

Thurlow (see "Graduate Theses Accepted by Library Schools in the United States, 1950-1951—Supplement," *Library Quarterly* 22:36-37, January, 1952), and the essay by Malcolm (George Peabody) listed in the *Library Quarterly* 20:296, October, 1950. There may be others, as no effort was made to check all items.

Material relating to college and research libraries may be estimated as abundant when one realizes that 12 pages of entries are needed for "College and university librarians" and "College and university libraries" and its various subdivisions. Many more references of special interest are included under such headings as Acquisitions, Bibliographical control, Bibliography, Cooperation, Photographic reproduction and projection, Reference books, Research and the library, and Research materials.—*Maurice F. Tauber, Columbia University.*

Management Terms

The Management Dictionary; Standardization of Definitions and Concepts of the Terminology in the Field of Personnel Management. By A. E. Benn. New York, Exposition Press, 1952. 376p. \$7.50.

It is fairly easy for a reviewer to pick out faults in a compilation of this sort, especially a pioneer reference book in its field. One can criticize the omission by the *Management Dictionary* of a definition for cost accounting (one of the 14 topics specifically mentioned as being within the scope of the book). Then there is an elaborate, inconsistent system of indirect entries, using DEPARTMENTAL RANKING, ORDER OF MERIT and ORGANIZATION, COMMUNIST-ACTION; but GUARANTEED ON-TRIAL RATE and 100 PER CENT PREMIUM PLAN. There are numerous cross references, but one looking under COMMUNIST-ACTION ORGANIZATION; RATE, GUARANTEED ON-TRIAL; or PREMIUM PLAN, 100 PER CENT would not find any guide. The compiler's penchants for listing abbreviations twice, with and without the periods (as ALA, A.L.A.) and for the expression "and so forth" are annoying.

However the essential criteria in judging a dictionary are the proper choice of words and phrases to be included and the accuracy and

clarity of the definitions. To insure excellence in these endeavors, the compiler analyzed statistically over 50,000 possible concepts; definitions were compiled from 8600 current (1945-) sources, including some 3300 periodicals, 2600 newspapers, 1400 pamphlets, 1200 monographs and 100 speeches. Only those concepts defined similarly at least five times were retained. Thus the method of compiling items and defining them seems unusually valid.

The definitions should be correct as far as they go, though in that for the LABOR-MANAGEMENT RELATIONS ACT not too much light is cast on the provisions:

"Federal legislation, enacted June 23, 1947, which amends the National labor relations act of 1935; it deals with labor and management relations affecting interstate commerce. Abbreviated L.M.R.A. Syn.: Taft-Hartley law."

This characteristic is neither rare nor, on the other hand, typical.

The dictionary can be improved, and a possible future second edition should be more satisfactory. It provides definitions of words and phrases, with their synonyms and antonyms, and explanations of symbols and formulas, brought together for the first time in one alphabetic list. For its accuracy and convenience, it is recommended to business, industrial engineering, labor and personnel management libraries.—*Robert Scott, Engineering Library, Columbia University.*

Marginal Punched Cards

Marginal Punched Cards. By Howard F. McGraw. Washington, D.C., The Scarecrow Press, 1952. 218p. \$4.50.

Many librarians shy away from articles containing statistics set forth with highly technical explanations that only practising experts can appreciate. They are apt to treat similarly the descriptions of punched card routines that have been appearing the last few years in regard to the bibliographic control of the literature of scientific and technical subjects. The relatively small number of articles on library applications of punched card systems has shown a conscious effort on the part of the writers to use terms familiar to any librarian with an ordinary knowledge of mathematics, but Dr. McGraw takes the extra precaution of warning readers on page 61 of his book:

(Librarians who have had no experience with

marginal punched cards may find it advisable to skip the remaining section of this chapter. Such persons may proceed, without handicap, to Chapter IV, since pages 61 to 79 deal with types of coding but infrequently found in college and university library systems.)

The rest of the book, while it gives evidence of its author's intensive study and thorough understanding of the use of all types of punched cards, should appeal even to those librarians who pride themselves on not being gadget-minded. Dr. McGaw's expressed intention (p.173) is "to maintain the point of view that the marginal punched card system, wherever installed, should always be regarded as a means to an end—the end not of a narrowly-defined economy, but of optimum efficiency for the library staff and of optimum service to the library's clientele."

This concern, that the routines developed around the cards shall benefit the library's users, is demonstrated particularly in the various references to procedures initiated in the Ohio Wesleyan University Library (during Dr. McGaw's administration there, as he modestly does not state). By using a Keysort card with double rows of punches on the margins, the library staff was able to code information about the students' reading habits that could later be translated into library reports to the faculty and administration as indications of the quality of service the library provided and of the effect of library use on the students' performance in class. To the reviewer, the coding necessary to incorporate so many different items presents the serious personnel problem of having either unusually accurate and cooperative clerical workers to handle the cards or of using the professional staff of the circulation desk for more routine work than is customarily acceptable. Dr. McGaw admits that "librarians may conceive ambitious plans for the obtaining of information on book use, only to have such plans cancelled by other considerations." (p.101) However, he issues no warning that the efficiency of a system depends on its suitability to the operating personnel available. If a new group of workers, young enough in their attitude to be interested in experimenting, can be employed, and enough supervisory time can be given to training them carefully, a complicated code may prove practicable. But if an existing staff must be used, it will be wise to

consider just how flexible its members are, whether they will readily accept changes in routine unless the changes are obviously labor-saving and undemanding of mental alertness. Another factor for consideration is the difference in the time individual clerks or librarians will take to needle marginal punched cards. The claims of the McBee Company of the speed of needling Keysort cards are based on the performance of efficient operators. Probably any code requiring several needlings to obtain one variety of information should be established only if the operation is to be performed infrequently.

As has been implied, *Marginal Punched Cards* describes chiefly the library applications worked out with the McBee Keysort card which is used in most of the libraries mentioned. Other cards and systems are treated in an appendix and are referred to in the text only as occasion arises. Almost a third of the book is devoted to the use of the cards in circulation routines, because it is in that area that most applications have been made. However, an illuminating chapter on their use in other departments of the library gives much material that has been secured largely by correspondence and interview. Throughout the text and in the appendices are excellent illustrations of equipment and handling methods. Addresses are carefully noted for the manufacturers of all accessories and for the librarians who have worked out adaptations. Wherever possible prices of supplies are included, with the date when they were in effect. Many of these prices have probably increased since the book was written, but at the same time the salaries of clerical workers have increased to a much greater degree, so any saving in such salaries will more than offset increases in the cost of supplies.

A comprehensive bibliography and the simplicity and clarity of Dr. McGaw's descriptions of coding and sorting methods make this book an essential guide for any librarian "just beginning his explorations of the use of marginal punched cards." (p.3) Those who have been working with them will find a considerable body of information not previously in print. The book should stimulate other librarians to publish accounts of their experiences, since they can contribute to the solution of current problems.—*Katherine M. Stokes, Western Michigan College Library.*