

work of locally recruited personnel, a sense of humor and proportion, good health, and the ability to adapt to a new environment. To paraphrase Professor Fuller—For the librarian abroad, his own and his family's behavior may be the principal means by which those with whom he comes in contact form an image of Americans and American librarianship.—*Flora B. Ludington, Mount Holyoke College.*

Catalog Code Revision

Toward a Better Cataloging Code; Papers presented before the Twenty-first Annual Conference of the Graduate Library School of the University of Chicago, June 13-15, 1956. Ed. by Ruth French Strout. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957. 116p. \$3.75.

These papers from the Graduate Library School Conference treat the subject of catalog code revision from various points of view; the historical background (Ruth French Strout and Paul S. Dunkin), "general considerations on the function and content of catalog entries" (Richard S. Angell), problems in applying catalog codes (Herman H. Henkle and Benjamin A. Custer), the cost of cataloging (Raynard C. Swank), developments in other countries (Andrew D. Osborn and Arthur H. Chaplin), and the present state of code revision in the United States (Seymour Lubetzky and Wyllis E. Wright).

The papers by Strout and Dunkin trace the history of catalog codes from 2000 B.C. to the present. Strout concludes her account by asserting: "Throughout history codes seem always to have envisaged catalogs which were far better than their contemporary catalogs ever were . . . Codes have not been a statement of the usages of their day but rather the very means through which progress has come." Dunkin details the attacks on catalog codes of the past fifteen years, beginning with Osborn's "The Crisis in Cataloging," pointing out that the attacks have ranged around three subjects: basic principles, simplification, and study of the user. He notes that today the "crisis in

cataloging" has become a part of the larger crisis in public and academic library administration generally and bibliographical control in general and wisely observes that agreement on functions is much easier to come by than agreement on techniques to implement functions.

In his attempt to develop "some general considerations on the function and content of catalog entries," Angell takes a close look at some of the basic principles (and alleged lack thereof) of our present codes, both for entry and for descriptive cataloging. His criticism is frequently sharp and incisive and will stimulate, if not antagonize, most readers. He contends that the rules for cataloging books have been too slavishly followed in devising rules for other media of communication and suggests that it is possible to devise rules for entry of the various media which grow "naturally" out of the media themselves. Unfortunately, there is no extended discussion of this point, and no illustrations of specific rules are presented for our consideration. He also contends that our rules are weak in conveying the import of the communication, implying that we should not rely on subject headings for this necessary function. These points are typical of many others in an essay which attempts to extend the frame of reference of code revision considerably beyond its usual boundaries.

Custer attempts to identify some of the most pressing problems in public libraries, as distinguished from academic libraries, e.g., the effect of filing rules on the rules of entry and on use of the catalog, the greater use of "common" rather than "authoritative" names, the probably greater use by patrons of names and titles as they appear on the works being cataloged, and the need for less detailed descriptive cataloging rules.

Henkle is particularly concerned with the problems of application of rules and suggests that the shift from the legalistic to the pragmatic theory in descriptive cataloging has perhaps been in name only—that operational research is needed to determine how far practicing catalogers have actually changed their point of view. At the same time, he points out that practicing catalogers have a unique opportunity to contrib-

ute to catalog code revision by a careful consideration of the practical problems which arise in everyday work.

Swank's paper, while not so directly related to the theme of the Conference, is an excellent statement of the factors involved in the cost of cataloging and of bibliography generally, and ends with a plea for no skimping on the author code, which he sees as the "very heart of the library service."

The papers by Chaplin and Osborn are among the most stimulating and provocative in the volume, and it is to be hoped that they will be widely read by American catalogers and librarians, since they present ideas and viewpoints which we tend to ignore in our deliberations. Osborn reports on the growing use in Germany of "mechanical" or "natural" word order in filing title entries, in place of the traditional grammatical word order, and mentions the introduction of corporate entries in the public catalog of the Deutsche Staatsbibliothek. Chaplin outlines the major problems which must be overcome to achieve an international code and comments hopefully on the activities of the IFLA working group on the international coordination of cataloging principles, which has optimistically attacked the chief obstacles to international agreement—corporate authorship and title entry for anonymous books.

Wright summarizes in some detail the current progress on code revision in the United States, identifying the principles and objectives which have been accepted for the new code, including the provision of alternative practices for specialized and popular libraries. Lubetzky, fittingly, has the last word, commenting on several points made during the Conference. He emphasizes the magnitude of the problem of assembling works of an author and editions of a work and affirms the professional nature of the problem of constructing a catalog code, asserting that the authors of a code cannot be too much concerned with possible misapplication of the code by practicing catalogers or with constructing a code which attempts to meet the "needs" and "approach" of the library's patrons.

In summary, these papers provide a good background for, and review of, the main

problems involved in catalog code revision (particularly for the library school student and teacher), as given by recognized experts, although one looks in vain for a detailed consideration of the basic problems involved in the "finding list vs. reference tool" dilemma, a question which still has not been thoroughly discussed. It is interesting to note that several participants minimize the value of studies of readers' use of the catalog—a far cry from the literature of the forties on the catalog and catalog codes, which virtually always concluded with a plea for such studies. To this reviewer, the most important question raised relates to the possibility of an international code. On the basis of the evidence presented here, it would seem that this is no longer in the realm of unattainable ideals. American catalogers and librarians have a serious obligation to examine closely our basic concept of main entry for works produced by corporate bodies. In view of the liberal use of added entries in American catalogs and bibliographies, can we consider a wider use of title as main entry for such works? Would this really violate our concept of "authorship" and, if so, what are the consequences? Certainly, these are questions which the Catalog Code Revision Committee should consider carefully as it works on the new code.—Wesley Simonton, *Library School, University of Minnesota.*

Russian Biography

Russkie biograficheskie i bio-bibliograficheskie slovari. By I. M. Kaufman. Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo kul'turno-prosvetitel'noi literatur'i, 1955. 751p. 31R 40K.

This new, revised edition of *Russian Biographical and Bio-bibliographical Dictionaries*, compiled by I. M. Kaufman, has added reference works which were published in the years 1950-1954. Published in an edition of 12,000 copies, it is obviously a work that is finding a home in nearly all Soviet reference collections.

It is divided into the following sections: (1) all biographical dictionaries and collections of biographies of general character,