

in Leipzig. The first three volumes are (1) Peter Karstedt, *Studien zur Soziologie der Bibliothek* (1954, viii, 97 p.; DM 10); (2) Rudolf Blum, *Der Prozess Fust gegen Gutenberg* (1954; vi, 118p.; DM16); and (3) Georg Leyh, *Aus 40 Jahren Bibliotheksarbeit: kleine Schriften* (1954; viii, 261 p.; DM24). The fourth volume will be Friedrich Adolf Schmidt-Künsemüller, *William Morris und sein Einfluss auf die moderne Buchkunst*. Although Karstedt's work will be of primary interest to public librarians, it contains many sapient observations on the social function of the library in general. The importance of the others is readily apparent from the title.—Lawrence S. Thompson, *University of Kentucky Library*.

German Reference Books

Lexikon des Buchwesens. Herausgegeben von Joachim Kirchner. Band 11: L-Z. Stuttgart, Hiersemann Verlag, 1953. Pp. 406-927. DM 36 (V. I and V. II together, DM 64).

Jahrbuch der Auktionspreise für Bücher und Autographen; Ergebnisse der Auktionen in Deutschland, Holland, Osterreich und in der Schweiz. Hamburg, E. Hauswedell & Co., 1950-date. V. II, 1952. xx, 428 p. V. III, 1953. xx, 348p. DM 48 per volume.

The second volume of Joachim Kirchner's *Lexikon des Buchwesens* completes a work that every bookman—librarian, collector, bookseller, or publisher—needs on his desk. It is gratifying to note that this volume, like the third volume of the Löffler-Kirchner *Lexikon des gesamten Buchwesens*, contains a classified index arranged under twelve major headings and numerous sub-heads. Even more gratifying is the price for the two volumes (DM 64), especially when we see the old Löffler-Kirchner advertised for sixty dollars and more in antiquarian catalogs.

Like the first volume, the second is considerably abbreviated by comparison with the L-Z section of Löffler-Kirchner. However, the some 4,000 articles in Kirchner's two volumes contain the same basic information that may be found in the older work, and judicious use of the classified index facilitates the location of information consolidated from specific headings into more general ones.

Kirchner's alertness and familiarity with professional and technical literature is amply proven by bibliographical reference to articles and books that appeared in 1953. Basic bibliographical literature from all languages is cited; and if a captious reader is apt to cite an occasional omission, any such minor delinquency (to which all bibliographers are subject) is relatively unimportant.

One curious inconsistency will surely cause a minor titter at the next meeting of the Amherst College board of trustees: On p. 253 (volume I) it is stated that Henry Clay Folger presented his collection to the Library of Congress, and on p. 715 (volume II) it is stated that he presented it to the city of Washington, D.C. However, such deficiencies are fewer in number than they are in most comparable reference works.

The second and third volumes of the *Jahrbuch der Auktionspreise für Bücher und Autographen* have firmly established the value of this Hauswedell publication. Auction records for West Germany, the Netherlands, Austria, and Switzerland are included. Eighty sales are recorded for 1951, one less than for 1952. However, some of the auctions are for art objects and antiques, and such catalogs are recorded only to show the full picture of the activities of firms that sell books and autographs as well as works of art.

There are separate alphabets for books and autographs. Each of the two volumes contains a valuable essay by the well known Bavarian antiquarian bookseller Bernhard Wendt. There are also lists of booksellers' trade associations in all countries, special fields of various important antiquarian dealers, and addresses of firms which have ads in the *Jahrbuch*.

The minimum price for any item listed in the *Jahrbuch* is DM 25. Descriptions are as adequate as possible when based on auction catalogs. However, the hard-pressed dealer cannot always be as generous with information as the library cataloger with all the wonderful space on his three by five, and a few entries are slightly unclear (through no fault of the compiler, and no more than in comparable English and American works). Volume III has a few innovations: reference to bibliographical descriptions in some cases (e.g., incunabula), the number of the item in

the original catalog, and the size of the book when known. On the whole, the individual entries are recorded quite accurately, both for German and for non-German books.

Comparison with American auction records indicates a distinctly lower price trend, and this phenomenon might well be the subject of a fairly careful investigation. It would seem, in general, to be advantageous for American librarians to participate more actively in European auctions rather than to pay a premium to domestic firms who acquire books we want at these same auctions.—*Lawrence S. Thompson, University of Kentucky Libraries.*

Contemporary Book Design

Contemporary Book Design. By Ralph E. Eckerstrom. "Beta Phi Mu Chap-Book Number One." [Urbana, University of Illinois Library] 1953. 26 p. \$3.00.

Eckerstrom's work is the first in a series of books to be published under the auspices of Beta Phi Mu, National Library Science Honorary Fraternity. The fraternity, founded at the University of Illinois in the spring of 1949, decided that "first attention should be given to the publication of a series of books which would be authoritative and worthwhile contributions to the literature of books and librarianship and would, at the same time, have the virtue of presenting the best in book design." The volume here under review admirably fulfills the scope and promise of the stated purpose of this series. If succeeding volumes in the series are of like excellence, the Beta Phi Mu Chap-Books will prove distinguished contributions to the literature of books and librarianship.

Mr. Eckerstrom, art director of the University of Illinois Press since 1949, defines book design as "the manner in which the paper, cloth, ink, type face, and illustrations are bound together in book form to make a visual presentation of the author's ideas." In his brief essay, the author contracts traditional book design with that of today, noting the new techniques now being employed in the composition of books. Type faces, illustrations, color, paper, binding—each plays an important role in the composition of the physical book; and the role of each is discussed clearly and concisely.

This contemporary "chap-book" was designed by the author, and he has agreed to design the other volumes to be published in the series. The format of the present volume offers ample proof that Mr. Eckerstrom practices in book design that which he preaches. *Contemporary Book Design* is a handsome example of typography, a delight to read and to own.—*John David Marshall, Clemson College Library.*

Physics Literature

Physics Literature: A Reference Manual. By Robert H. Whitford. Washington, D.C., The Scarecrow Press, 1954. 228 p. \$5.00.

The appearance of this guide to the vast amount of reading matter and the complex publishing pattern of physical science literature will be welcomed by the librarians and students at the college level at which it is aimed. *Physics Literature* is a survey of literature, arranged by "most usual lines of inquiry termed 'approaches'". Eight major approaches are outlined (bibliographical, historical, biographical, experimental, mathematical, educational, terminological, and topical) and the most useful titles in furnishing helpful guidance and a basic collection are listed.

This survey will immediately be suspected of being a rival to Nathan Parke's *Guide to the Literature of Mathematics and Physics* . . . published in 1947. These books are only rivals in part. Parke's work is largely a selected list of the outstanding treatises on various subjects arranged alphabetically by topic. The topical listing, however, is only one of many approaches used by Whitford to develop his guides to the literature of the various phases of physics. Although Parke lists more titles, from 30 to 40% of the titles listed in Whitford's topical section were published after 1947 and thus do not appear in Parke's guide. Parke's excellent discussion of study methods and literature searching, and his more detailed subject listing, and Whitford's carefully analyzed approaches and more recent titles are more complementary than competitive.

Dr. Whitford used a number of criteria to cull out the most useful titles to physicists. By the same criteria, his own book would also be included. *Physics Literature* will un-