

Review Articles

Information Processing Equipment

Information Processing Equipment. Edited by M. P. Doss. New York: Reinhold, 1955. 270p. \$8.75.

This collection of the papers of a symposium held in 1953 includes ten papers. The first is "Special typing, stenciling, hectographing, figure preparation and miscellaneous equipment"; the second, "Lensless copying with sensitized papers"; the third, "Photography in the laboratory"; the fourth, "Microcopying . . ."; the fifth, "Xerography"; sixth, "Letterpress and offset printing"; seventh, "Author's guide to effective slides"; eighth, "Audio methods for handling data"; ninth, "Storing and finding technical information with punched cards"; and finally "Numerical data-handling machines."

This miscellany not only duplicates information in other sources but also duplicates within itself—i.e., Stenafax is illustrated and described on pages 11-12, where it may belong, and then is re-illustrated and re-described briefly on pages 47-49, under "lensless copying with sensitized paper," where it does not belong.

New processes, such as Kalfax, are not covered since the basic material on which this "book" was based was all delivered two years ago.

The range of topics, presented with only the most general data on when or where each is suitable economically, runs from reading glasses for two or three diameter enlargement, to typing, to photomicrography, high speed moving picture cameras, slide projection equipment, audio recording devices, etc.

The treatment is uneven. In some of the articles a great deal of technical information is assumed. In others, the difference between 16, 35, and 70 mm. film is described and illustrated. Some of the material, such as that on office dictating machines and movie soundtracks, is simply dragged in, as are slide

rules and conventional office-type adding machines and calculators.

The collection of papers is profusely illustrated, and a large percentage of the illustrations seem quite unnecessary—among these, illustrations that appear to add so little to what is so commonly available as to be a waste of space would be: the IBM electric standard typewriter, the Varityper, a publicity picture showing three desks with machines on them and labeled "a battery of three automatic typewriters . . .," a Dick stencil duplicator, a Photostat camera, seven conventional microfilm cameras and reading machines, x-number of pictures of notched or punched cards, etc., etc.

Some of the illustrations are definitely misleading. One shows a man standing next to a pile of books almost up to the top of his head and holding a box of microfilm. The impression it gives is that the small roll of microfilm (weighing 1.5 ounces) takes the place of all this. The caption is "Microfilm for condensation. . . ." But it goes on to say that this film was made for a student . . . and includes all the *pertinent material* found in the 366 pounds of volumes (*italics supplied*). If the *pertinent material* does not equal the total, and it cannot, then what honest purpose can the illustration serve?

This symposium volume does not add up to a coherent, seminal contribution to knowledge, and the price of \$8.75 for its 270 padded pages is far out of line with the material that might be derived from it that is not readily available elsewhere.—*Ralph R. Shaw, Graduate School of Library Service, Rutgers University.*

Technical Reports

The Technical Report; Its Preparation, Processing, and Use in Industry and Government. Edited by B. H. Weil. New York: Reinhold, 1954. 485p. \$12.

This book makes an important contribution to a critical area in the documentation of research. Its scope is clearly indicated by