

eighteenth-century precursors to this particular genre of book club, Sir Harold chronicles the establishment in 1812 and the early history of the Roxburghe Club. "In addition to the practice of heavy dining," he reports, "it was early resolved that each member . . . should, in turn, print 'some rare old tract, or composition—chiefly of poetry,' at his own expense."

Roxburghe was followed in 1823 by the founding of the Bannatyne Club by Sir Walter Scott with the purpose of printing texts illustrative of the history of Scotland, a pattern promptly followed by a number of other similar associations in that country. Others—throughout the British Isles—dedicated their activities to slightly different specializations, and such names as the Camden, Chetham, Caxton, and Hakluyt societies soon became well known to the historian of British life and culture. These in turn led to a proliferation of printing historical societies—such as the Pipe Roll, the Selden, and the Folk-Lore societies—and of printing literary societies—including the Early English Text Society, the Shakespeare Society, and the Chaucer Society. Collectors soon had their printing clubs, such as Ye Sette of Odd Volumes and The First Edition Club, by which the book here under review was first commissioned. Bibliographical societies were not far behind.

As a result of the work of these sixty or so organizations, many of which are still active, virtually thousands of texts have been made available to scholars, texts which would otherwise be languishing still in single manuscript. Although motivated in part by considerations of vanity and dilettantism, these printing societies have accrued a large debt of gratitude from scholarship, a debt which has not yet been fully recognized or acknowledged. But that is another book.—*David Kaser, Graduate Library School, Indiana University, Bloomington.*

Foskett, A. C. *The Universal Decimal Classification: The History, Present Status, and Future Prospects of a Large General Classification Scheme.* London: Linnet Books & Clive Bingley, 1973. 171p.

And now rides forth on a white charger another brave knight to succor that elderly

damsel in distress, *Universal Decimal Classification.* Boldly he chants again the oft-told tale of her royal (albeit with bar sinister) descent from Good King Melvil, her auspicious birth, her trials and tribulations, the mighty feats of her noble protectors, Sir Otlet, Sir LaFontaine, and Sir Duyvis, and the evil days which have fallen on her since their passing.

Then he gets down to the nitty-gritty:

There are full editions of UDC and medium editions and abridged editions and special subject editions, all in various stages of development, in various degrees of modernity, and in various languages. Schedules are produced in volumes, in fascicles, in loose-leaf, and by computer. UDC still has the general intellectual pattern of DC with its bias and notational problems; and in development of detail synthesis appears alongside enumeration. Revision is spasmodic, cumbersome, decentralized, and slow. Two Unesco surveys have suggested that UDC could no longer serve as an adequate international general classification scheme.

Ideas for the future of UDC have ranged from tinkering with its schedules and notation (e.g., Caless, Perreault, and others) to fundamental reconstruction of the scheme (e.g., Mrs. I. Dahlberg). Perhaps even more important than a restructured scheme is a restructured management—more efficient, more centralized, and above all, adequately funded (cf. Wellisch and others). But where to get the money? Although "the English edition of UDC sells quite well," yet "the United States would present a more difficult market" and "without fairly considerable support from sales in the USA it would be difficult to finance the improvements which all agree are necessary" (p.67-68).

At this point Foskett sticks in a chapter on mechanization and another on the Classification Research Group (CRG): mechanization and UDC would go well together—e.g., the Freeman-Atherton project sponsored by the American Institute of Physics. The work of CRG toward the construction of a new general classification scheme developed a number of theories which might be helpful in revising UDC—e.g., levels of integration, categories, etc.

And then we are returned to the future

of UDC, this time as Foskett himself sees it. A few of his suggestions:

UDC should be "a broad classification . . . with a detailed analytico-synthetic scheme to replace the current full/medium editions" (p.105). The scheme should use several CRG ideas, and it should be accompanied by "a thesaurus rather than a simple alphabetical index" (p.108). UDC should develop "through use in mechanized information retrieval systems and through computer production of the schedules" (p.103); by use of Computer Output Microfilm "at the end of each year a complete new edition could be published" (p.117). Just as LC and DC are "tied to a collection" and "developed through the daily work of classifying the books received by the Library of Congress," so "the British Library should accept as one of its responsibilities the maintenance of a team to maintain and utilize UDC" (p.102-3). "The English edition could then become the basis for all versions of UDC" but "policy would remain in the hands of the FID/CCC; a situation analogous to that of DC" where "revision is carried out" in the Library of Congress "but overall policy is decided by Forest Press Inc., acting on the advice of the Decimal Classification Editorial Policy Committee" (p.119). Funding would come from the British Library and from the sale of the completed edition (p.120).

This is a book whose detail may be for experts more about penguins than they wish to read and for the interested non-experts more jargon than they can easily understand. Organization of the material is rather more haphazard than one might expect from a classification expert (there are even tacked on four not too obviously needed appendices). It is not impossible that the solutions offered would transform (rather than save) UDC and repel some present producers and some present users. But Foskett's statement of the problem rings loud and clear:

The old girl can no longer get by with just love and a lone faithful servitor; what she needs now are cash and a retinue. But first she must have a face lift.—Paul S. Dunkin, Professor Emeritus, Rutgers Graduate School of Library Service.

Mathies, Lorraine M., and Watson, Peter G. **Computer-Based Reference Service**. Chicago: American Library Assn., 1973. 200p. \$9.95.

The title is somewhat misleading. The reader may be anticipating a discussion on the *provision* of reference service using an electronic data base and how a library should go about doing this. The on-the-line librarian may well have questions about the implications and costs in getting involved in such a venture. Librarians are becoming aware of commercially available data bases and are probably beginning to ask basic questions about the direction to take. For example, is it best to opt for the commercial product offered by such corporations as SDC or Lockheed, or is it better to start one's own shop of electronic reference tools? How does a library market this new service? What are the staffing requirements: their numbers and educational background; and how does a library pay for this?

What this book turns out to be is an introductory technical manual (based on a 1971 ALA preconference) on some aspects of electronic data use; e.g., document processing in ERIC, binary numeration, Boolean Logic, and weighing. The authors appear to have the viewpoint that librarians will, by working through this book, be less likely to be snowed by computer people when electronic data services are talked about. The authors state that librarians must be versatile in discussing computer-based services. This is true, but do librarians need to know *binary arithmetic* (14 pages) or *Boolean logic* (12 pages) to carry on intelligent conversations. Some librarians will need to know how to use a computer terminal and to act as facilitators in arranging for a user's search of the literature. (No doubt for such an individual all of this book is relevant.) Most other librarians will need to know about the administrative and user-oriented aspects of such services.

The best and most original part of this book deals with search strategies and their refinement in realizing the full benefit of an electronic data base. This section provides useful information on how one goes about structuring and refining the language of a search request.