Altogether this is a useful and practical guide to mathematics literature. It would be most applicable to college libraries rather than large research collections in mathematics, where there would be more stress on foreign literature.—Alice W. Hall, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge.


The two works of similar genre, by necessity selective and geographically limited, are both designed to aid the researcher and librarian, but their philosophies are somewhat different, as an examination of the arrangement of the contents reveals.

Lewanski believes in a strict subject approach as defined by the eighteenth edition of the Dewey Decimal Classification, which necessitates the repetition of information on libraries that may be strong in more than one subject. The author is himself aware of the shortcomings of the scheme for his purpose, yet so stern is his commitment to this approach that he adds only one index—an alphabetical key to the classification scheme.

The Roberts and others work, on the other hand, arranges the selection of UK libraries in alphabetic order in four groups: (1) national, specialist, and public libraries, (2) university libraries, (3) polytechnic libraries, (4) Scottish central institutions. Although not mentioned in the table of contents, some references to libraries in Northern Ireland are sprinkled among the first three categories. There are four indexes to this work: subject, name of collection, geographical, and list of libraries; the latter arranged in the same order as in the body of the text seems redundant.

Both works try to give essential information about the libraries, including address, name of librarian, date of foundation, size, access, services rendered, hours, etc. (Roberts even lists phone and telex numbers.) This information, although unevenly supplied within each work, seems to be more detailed and exhaustive in Roberts. Both works list publications and guides describing the collections and libraries with each entry, the only difference being that more general guides are found in Lewanski after the subject entry while Roberts lists them in the beginning of the work (p.13-18).

Apart from the difficult task of obtaining, sorting, interpreting, and arranging massive materials, which the authors of both works had to face, Lewanski had to surmount in addition the problems of multilingual entries with diacritical marks (which he omits throughout) and the uniform transliteration of non-Roman scripts. In general, he succeeds in this and even translates the Slavic, Finno-Ugric, Greek, Albanian, and Turkish names of libraries, albeit not always idiomatically, which may in some instances be misleading. There are other types of mistakes which are almost unavoidable in a large and complicated work as this. There are the usual misprints such as "Kunliga" for Kungliga (p.481b last entry), "Franiskanska" for Frančiškanska (p.26 top), "Stata" for Stat (p.23a second entry from bottom). Pančevo is situated in Vojvodina, not Slovenia as given (p.465a entry 4 from top). Apparently some misplacement occurred also in the subjects; at least the description of the collections would so indicate. Thus, for example, under 686 Printing—History and Technology for France, one finds the Vivaréz collection of ex libris that is not accounted for under 097 Book-Plates.

The above imperfections notwithstanding, every well-stocked reference department will want to acquire both works. As Lewanski requests, the scholar and researcher should continue to suggest improvements and make corrections so that the next edition will be exact and complete.—Miroslav Krek, Brandeis University, Waltham, Massachusetts.