

Librarianship and Literature: Essays in Honour of Jack Pafford. A. T. Milne, ed. University of London: The Athelone Press, 1970. viii, 141p.

Festschriften present peculiar problems to those who are asked to contribute to them. If their contributions are major essays on important issues, they are worth publishing in a form which is widely distributed (such as a periodical); if they are not of wide interest, the question arises whether they should be published at all. Festschriften can easily be cemeteries of lesser monuments—minor contributions on important issues or admirable essays on unimportant topics.

It is not unkind to the persons who contributed to this collection, in honor of Jack Pafford (whose main library service was as sublibrarian at the National Central Library and later as Goldsmiths' librarian in the University of London) to suggest that their essays are mainly readable background material. Three of them go rather beyond this, in serving as very useful historical summaries of major elements in the British library system.

Sir Frank Francis, recently director and principal librarian at the British Museum, reflects on the British Museum Library from the mid-twenties to date. His reminiscences largely center around the buildings and around the catalog, from the abortive attempt to produce a totally revised catalog, which managed to cover only three or four letters of the alphabet after several years, to the photographic reproduction of the catalog which was completed in seven years. Since these are the aspects of the library which most affect the public, this emphasis is reasonable, but one might have hoped for some discussion of the problems of administering a very complex and growing institution, and of acquisitions policy. The problem of buildings has now reached a happy solution in the firm decision to go ahead with a building to house both the British Museum Library and the National Reference Library of Science and Invention on the Bloomsbury site, though it will be some years before the actual buildings are ready.

S. P. L. Filon's study of "Library Cooperation in Great Britain" is less personal

and summarizes in a very useful form the history of interlending mainly insofar as the National Central Library was concerned with it. The constant wavering between building up a central collection in the National Central Library and depending mainly or entirely on the resources of public and other libraries, can be seen clearly as the crucial flaw in planning a lending library system for the country until recently. Even now the question is far from resolved, and although there must obviously be limits to the growth of central collections—they simply cannot meet all demands—major policy decisions remain to be made on the question. Is the pattern established by the National Lending Library for Science and Technology to be followed, of a comprehensive central collection, or the pattern favored by the National Central Library, of union catalogs leading to the resources of individual libraries?

"The Development of British University Libraries" by H. W. Scott is an even more rapid and condensed survey of a broad area, and nonetheless useful for that. (I hope it is the temptation to speak well of all things in festschriften that is responsible for his inclusion among "splendid new libraries" those of Newcastle, Reading, and Sheffield.) As with Sir Frank Francis' paper on the British Museum, one does not really get a picture of the problems and opportunities brought about by the huge increase in the scale of operations in libraries over the past thirty or forty years. It is particularly disappointing that Scott stops short at subject specialization, which he considers the fourth and most recent major development of the twentieth century. The advent of computers, the development of management techniques, the introduction of nonbook materials, and the growth of information services are all, actually or potentially, of far greater significance than subject specialization, which may be only a minor superimposition on an old-fashioned structure.

American library schools will be interested to compare notes with Raymond Irwin, who writes on "The Education of a Librarian." Most of his discussion will be almost unintelligible to those who are not familiar with the British tradition and background

in library education. Indeed, his emphasis on "bibliography" (in however broad a sense) as the heart of the course at the University College School of Library, Archive and Information Studies will seem old-fashioned even to many British librarians nowadays.

Three papers are concerned with other aspects of Pafford's various interests. Professor Arthur Brown's "The Growth of Literary Societies" is a fascinating account of these curious institutions, most of them founded in the eighteenth or nineteenth century. "The Editor and the Literary Text: Requirements and Opportunities" is an opportunity for Howard Brooks to write about a subject where Jack Pafford made notable contributions; indeed, a look at the list of publications which constitutes the ninth contribution to this anthology shows that a great many of his published articles are concerned with textual criticism. Lastly, Professor Wilmot writes about a thirteenth-century illuminated manuscript which Jack Pafford acquired for the University of London Library.

Pafford is an excellent example of the librarian-cum-humanistic scholar. It is doubtful if bibliographies of librarians in the future will resemble that of Jack Pafford at all. His writings are tributes to the range of his mind, and this collection of essays is a not unworthy tribute also. It is a pity that the book should be marred by a number of irritating misprints and some mistakes. The most glaring misprint, which could well be misleading to American readers, is on page 14, where "the National Science Reference Library and the National Lending Library for Science and Invention" are mentioned; this should of course read "the National Reference Library of Science and Invention and the National Lending Library for Science and Technology."—*Maurice B. Line, University of Bath.*

User-Requirements in Identifying Desired Works in a Large Library. Ben-Ami Lipetz. New Haven: Yale University Library, 1970.

In light of all that has been said for so many years about the needs of the user as a key element in cataloging, it seems strange that it is only now that we have a

careful and reliable, large-scale study of how the patrons of an academic library use the card catalog. This study of the use of the main card catalog of Yale University over a year's period of time is outstanding in terms of the care and detail which went into its planning and implementation and into the analysis of the data involved.

Its main purpose was to examine "the question of how to design a computerized catalog for a very large library that can be expected to give the best possible performance." A second objective was to see "whether, and, if so, how, existing card catalogs in very large libraries may be made more responsive to user requirements." Can a study of this kind be of primary value in planning computerized tools without being substantially supplemented by other kinds of studies of user needs? "One cannot create an ideal tool of any sort on a rational basis . . . without knowing a good deal about the purposes for which the tool is to be used, and about the manner in which the users interact with the tool. In the literature on libraries, there is a dearth of reliable information on the utilization of catalogs." So we have created card catalogs on a less than rational basis and have foisted upon the user a complex tool which must have by now materially affected the ways in which he attempts to define his needs. If we now ask him how he satisfied information needs by the use of the card catalog, we are only asking him how he has adapted his needs to the tools we have made available to him. This may be analogous to planning new transportation systems by conducting an automobile traffic survey.

For the possible improvement of existing catalogs, the thirty major findings of this study are of unquestioned value. Those that may be briefly summarized here include: (1) 73 percent of the searches were for a known document (26 percent for a document that the user is already familiar with), 16 percent are subject searches, 6 percent author searches, and 5 percent bibliographic searches; (2) many users look for known documents as an indirect way of conducting a subject search so that in total 56 percent of the searches were for a known document and 33 percent were sub-