

attempt to make this delineation the conference has succeeded uncommonly well.

Inevitably the findings of such a conference include numerous suggestions of areas in which further study is necessary before any frontal attack on the big problem can begin. This isolation of specific problems and their solution to the end that the summation of solutions will provide a rational method for attacking the bigger problem is good research

technique and historically effective methodology. It is to be hoped, however, that in view of the magnitude of the task before us, and the urgent need for a solution, these and other experts will not linger so long over the trees that they lose sight of the forest. These papers are a challenge to the whole profession of learning, not just to the librarian and the scholar-specialist.—*Carlyle J. Frarey, Columbia University School of Library Service.*

The Scottish National Dictionary

The Scottish National Dictionary, Vols. I-III through Part III. Aberdeen, The Scottish National Dictionary Association, [1931]-1950. £20 for the complete set of 10 volumes; additional charge of 17/6 per volume if bound.

In 1907 Sir William A. Craigie suggested to the Scottish Branch of the English Association that it "collect Scottish words, ballads, legends and traditions still current." This germ idea brought about the formation of the Scottish Dialects Committee, which has been the chief mover back of the *Scottish National Dictionary*. Then in 1919 Sir William proposed that a series of period dictionaries of the English language be published, these to deal more fully and specifically with segments of the language than the *Oxford Dictionary* had done. The proposed noncommercial dictionaries are: Bosworth and Toller's *Anglo-Saxon Dictionary* and its supplement; the *Middle English Dictionary*, now being edited at the University of Michigan; the *Early Modern English Dictionary*, begun some years ago at the University of Michigan but now held in abeyance; the *Late Modern English Dictionary*, not yet begun; the *Dictionary of American English* (1944), which has recently had its complement in M. M. Mathews's *Dictionary of Americanisms* (1951); the *Dictionary of the Older Scottish Tongue*, now being edited by Sir William and in print in the f's; the *Scottish National Dictionary*, editing begun by William Grant and being continued by David D. Murison, and in print in the late d's.

Although Joseph Wright's *English Dialect Dictionary* was not specified as a member of the period dictionaries, it is a valuable con-

tribution to the lexicographical group of the English language.

When Sir William came to America to edit the *Dictionary of American English*, he had in mind to produce two dictionaries: *Dictionary of American English* and *American Dialect Dictionary*. Since it soon became evident that it would be unwise to work on both at the same time, work on the dialect dictionary was discontinued. The American Dialect Society is now collecting material for a dialect dictionary of the United States and Canada.

Samuel Johnson and Joseph Wright were not the only dictionary makers who have suffered financial pains in giving birth to their lexical offspring. Officers of the American Dialect Society and the Scottish Dialects Committee are experiencing the same pains. But happily the Scotch are faring better than the Americans. The former have received financial support from the Burns Federation, the Carnegie Trust, the Educational Institute of Scotland, the American Scottish Fund, and numerous individuals in both Great Britain and the United States. The Scottish Dialects Committee labored 20 years collecting and editing material before it began publishing the dictionary.

In its coverage the dictionary aims to be national and comprehensive, to include all written and spoken words that have appeared in the nine Scottish dialects from 1700 to date (the *Dictionary of the Older Scottish Tongue* will deal with the language prior to 1700). Standard English words that have different meanings in the Scots will be included. Latin, French and other foreign words used in Scots will also be included. A large number of words are of Norse origin.

The work will list and deal with some 50,000 terms.

The introduction (52 pages), Vol. I, presents helpful information about the Scottish people, their country, their speech and their writers. Some of the sections of the introduction constitute valuable brief essays on Scottish dialect, spelling, pronunciation, etc.—for example, sections 11, 13-16, 18, 21-22, 159-160. A map of England and another of Scotland provide helpful keys to the general pronunciation areas of the two countries.

The treatment of words is similar to that in the *Oxford Dictionary*. All variant forms (spellings) are given and all known meanings of terms. Illustrative quotations arranged according to time and place, and identified as to author and title help to clarify meanings. Etymologies and origins are also given. When there might be some doubt as to the pronunciation, it is indicated in the alphabet of the International Phonetic Association.

Methods of collecting material for a dictionary of a historical and a living language are telling as to the final work produced. Four to five thousand written sources of all kinds (in print and manuscript) were drawn upon. In addition, other material was collected directly from living speakers of all the dialects. Librarians, educators, teachers, ministers, journalists and other capable and interested persons helped the cause. No one received pay for his contributions. This was pretty much the system employed by Joseph Wright.

Phonograph records were used to aid in securing and studying the pronunciation. Over the years collectors of terms sent them to the editors of the *Transactions of the Scottish Dialects Committee*, where they were printed, and readers were asked to send the editors further information. When the editors of the dictionary needed still more information, they sent out printed lists of certain words, asking for additional light on meanings, pronunciation, locales, dates, authors, and for illustrative quotations.

As would be expected in a collection of folk words, many are archaic, such as: *brave*, beautiful; *brock*, badger; *daysman*, an umpire, an arbitrator. Americans will recognize many ancestor or kindred words of our dialect: *a* (I), *ahint*; *aneath*; *auld boy* (the devil); *ayant*; *back* (to address a letter);

backset; *bad man* (the devil); *ballop* (flap in front of breeches); *bedfast*; *black strap* (dark molasses); *blinked milk*; *burial* (a funeral); *buss* (a kiss); *collop* (a slice of meat); *ding* (to knock); *disremember*; *donsie*; *doxie* (a sweetheart); *duster* (a drizzle).

