

consumers purchase the A performance rather than the B performance of the same work.

British librarians, in general, and Mr. Bryant, in particular, seem to have one soul-searching problem and that is the cataloging of the "recital" disc, for he speaks of it often. American librarians have found a rather simple remedy for this and similar problems by using extended added entries. I am sure that any American librarian would have been only too happy to help with this solution if the invitation had been offered. The entire chapter on recordings is garrulous beyond endurance with overly detailed comments on all phases of the work from selection to withdrawal. Isn't it about time that libraries, with the exception of the major archival types, face the fact that recordings are ephemeral materials and treat them as such? Readers accustomed to our generous lending policies might be horrified to learn that one English library actually sends a staff member to check the playing equipment in the borrower's home before a record borrowing permit is issued, and that after a certain period of time the borrower must show a receipt to prove that he has purchased a replacement for his cartridge or stylus.

Mr. Bryant has evidently put a great deal of thought and effort into this volume and the fact that it has been in progress for quite some time is evident from his statement concerning the Angel DeLuxe packaging, which has not been available for more than a year. He also mentions that a study on the preservation of recordings is "about to be undertaken" by the Library of Congress. This study was completed and published as of October 1959.

Following the pattern of McColvin and Reeves and other authors on the subject, the second half comprises lists of recommended scores graded A to E and signifying materials to be included in A, the smallest independent library, and moving progressively to E, the largest collection. The ideas expressed in these lists are rather strange in contrast to an earlier remark that only music heard in concerts or available on records should be the basis for purchasing. Furthermore, for the more adventurous there is the stern warning to "withdraw or do not buy works by composers who rate but a few lines in Grove's *Dictionary* or do not appear there." Grove, in addition to being very pro-British, is slightly

dated at this point, having been published in 1954, and even then was not entirely free from errors of omission! A random sampling of the opera scores in the graded lists shows that the smallest library would be likely to have a fairly representative collection of the popular repertory as well as Britten's *Peter Grimes*, Gay's *Beggar's Opera*, and two scores by Edward German, *Merrie England* and *Tom Jones*, as well as all the Gilbert and Sullivan scores. Only the largest collection would be able to supply a reader with a copy of *Wozzeck*, *Louise*, *Martha*, *Andrea Chenier*, *Parsifal*, and *Salome*!

Mr. Bryant does give credit to America for "its musicals that have far greater vitality than the home-grown specimens. *The King and I* and *My Fair Lady* are more recent examples of American successes (though with some British collaboration)."

Altogether, Mr. Bryant has written a book which should prove helpful to the newer British libraries being formed as well as to those which are already in existence. The "matters of interest and use that librarians overseas will find in it" will probably be restricted mainly to purposes of comparison, and wonderment over the extremely biased and chauvinistic attitude displayed throughout and without apparent reason.—*Thomas T. Watkins, Music Library, Columbia University.*

## Cataloging Persian Books

*Cataloging of Persian Works; Including Rules for Transliteration, Entry and Description.* By Nasser Sharify. Chicago: ALA, 1959. 161p. \$3.50.

For centuries, libraries in the Middle East were storehouses—safe-deposit buildings for books and manuscripts. Their sole function was to protect their valuables but to discourage their use. Standard cataloging codes, uniformity in author entries, and other accepted practices of present-day libraries were unknown. Every library had its own particular system for recording the material it housed, but that system was not devised with service to the user principally in view.

When libraries began to be used by the people, they ceased to function merely as

safe-deposit buildings and became interested in attracting readers and having their materials easily accessible to all users. Librarians in the Middle East consequently became aware of the necessity of a standard cataloging code and modern library practices. Many attempts at standardization of cataloging methods were made, but nothing appeared in print except an article by Labib Zuwiyya entitled "Arabic Cataloging: a Criticism of the Present Rules" which discussed form of entry of Arabic personal authors (*Library Resources and Technical Services*, Winter 1957).

The publication of Dr. Sharify's book is the first complete work of this nature. Although it is limited to Iranian works, catalogers of Arabic material will find it most useful and informative.

The numerous problems involved in cataloging Middle Eastern material, especially in the vernacular, have been a source of many worries to libraries with such collections. As Dr. Sharify points out, because of the lack of rules for descriptive cataloging of Persian material, and a standard Persian transliteration scheme, there are in the United States many libraries whose Persian collections have not yet been cataloged at all. Now, with the growing interest in Near and Middle Eastern Studies on the part of universities and other institutions, libraries can no longer afford to ignore these collections.

Dr. Sharify's library experience and background have made him thoroughly knowledgeable of problems confronting catalogers of Persian material in the Middle East and in the Western world. In Iran, his home country, he was deputy director of the Library of the Parliament. In the United States he studied at the School of Library Service of Columbia University and received his Master of Science degree and his doctoral degree from that institution. He also worked with the Library of Congress cataloging Persian material.

The cataloger will find in Dr. Sharify's book a detailed and comprehensive tool. After discussing the existing systems of transliteration and their shortcomings, he recommends the system which he helped to develop when he was on the staff at the Library of Congress. That system—a table of transliteration with rules for application—

is set forth. He also treats such controversial problems as Iranian personal names (which part of the name should be used as the entry word?), giving in an appendix a list of aids to catalogers for the establishment of entries. The last two chapters are devoted to a discussion of the current cataloging practices of a few North American libraries—their sample cards and rules for descriptions. Catalogers will find many excellent pointers.—*Flora R. Jones, United Nations Library.*

## Electronic Computers

*Electronic Computers: Principles and Applications.* By T. E. Ivall. New York: Philosophical Library, 1960. 263p. \$15.00.

In the relatively few years that electronic computers have been loosed upon the land they have had a revolutionary impact on many problems of information processing. Their impact upon libraries, which must be considered among the primary information handling agencies of the world, has been only slight, however. In a few instances this slight disturbance has been more of an unnerving for a short period of time as an occasional librarian has approached the problem of learning more about computers and how they might be applied to library operations. Most probably these librarians have been turned away because of unintelligible technical presentations, or all-too-intelligible reports of lack of economic justification for the use of computers in libraries. Most librarians, however, have probably ignored computers as library equipment.

Computers are finding *some* use in information systems, as is shown in the recently published National Science Foundation surveys on nonconventional technical information systems in current use. A glance at the array of imposing names of scientific and industrial firms wherein most of these nonconventional systems have been installed, and at the description of the contents of information handled by the system, has probably confirmed many librarians' beliefs that, after all, computers in information systems are limited to a few high-powered, nationally urgent, narrowly defined scientific and techni-