

Review Articles

Compact Book Storage

Compact Book Storage; Some Suggestions toward a New Methodology for the Shelving of Less Used Research Materials. By Fremont Rider. New York, The Hadham Press, 1949, 90p. \$3.00.

Mr. Rider begins this little book with an analysis of the fundamentals of book storage. While this analysis contains nothing new, it does constitute a good point of departure for the following chapters. Since the author recommends compact book storage primarily for little-used research materials, the question of segregation of these books from the much-used ones is a necessary second step in his thesis development, and in Chapter 2 he, "long . . . an apostle of segregation," restates concisely the arguments for it. Chapters 3 ("The Rube Goldberg Chapter") and 4 ("Rolling and Hinged Stacks") are superfluous. The first adds nothing to the development of the subject and the other does little more than describe something which is not recommended by the author. Part I, "Analysis," is concluded with a chapter on the factors involved in the conventional form of book storage.

Part II is called "Synthesis." Here the author reviews the opportunities for increased book capacity in existing book stacks, concluding that shelving by size is one of the best ways to effect space economies. Chapter 2 is perhaps the most important part of the book, for in it the author leads us logically to conclude with him that shelving books in an upright position is the principal cause of the low proportion of stack space actually holding

books. He recommends "boxing" for most books not shelved in an upright position, and then proceeds, in customary Rider fashion, to go into the greatest detail concerning solution of all the infinitesimal problems which arise when this system is put into effect. He is fully aware that binding policies are inextricably involved in the problem of boxing, and treats this important phase of the subject comprehensively. Mr. Rider then attempts, with varying success, to show the relative economy of compact book storage. Next, the author interrupts his thesis in order to answer questions which he assumes have arisen in the mind of the reader. Here he is not nearly so successful as he was in his widely-read *The Scholar and the Future of the Research Library*, where such questions were foreseen and answered during the development of the thesis, after the fashion of Arnold Bennett and many professional philosophers. The objections he cites were not at all the ones which bothered me most as I read his book. The final chapter discusses by-product advantages of boxing.

The book is interestingly written. The subject treated is very much worthwhile; the problems presented and the solutions suggested are of concern to all of us. While the author has aimed his book primarily at the large library, there is much in it which will be useful in small libraries. There are a number of typographical errors, but in general the format and physical appearance of the volume are good.—*William H. Jesse, University of Tennessee Libraries.*

Man and Pictures

From Cave Painting to Comic Strip. A Kaleidoscope of Human Communication. By Lancelot Hogben. New York, Chanticleer Press, 1949. \$5.00.

A new criterion can be added to those established not long ago by Russell Lines for the classification of the human species into high-, middle- and low-brow: whether or not one is irritated by this new book by the author of *Science for the Citizen* and *Mathematics*

for the Million. Hogben himself says in the foreword of his book that "it will please neither the high-brow nor the low-brow." On first sight, your reviewer was considerably irritated. Many of the readers of the *College and Research Libraries* will be likewise affected.

Seriously, the book which looks extremely stimulating and challenging, has annoying characteristics. There is obscurity in its style

of expression, not fully resolved upon later rereading with added understanding of the author's mental pattern. There is some needlessly sensational titling. The peculiar genesis of the book as the script for a series of pictorial documents developed by Marie Newrath, director of the Isotype Institute, has also caused some confusion. The picture captions are either needless repetitions of statements already contained in the text, or they are elaborations and sometimes excursions which can detract from the reading of the text. The choice of sources is not always a wise one. Thomas Francis Carter's brilliant work on far eastern printing was apparently unknown to Hogben, which accounts for his neglect of the story of far eastern seals in his discussion of early property identification and authorization. On the other hand, too much weight is given McMurtrie's *The Book*, in particular his account of Gutenberg, which results in a slightly distorted view of his relationship to Fust and Schoeffer. Incidentally, McMurtrie appears as "Francis," instead of Douglas C. in the index, page 284. The caption on page 35 might have explained the relationship of the zodiac to bloodletting, clearly the purpose of the picture on page 34. The picture of the paper mill on page 129 is not, as the caption claims, a woodcut, but a copper plate. One could go on with such a list and specialists would probably find similar instances of defect from their own fields. The important thing, however, is

that they do not have any serious effect on the very real contribution which this book makes. It would be absurd to overlook, because of such details, the magnificent contribution which Hogben has made to our understanding of writing and picture making, of printing and the other forms of communication. The importance of this contribution lies to a large extent in the manner in which this book was conceived. The resolution to connect, upon the discovery of their inner coherence, the many seemingly disconnected elements in the basic story of the growth of man's ability to record events and live with and through pictures and letters, was a most felicitous approach. It resulted in a book of a highly original order of creativeness. To those who have long suspected these connections and have groped, in one way or another, for the means of making them apparent to those who have sensed the importance of these causal connections with many of the urgent problems of modern society, Hogben's work is mental stimulus and nourishment of great importance. Many corrections of details and of some more basic elements in his structure are possible and many things in the book are capable of prolonged and thorough discussion. It is a book which is likely to be read for a long time and by many. That its important message will reach the scholarly librarian in spite of superficially irritating appearances is a desirability which this review hopes to accomplish.—*Hellmut Lehmann-Haupt.*

Descriptive Cataloging

Rules for Descriptive Cataloging in the Library of Congress. U.S. Library of Congress. Descriptive Cataloging Division. (Adopted by the American Library Association.) Washington, U. S. Government Printing Office, 1949.

This title is an important milestone along the road to simplification in cataloging, the goal toward which many catalogers and administrators have been striving for the past several years. The rules are well stated and well organized, and a good index facilitates their use. Every day we have cause to be grateful for the cooperative work which resulted in such a satisfactory code.

Mr. Swank's excellent review of the preliminary edition (*College and Research*

Libraries, 9:90-4 January 1948) was presented largely as a study of underlying principles. This review represents the point of view of a cataloger who is applying the rules in her daily work and who is alert for the possibilities of further simplification and economy.

As the proof of the pudding is in the eating, so the test of the rules is in their application. Recent Library of Congress proof sheets demonstrate the book descriptions resulting from the use of the rules by the Library of Congress itself. Let us examine briefly some of the items noted.

The current cards are brief. The information they contain is clearly and concisely stated, and I believe they can be consulted and under-