It is to be feared that the
hope expressed—"that all medical librarians
will find material for discussion in the sum­
maries of controversial topics"—is entirely
vain.—Frank B. Rogers, University of
Colorado Medical Center.

Répertoire des Bibliothèques d'Étude et
Organismes de Documentation. Publié
sous l'égide de la Délégation Générale à
la Recherche Scientifique et Technique.
3 vols. Paris: Bibliothèque Nationale,
1963. 1233p. 85 n.f.

This guide presents information on nearly
twenty-four hundred French scholarly li­
braries and documentation centers. Since
the present work will, for most purposes,
replace the Répertoire des Bibliothèques de
France (3 vols., Paris: Bibliothèque Na­
tionale, 1950-51), the user's first reaction is
to compare it with its predecessor. At the
outset he notes the basic similarity: a direc­
tory of libraries and documentation centers
with information presented on a fixed num­
ber of points and with an index to facilitate
use. The differences between the two com­
pirations fall into three groups: (1) scope,
(2) information presented, and (3) arrange­
ment.

The later directory has a narrower scope
than the earlier; it includes only scholarly
libraries and documentation centers and
thus contains no information on the central
lending services of the départements or on
certain municipal libraries (even for those
which are included there is no mention of
lending and children's services or of branch­
es). Beyond metropolitan France two li­
braries (in French Guiana and Guadeloupe)
are included as well as one in Monaco, but
gone of course are listings for Algeria. Nei­
ther Martinique nor Réunion (both in the
earlier list) figure here. Nevertheless, total
coverage has increased from 1634 to 2382
institutions, or about 45 per cent.

Each entry contains the following infor­
mation: name of library or documentation
center; name of parent organization to
which it belongs; address, telephone num­
ber, cable and teletype address; hours of
service and dates of annual closing; purpose
and activities of parent organization; lend­
ing policies; subject strengths and special
collections; statistics (1960) of volumes,
additions, periodicals currently received and
of other forms of material held; classifica­
tion used; catalogs available; documenta­
tion (i.e., special bibliographical tools and
services to facilitate the reader's work);
translation services; union catalogs to which
information is supplied; publications; photo­
duplication services; historical data and re­
ferences. Although this corresponds generally
to information found in the 1950-51 guide,
three items (reading rooms; administration,
including the names of the director and
department heads; and source of funds) have
been dropped, while three (classifica­
tion, documentation, and translation ser­
vices) are new. The fullness of entries var­
ies, those for the larger libraries being long­
er and more complete than those for the
smaller. As one might expect, the longest
entry (I, 60-72) deals with the Bibliothèque
Nationale; divided into eleven sections, it
covers general information and the library's
departments (viz., Maps, Acquisitions, Prints,
Printed Books, Manuscripts, Oriental Manu­
scripts, Numismatics, Music, Serials, and the
Annex at Versailles). The average listing
seems to require between one-quarter and
one-half page. In a few cases the Répertoire
merely serves to indicate the existence of a
collection, since little information is pro­
vided other than that access is strictly lim­
ited.

Users of the earlier compilation will re­
call that it devotes one volume to Parisian
libraries, one to those in the provinces, and
one to documentation centers. The new ver­
sion incorporates the last category into the
first two groups. The first volume, however,
now comprises not only organizations in
Paris but also those in the two surrounding

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