

task. There are few introductory articles on library conservation, still fewer that concentrate on the philosophy of preservation. Much of the best writing on conservation philosophy is in symposium reports or is embedded in articles describing specific preservation techniques. A successful textbook of conservation readings would need to excerpt these sources and provide for them an extensive framework of introduction and clarification. The resulting volume would be a cohesive structure for guiding the conservation neophyte.

*Library Conservation* does resemble such a textbook for independent conservation study. The ten topical divisions include subjects from "The Nature of Library Materials" to "The Roles of the Conservator and the Scientist." Each division begins with a two- or three-page commentary that incorporates citations for additional reading. However, the commentaries neither elucidate the articles nor draw the selections into a unit; they chiefly explain why particular articles were chosen.

There are a total of thirty-four articles to introduce all aspects of the conservation of research library materials. Four articles prove to have little or nothing to do with library conservation.<sup>1</sup> Three excerpts are peripheral and do not have supporting material to show how they relate to books.<sup>2</sup> The presence of six articles on "preservation microrecording" places undue emphasis on this method of conservation. The five selections related to binding do not discuss how and why a book should be bound for permanence and durability. There is no mention of conservation as it relates to regular library activities, including processing, storing, and handling procedures.

The decision not to include methods of preservation, even on an introductory basis, will leave the reader unable to cope with basic conservation questions—what to do with a crumbling book that needs to be saved rather than microfilmed; how to decide between encapsulating and laminating a document; how to discuss preservation techniques with a conservator when the proposed methods are new to the librarian.

Certainly, the editors have included some articles that are classics. It is tempting to consider purchasing these materials separately. Five entire volumes from which excerpts have been taken could be purchased for half the cost of *Library Conservation*.<sup>3</sup> In fact, a research library is apt to have most of the selections

already available. Of the 416 pages of reproduced information, 179 are from periodicals such as *Library Journal*, *Special Libraries*, and the *Encyclopedia of Library and Information Science*. Only 113 pages of material are unlikely to be found in most libraries or are published here for the first time.

The printing and proofreading of this volume are poor enough to irritate the reader. Pages are either overexposed and very dark or underexposed to the point of losing small punctuation marks. Sloppy printing has caused pages to be crooked, extra marks to appear on the page, and letters or entire words to be missing. Running heads switch from one location to another, and one heading appears on the wrong article.

The value of this book will have to be judged by each library. If staff members are already acquainted with conservation theory and practices, they may appreciate having these articles in one volume. A newcomer to the field of conservation might be better served by acquiring Cunha, Horton, and Winger.<sup>4</sup>—*Catherine Asher, Indiana University, Bloomington.*

#### REFERENCES

1. D. Cockerell, "How to Judge a Binding"; B. J. Dillon, "Binding Procedures and Programs in Libraries"; M. T. Roberts, "The Library Binder"; R. H. Land, "Defense of Archives Against Human Foes."
2. W. J. Barrow, "Inks"; J. W. Waterer, "The Nature of Leather"; M. L. Ryder, "Parchment—Its History, Manufacture and Composition."
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4. George and Dorothy Cunha, *Conservation of Library Materials*; Carolyn Horton, *Cleaning and Preserving Bindings and Related Materials*; Howard W. Winger and Richard D. Smith, *Deterioration and Preservation of Library Materials* (also published as *Library Quarterly*, vol. 40, no. 1).

*Victorian Periodicals: A Guide to Research.* By Scott Bennett and others. Edited by J. Don Vann and Rosemary T. VanArsdel. New York: Modern Language Association, 1978. 188p. \$17 cloth, \$8.50 paper. LC 77-94918. ISBN 0-87352-256-7 cloth; 0-87352-257-5 paper.

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papers published in England from 1824 through 1900, the same period as that covered by the *Wellesley Index*. What histories, biographies, and bibliographies are available? How are relative importance and influence judged? These and other questions "pertinent and necessary for the proper use of this valuable resource" form the basis of eight essays, each by one or two qualified Victorian specialists.

"The Rationale—Why Read Victorian Periodicals?" is pointed and perceptive. Although the definition of a periodical is incorrect on at least two counts, the essay clearly establishes the mutual influence of culture and periodicals on both literary and social grounds.

The often overlooked fact that an integrated and organized knowledge of periodical content is *post hoc*—e.g., the Victorian's dependence on periodicals was often frustrated by not knowing their vast and complex content—is the basis for the bibliographic essay that is a description of eighty works, including library catalogs, trade publications, several categories of retrospective lists, and indexes. This essay by Scott Bennett is one of the two best in the book and may well be worth the price alone.

The techniques of finding specific titles in a variety of formats and in scattered locations, a number of quite clever suggestions for piecing together biographical information, general histories of the press, and studies of individual periodicals are each covered in separate, well-written, and informative essays. One other essay indicates several techniques for gathering peripheral evidence that can illuminate the purpose and function of a periodical.

Criticism is often frustrated by unsigned, or falsely signed, material; and the essay on "Identification of Authors" is one of the more informative in this guide. The "tradition of anonymity" and the "necessity of identification," plus outlines of the techniques and some of the pitfalls, make this a helpful and knowledgeable road map for literary detective work.

Any library that supports even a small amount of Victorian studies will want a copy; all Victorian scholars should have their own. One note of caution: while the print is clear and crisp and the paper acceptable, the binding and the cover of the paperback issue are not. Despite this minor quibble, the guide is endorsed, praised, and recommended as first rate.—Neal L. Edgar, *Kent State University, Kent, Ohio*.