The decade was indeed an exciting one, which saw very dramatic developments and changes in the fields of information and library science, but that drama is largely lost in the volume, perhaps because of the unevenness of the writing.

The most readable and downright sensible section is Markuson’s on library networks; I found Orne on standards and Jackson and Wyllys on professional education useful and succinct. The most irritating reading is Kraft and McDonald on library operations research, which I am not entirely convinced even belongs in the book. The other sections are workmanlike and mostly cover the ground adequately, if not with flair.

The single most valuable section may well be Stephen Salmon’s contribution, an intelligent summary of problems and failures which are generally not available in a form which puts them into perspective. Salmon does this very well, and he makes a sober and dignified case for reporting on negative results in an honest and timely fashion as part of professional responsibility.

I was prepared to like The Information Age better than I did. No doubt some of the dullness I find in the books is caused in part by the standard Scarecrow format, but essentially the book is disappointing because it is uneven and diffuse and fails to capture the real feeling of the decade.—Fay Zipkowitz, University Library, University of Massachusetts, Amherst.


This idealized design of a national system for scientific and technical communication transfer is intended, in the words of its au-
thors, “to mobilize the large number of rela-
tively autonomous subsystems of the
current system into a collaborative effort
directed at redesigning their system and
implementing their design.” Supported by
a grant from the Office of Science Infor-
mation of the National Science Foundation,
Russell Ackoff and his associates at the
Wharton School of the University of Penn-
sylvania have developed a comprehensive
system that combines existing technology
with a substantial number of innovative
programs.

Among the major features of the SCATT
(National Scientific Communication and
Technology Transfer) System proposed are
the provision for prepublication entry of
documents; a mechanism for redundancy
checking of all manuscripts; a structured
fee system wherein invited papers would
have no charges, uninvited but refereed
and accepted papers would get partial re-
covery of processing costs, and uninvited,
unrefereed, or rejected papers would be
charged the total processing cost; establish-
ment of national, regional, and local centers
with separate but interlocking functions;
user feedback on document relevancy and
quality; and the potentiality for internation-
al extension of the system.

In addition to describing the idealized
system in great detail, the authors have in-
cluded an excellent summary of the existing
system for the dissemination of scientific
and technical information. This volume
raises a number of monumental issues that
affect the publishing community, academic
and public libraries, the role of the federal
government in information transfer, the
nature and extent of user subsidies, and the
whole question of quality control in scien-
tific and technical communication.

Although the group producing this vol-
ume has received NSF support to proceed
to a second phase that aims at moving
from idealized design to practical planning,
it is clear that possible implementation of
such a system is dependent in large part
upon a substantial number of cooperative
agreements among various parts of the sys-
tem, including publishers, scientists, sci-
tific and technical societies, libraries,
governmental agencies, and research lab-
atories. In a foreword, Lee Burchinal,
head of the Office of Science Information
Service at NSF, invites “researchers and
users . . . [and] information processors” to
contribute to the design of the system and
to critique the proposed system. Academic
librarians, especially those involved in sci-
entific and technical information, ought to
read this volume—and respond.—Jay K.
Lucker, Director of Libraries, Massachu-
setts Institute of Technology, Cambridge.

Pollard, Alfred William. Alfred William
Pollard: A Selection of His Essays. Com-
piled by Fred W. Roper. The Great Bib-
liographers Series, no. 2. Metuchen,
N. J.: Scarecrow, 1976. 244p. $10.00. LC

A stammer made Alfred William Pollard
a librarian, then a bibliographer and a
scholar of international reputation; other-
wise, we may never have benefited so
greatly from his talents. Keeper of printed
books at the British Museum, he planned
its catalog of fifteenth-century books and
the Bibliographic Society’s short title cata-
log, which mark an epoch in the history of
bibliography. He was the outstanding incu-
balist of the day, and many of his in-
sights have been built upon.

Roper has chosen items which represent
Pollard’s theory and philosophy in bibliog-
raphy and librarianship: (1) personal
impress, (2) work historically important
but largely superseded, and (3) work that
remains both useful and relevant today.

Nine of his essays are included. Those
on regulation of the English book trade and
history of copyright are especially interest-
ing, but others are dull and unreadable. It
appears that Pollard was more for getting
things done, however, than in general the-
ories about the nature and purpose of bib-
liography.

Three arrangements for bibliographies
are put forth, and he evidently favors the
chronological one, under subject, but never
gets around to saying so, failing to discuss,
for me, the scope, length, or planned use of
a bibliography.

He replies to criticism that English bibli-
ographers should give more than physical
description of the book with this statement:
“Brown has sinned against one of the sound-
est of maxims, never to try to pull another
man off his hobby.” This seems a shallow