

trace public taste in these titles and in looking toward the future could use them as a starting point for speculation. The yearly lists in the present volume have more appeal for the student of social history and literary taste than the over-all lists because they reflect events, crises, and changing mores through a period of years.

Generally speaking, the popular book appeals to the reader because it is influenced by the same forces that shape the non-reading hours. A record of best sellers is a record of social history. Alice Payne Hackett has provided a valuable record and guide to source material in several fields in her *70 Years of Best Sellers*.—*Martha Boaz, University of Southern California.*

Raking the Historic Coals: The A.L.A. Scrapbook of 1876. By Edward G. Holley. (Beta Phi Mu Chapbook Number Eight) [Urbana, Illinois]: Beta Phi Mu, 1967. xv, 142p. \$6. (67-28354).

During 1876 the United States celebrated its centennial in a huge exhibition in Philadelphia. In October a group of this country's leading librarians (ninety men and thirteen women) came together in the City of Brotherly Love for three days, for the purpose of "mutual consultation and practical cooperation." *Raking the Historic Coals* presents by means of one hundred selected documents the story of the *preparations* for this conference which witnessed the founding of the American Library Association with Melvil Dewey being the first to sign the membership register.

The volume here under review is based on a scrapbook of letters, postcards, and printed documents called "Librarians' Conference, October, 1876" which the author-editor found at ALA headquarters while working on his award-winning biography, *Charles Evans, American Bibliographer* (University of Illinois Press, 1963). The scrapbook contains "216 items, mostly autograph letters, beginning with Justin Winsor's response of May 18, 1876, to a [Melvil] Dewey-[Frederick] Leypoldt letter about supporting a conference and concluding with the advance proofs from the first issue of the *American Library Journal* which described the Conference program for the meeting in Philadelphia, October 4-6, 1876."

From this "chief manuscript of our professional history," Mr. Holley has chosen seventy-four items; and from other contemporary sources (e.g., *American Library Journal, The Nation, Publishers' Weekly*), he has selected twenty-six items which complement and supplement the scrapbook documents. He has edited this material wisely and with discrimination, and has provided an informative and authoritative, interesting, and gracefully written introduction to the work.

Since many of the letters and postcards merely express approval of an interest in the conference-idea, only a representative sample of such communications is reproduced. Most of the letters "containing concrete suggestions for conference discussion, or relating to the major conference figures" are included.

The letters concerning topics for conference papers and discussion reveal that librarians in 1876 were interested in such matters, among others, as bibliography, cataloging and classification, copyright, distribution of public documents, indexing, library cooperation, qualifications of librarians, statistics. How familiar these topics sound in 1968—ninety-two years later! "There is no new thing under the sun."

Among those planning the conference or exchanging letters about it were Justin Winsor (Boston public library), William Frederick Poole (Chicago public library), Charles Ammi Cutter (Boston Athenaeum), Richard Rogers Bowker and Frederick Leypoldt (*Publishers' Weekly*), Charles Evans (Indianapolis public library), Lloyd Pearsall Smith (Library Company of Philadelphia), Ainsworth Rand Spofford (Library of Congress), and, of course, Melvil Dewey (Amherst College library). Their letters reveal much about these early library leaders—their healthy prejudices, their opinions of colleagues, their views on various library matters, their hopes for the conference.

Reading the letters of the great and the near-great, the well-known and the not-so-well-known, holds a certain fascination for many. Those in the library profession so fascinated will not want to miss reading these letters of librarianship's pioneers as they prepared for the 1876 meeting in Philadelphia. Librarians generally—library

history buffs particularly—will long be in debt to Edward G. Holley for having rekindled the historic coals of the conference out of which came the American Library Association. As for the book itself, it is beautifully printed, admirably illustrated, handsomely bound—a credit to the publisher, the printer, and the designers. *Raking the Historic Coals* is a solid contribution to library history, to the literature of librarianship, and, what is more, it is a real charmer. —John David Marshall, Middle Tennessee State University.

British Public Library Buildings. By S. G. Berriman and K. C. Harrison. New York: London House and Maxwell, 1966. 260p. \$25.

Public library architecture has long been debated, discussed (and cussed), and studied. Too often there has been more wind than logic; too often architectural whims or professional prejudices have dominated the scene, and the convenience of the user or aesthetic qualities have suffered.

As the authors have rightly pointed out in their monumental record of postwar British public library construction, public libraries the world over were freed from the ornate institutionalism found in buildings constructed prior to the 1940's. Undoubtedly two important factors influenced this change: one a breath of fresh air created by architects, working with newer materials and under a different economy thus permitting materials hitherto too expensive for public buildings; and the other, a completely new understanding on the part of librarians, not only for the functional operational needs of the staff, but also greater consideration for the interrelationship of uses of a public library by the public. This in many buildings has produced a happy combination in a joint understanding and relationship between architect and librarian. A study of this volume will indicate the extent to which this has occurred in Britain.

The book, containing an index, is divided into seven sections: Commentary; Municipal Main Libraries; County Library Headquarters Buildings; Municipal Branch Libraries; County Branch Libraries; Tabulated Data

of other Municipal Library Buildings; and Tabulated Data of other County Library Buildings.

The Commentary contains a good summary of public library architectural trends and recommendations. It is all too short in proportion to the book as a whole. This reviewer would have appreciated more comments and thinking by the authors, for they are in a position to exert great influence on future public library buildings. Indeed it is a pity that the text was not available to architects and librarians before some of the structures illustrated were built. It is exciting to think that a team of architects in the Ministry of Education is producing prototype library plans for varying sizes of communities. These, however, should be subject to continual review for changes required as new services or equipment is required and there should be reasonable acceptance of the prototype plans by all concerned—public, librarian, and architect. There is a danger also, of course, in that the prototype will be duplicated without thought as to local requirements for site and local services. Experimentation and logical evolution must not be squelched.

The volume is well illustrated, giving in many instances a real dimension to the plans. It would have been helpful to have had the plans all drawn to the same scale and to have had tabulations of pertinent statistics. Some floor plans give neither the scale used nor the square footage. This, however, is a most welcome volume which will lead to further thinking on public library building problems.—Emerson Greenaway, *Free Library of Philadelphia*.

Formulation of Research Policies; Collected Papers from an International Symposium. By Lawrence W. Bass, and Bruce S. Olds, eds. [Washington, D.C.] American Association for the Advancement of Science, 1967. 210p. (Publication No. 87). (67-29695).

Research forty years ago, according to a colleague, was less than a respectable activity for a young PhD in chemistry. In recent decades research has taken on an entirely different character and is, in fact, in *Formulation of Research Policies* the subject for attention of nineteen ranking officials in government and industry.