

Recent Publications

BOOK REVIEWS

Mexico's Library and Information Services; A Study of Present Conditions and Needs. By Carl M. White. Totowa, N.J.: Bedminster Press, 1969. 106p. \$5.50.

This slender volume is more than a simple recounting of current library conditions and needs in Mexico; it is also the author's *apologia pro vita sua*, and a fine one it is. Indeed, helpful though the book may be to the agency that commissioned it and to the nation that is its subject, its value may be even greater as a succinct and rational position paper on the essential role of libraries in national growth. The wealth of Dr. White's extensive experience in the activities of libraries in developing lands assures a level of credibility to the volume that is unlikely soon to be matched in another.

The first chapter, a general essay entitled "Libraries in the Building of a Nation," really carries one of the two major burdens of the book. In this reviewer's judgment, it deserves to be reprinted separately—it is capable of standing by itself—and distributed widely among advisors, civil servants, opinion leaders, industrialists, and others who find themselves involved in planning and implementing programs of national growth. The conceptualization of a rational plan for library development in a country, Dr. White argues logically, is possible only as an integral segment of general national planning.

"Nation-Building in Mexico" is the second chapter, and the second theme of the book begins here. In it the author examines the changing educational, professional, technical, and economic composition of Mexican society; speculates as to their future; and considers the role of libraries as both causes and effects of the changes. In Chapter 3, "Mexico's Library Capability," he appraises current levels of library service and examines critically the reasons usually given for their not having developed more fully.

Chapter 4 describes "Modern Library Service for Modern Mexico." Herein Dr. White outlines the characteristics of library service he feels are necessary fully to support present and future stages of Mexico's social development. In the fifth chapter he described "The Federal Government's Part" in library development, especially the establishment of a statutory body with both responsibility and authority to effect appropriate library services. The sixth and final chapter concerns "Manpower for an Emerging Profession."

The present study, together with Paul Bixler's *Mexican Library* (Scarecrow Press, 1968), was done for the Ford Foundation in October 1966. In the library community, it will be of considerable interest to Latin Americanists, to librarians concerned for the international aspects of their work, and to students of comparative librarianship. Most of all, however, it should stand for a long time as a model for librarians who find themselves involved in the development of library plans for other nations in the world where similar conditions and circumstances prevail.—*David Kaser, Cornell University.*

Caxton and His World. By N. F. Blake. New York: London House and Maxwell, 1969. 256p. \$7.95.

William Caxton, the earliest English printer, has been the subject of numerous literary, bibliographical, and historical studies. Surprisingly, there has not been a major reassessment of his career since William Blades' *The Life and Typography of William Caxton*, a landmark work published in 1861-63. And so it is with special pleasure that we receive the excellent synthesis provided by N. F. Blake of Liverpool University, an accomplished Caxton scholar who has been writing significant articles for over a decade. *Caxton and His World* is both an exploration in biography and an evaluation of his literary attainments.