Recent Publications

Guide to the Research Collections of the New York Public Library, reviewed by Roscoe Rouse .................................................. 373
Salmon, Stephen R. Library Automation Systems, reviewed by Eleanor Montague 374
Cole, John Y., ed. Ainsworth Rand Spofford: Bookman and Librarian, reviewed by Judy H. Fair ........................................... 375
Martin, Susan K., and Butler, Brett, eds. Library Automation: The State of the Art II, reviewed by Teresa Strozik ........................................... 375
Schlipf, Frederick A., ed. Collective Bargaining in Libraries, reviewed by Lothar Spang ............................................................. 377
Rath, Frederick L., Jr., and O'Connell, Merrilyn Rogers, eds. Historic Preservation, reviewed by Gay Walker ........................................... 378
Lewanski, Richard C., comp. Guide to Polish Libraries and Archives, reviewed by Peter Kudrik .......................................................... 378
Lowell, Mildred Hawksworth. Library Management Cases, reviewed by G. A. Rudolph ................................................................. 380
Other Publications of Interest to Academic Librarians .................................................. 380
Abstracts ............................................................................. 384

BOOK REVIEWS


A universe of libraries” is the apt term used by Director James W. Henderson to describe the Research Collections of the New York Public Library, which have been carefully viewed, evaluated, and presented in this new research tool. A ten-year endeavor, it will be heralded as a successful one by researchers, by cooperative library groups, by networks, and others.

Since last described in a 1941 volume compiled by Karl Brown, the Research Libraries collections have doubled in size, now comprising over four million volumes. The team of scholars chose to write a new edition of the Brown work rather than to issue a supplement to it. One does not find it necessary, therefore, to refer back to Brown’s Guide to the Reference Collections of the New York Public Library. The new Guide is formatted in the same style as the original work and, indeed, some of Brown’s phrasing is retained here and there.

Whereas the first Guide was arranged by the old Billings Classification Schedule, the new one is arranged by major disciplines and broken down under smaller subjects. There is a very good subject index as well as a relative index which leave us no cause for quarrel with the compiler insofar as access to topics is concerned.

Not every category of material owned by the library is included in the book; only the most noted and extensive collections are represented here. They are described in narrative form under the heading of the subject with which they are concerned. “Woman,” for example, is a subheading under “Sociology, Statistics, Political Science,” which is a subheading under the larger sub-
ject “Sociology.” This collection is described in a half page as a “strong subject in the Research Libraries,” with a few details given about the personal papers in the collection of some outstanding women, commentary on donors to the collection, and figures given for the number of entries (12,000) in the catalog under “Woman.” Reference is made to holdings in the category concerned with the feminist movement.

To inform the readers of this review what the volume is not seems also to be in order. It is not a checklist, a bibliography, a union list, a catalog. Few specific titles are mentioned except to make reference to manuscripts, outstanding works, or extremely rare items. The volume is not a history of the Research Libraries of the New York Public Library. For historical treatises on the great NYPL, please be referred to works by Harry M. Lydenberg and Phyllis Dain. It is not, as previously stated, an absolutely complete reflection of every collection held by the Research Libraries.

The guide is a needed new addition to library research tools so important today when computers, TWX lines, and other rapid communication media bind us ever closer and make an immediate response almost necessary instead of only desirable. But one wonders why ALA put such a high price tag on the volume, particularly since philanthropy played a large part in bringing it into being. Perhaps there is some reason not known to us. But, nevertheless, a vote of thanks to Williams, Jackson, Henderson, the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, Emily E. F. Skeel, et al.—Roscoe Rouse, University Librarian, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater.


The author’s purpose for this book is to present “a reasonably comprehensive discussion of library automation systems for the librarian without previous knowledge or experience in the field, and for the intelligent layman.” The approach is historical; systems covered range from the pio-