Surprises of some kind await the reader on almost every page. Some words which in American speech are highly indecent have no such meaning in Scots; but the reverse is sometimes the case. Many other words show different meanings between the Scots and the American. Scottish *cow* is a broom, a switch, a hobgoblin. *To cower* is to get well. *A crony* is a potato. *To croon* is to bellow like a bull, purr like a cat, or croak like a frog. *Croup* is a berry. Incidentally, we learn that the now standard English *croup* was once Scottish dialect, and was introduced into the medical world in 1765 by Francis Home, of Edinburgh.

Other interesting words are *bairdie*; *berry-barn*; *bottomless breeks* (kilts); *breenger*; *bundling* (accompanied by an enlightening quotation on this courting custom, which came to New England); *capadoshie*; *cowhow*. The numeral *dek*, ten, is used by shepherds in counting sheep. This reviewer has observed that the first 10 and sometimes 20 numerals in some dialects are quite archaic and conform to rhythmic patterns. This holds for several English dialects, Gullah, and some parent African languages of Gullah.

The dictionary is enriched by many quotations that not only clarify the meanings in question but also contain interesting folklore, folk sayings, folk songs and frequently sprightly wit.

The *Scottish National Dictionary* should certainly find a place along with its companion dictionaries—the *Oxford English Dictionary*, the *English Dialect Dictionary*, Bosworth and Toller's *Anglo-Saxon Dictionary* and its supplement, etc. One critic has said of the dictionary: "It is not a book for Scots alone; it must be consulted by students of English—modern, middle, and old; by students too of Norse, Danish, and various Germanic tongues." He might well have added "by all educated persons who wish to know more about the Scottish writers of the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries—among whom are Allan Ramsay, Robert Fergusson, Robert Burns, Sir Walter Scott, Thomas Carlyle,

and Sir James M. Barrie; about the English language in general; and about the American speech in particular, since our speech has inherited so much from the Scots."

It is regrettable that the editors are print-

ing such a few sets of the dictionary—only 2000.—George P. Wilson, professor of English, Woman's College of the University of North Carolina, and secretary of the American Dialect Society.

Standard Dewey Classification

Decimal Classification, devised by Melvil Dewey, Standard (15th) edition. Lake Placid Club, N.Y., Forest Press [C1951] IV, 661p. \$16.00.

The fifteenth edition of the *Dewey Decimal Classification* is the long awaited standard library edition. It is a complete revision designed to meet the needs of "the greatest number of libraries," or small to medium-sized libraries, with the tables "evenly and broadly expanded," eliminating the over-elaboration of some classes found in earlier editions. Each schedule has been studied, rewritten and simplified by librarians and subject authorities in the light of current developments, changing concepts and terminology. Much unnecessary material has been omitted.

Issued in a green buckram binding (a great improvement over the drab bindings of earlier editions), the entire book has been reset and standard spelling is used throughout. Various type faces are used in the tables making it easy to consult them.

The arrangement follows earlier editions closely. The "Introduction" is followed by summaries of the main classes, divisions, sections, form divisions, tables and index. Compared with the fourteenth edition which contained 80 pages of introductory material, 1047 pages of tables, 737 pages of index, and 50 pages of supplementary material, the fifteenth edition contains 55 pages of introductory material, 469 pages of tables, and 190 pages of index. The supplementary tables are omitted in this new edition.

A special effort has been made to bring the terminology up-to-date. Definitions, scope notes and references to related materials have been given liberally, adding considerably to the usefulness of the tables. Occasionally the obvious has been defined and a few definitions are rather vague, but on the whole the definitions are helpful.

The length of the notation has been kept down to a maximum of four decimal places, found principally in the 621's, 629's, and 900's.

The relative index has been shortened considerably. It includes personal names for artists, philosophers and theologians, but many names included in scope notes in the tables are not listed here. Many subjects which should be included have been omitted, and it is unfortunate that some typographical errors have crept in, e.g. Egypt. History. Modern.—926 instead of 962; Libya—960.2 instead of 961.2; Red Cross—361.506 instead of 361.5; Tunisia—960.1 instead of 961.1; and Western Australia 984.1 instead of 994.1.

Since reclassification is a physical and financial impossibility in most libraries, the editors made "no very drastic changes." Even so, in adopting this edition many libraries will be faced with the problem of some reclassification. Numbers for which no books could be found have been dropped. Subject division numbers falling in this category include: 017-019, 061-068, 083, 087, 114-119, 122, 125-127, 129, 141-149, 163, 165-169, 214, 216-217, 219, 255, 257, 313-319, 569, 689, 764, and 768. Form divisions and subdivisions have been omitted in many cases, e.g. 202-209, 501-509, etc.

When a subject is shifted from one class or subdivision to another, it is recorded in the tables in the form of a recommendation, e.g., 614.9. It is recommended that VETERINARY SANITATION be classified in 636.0894. Important changes are shown in the accompanying table.

The main classes or divisions which have been changed include the following: 128 Soul : 218 or 233.5; 140 Philosophic systems : 180-190; 172 Political ethics : 177; 173 Family ethics : 177, Marriage and the family: 301.422; 174 Professional or Business ethics : classified with Profession or Business;