

the validity, for instance, of the statements on personnel qualifications needed and their all too frequent lack, it is suggested that the total implication may be a little darker than the facts of 1949 warrant. A number of examples might be cited but one will suffice for illustration. Professional sense, obligation, attitude and general interest are held to be too generally lacking (pp. 38-39)—and no doubt they *are* in too many librarians. But, when members of recent library school classes hold 100 per cent membership in the A.L.A. and a state library association; when numbers of them, at their own expense, attend conferences and visit libraries; when, even as newcomers to the profession, many are participating actively in local, state and national committees and other professional activities,

the indictment requires considerable qualification. This reviewer does not wish to appear to be in the position of defending the status quo or of saying that librarianship and education for it should not be vastly improved. It is his observation, however, that improvement and change with respect to recruits for and those admitted to library schools have recently been taking place. Full awareness of the change appears not to be reflected in *The Task and Training of Librarians*.

Nonetheless, as indicated at the beginning of this review, the volume cannot fail to stimulate the imagination and thought processes of anyone interested in the possibilities and future of libraries and librarianship.—*J. Periam Danton, School of Librarianship, University of California.*

## Incunabula

*Fifteenth Century Printed Books at the University of Illinois.* Compiled by C. U. Faye. Urbana, University of Illinois Press, 1949. (Illinois Contributions to Librarianship no. 4). 160p. \$3.00.

The indefatigable bibliographer and student of early printing, C. U. Faye, was well chosen for the work of compiling the Illinois list of fifteenth century books which now comes to take its place among the Huntington, Newberry, Morgan and other check lists of incunabula. Mr. Faye has a rare combination of linguistic facility, an extensive experience in early printed books, and a passion for the minutiae of paleotypography which have resulted in not only a well-documented list but also a thought-provoking introduction to the field.

The Illinois list numbers some 431 items including three designated as sixteenth century printing. The arrangement is that of Robert Proctor. Each country is taken in the order in which printing was established within its borders, with the cities of each country in chronological order on the same principle. Within each city, the presses of each city appear in the order of their establishment, and the publications of each press are listed according to the date of publication, insofar as this is known.

Immediately following the introduction is a list of references including the most important works useful in the field of incunabula.

The specific qualities of some of these works are recorded in the first pages of the introduction. This list of incunabula is followed by a parallel listing of Hain, Copinger, Reichling, and the *Gesamtkatalog der Wiegendrucke* with the Illinois numbers. The indices include an index of printers, presses, publishers and places all in one, and an author and title index, with a concordance to the *Second Census* of Stillwell.

It is only just that Illinois, as one of the most rapidly growing university libraries of the country, should publicize its now considerable holdings of incunabula, and the production of this list adds considerable luster to the series of Illinois Contributions to Librarianship. This volume contains much more than the usual list of early printed books. In addition to the meticulous detail of identification surrounding each entry, Mr. Faye has incorporated in his introduction a theme which deserves the attention of all amateurs of early printing.

In a "Note on the Cataloging of Incunabula," the compiler first outlines the development of the now accepted authorities in this field, and notes in particular the scope of the identification work in each bibliography. The identifying elements normally include paper, typography, illustrations, foliation, binding. Some bibliographies are more reliable for one element than others; some provide greater detail, utilizing many identifying elements in

very satisfying measure. Because of his passion for detail and his well-known affection for early printing, Mr. Faye's list itself includes numerous helpful notes to distinguish the Illinois copy of variant editions. The larger part of this "Note," however, is devoted to a thoughtful consideration of the need for more complete identification of the incunabula and the place of the cataloger in this process.

It is the conviction of Mr. Faye, and he documents his case, that insufficient work has often resulted in false or, at best, inept listings of early printed works. His complaints are grouped under two heads, "Authorship" and "Identification of Texts." The problem of authorship has long been with us, and Mr. Faye's complaint on this score is a common one. His contributions here lie chiefly in his indications of a possibly more productive method of attack and in references to new sources of information. His proposals for better identification of texts essentially represent the fusion of some of the accepted methods of paleography with what is fundamentally typographical research in a product appropriately called paleotypography. Under his system, an incunabulum should be confronted with an accepted modern edition, and verification made of *content*, if not page by page, at least by chapters or parts. The acceptance of the modern established text would require universal agreement, but it is the feeling of Mr. Faye that compilations like the *Thesaurus Linguae Latinae* or the *Patrologia Latina* have adequate acceptance for comparison. Admittedly, it will be impossible to find contemporary models for comparison of some incunabula, and in such cases,

the internal evidence of the text will have to be accepted.

The delicate point of the proposal is the line of demarcation (if one such exists) between the potential capabilities of a cataloger and those of a literary researcher in establishing the identity of a text, or possibly even the authenticity of a text. Mr. Faye is eminently well fitted for research work in this field, and if all catalogers were equally well equipped with languages and his kind of experience, there might well be no need to draw an artificial line. Unfortunately the vast majority of our trained catalogers are not at all equipped in this fashion, and we cannot hope for a very great change in this field. There is certainly some possibility, however, of improving the identification of incunabula by the methods proposed. It was implicit in all previous checklists of incunabula, and it is implicit in this list that the field is relatively small and a major project covering the whole field would still not be inconceivable. What Mr. Faye wants is to have all incunabula positively identified and adequately described. I am sure he would like to see a crowd of catalogers and literary researchers working hand in hand at this project, and to see it carried to completion. He has an important point at this time, because as time goes on our few remaining scholars of his kind are disappearing without replacement. Our kind of training for librarianship does not take this work into account, and I fear, as he does, that the idea will die. Perhaps here is another test for the versatility of our rapidly proliferating library schools. Perhaps they will meet this need.—*Jerrold Orne, Washington University Libraries, St. Louis.*

## Foundations of the Public Library

*Foundations of the Public Library; The Origins of the Public Library Movement in New England 1629-1855.* By Jesse H. Shera. Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1949, 308p. \$5.00.

With the continued cultural and social development of the United States, it has benefited the public library, as an important social agency serving the needs of individual communities, to continually develop and broaden its horizons. The current trend toward increasing regionalization of libraries

calls for a backward look to the earliest public libraries to understand their development and growth in "economic and social terms" in leading to the present trend.

This book by Professor Shera, of the Graduate Library School, the University of Chicago, is a social history of the Public Library Movement in New England from 1629 to 1855. The author has done an intensive job of reaching back to the earliest New England backgrounds of this country's development to show the economic and social milieu up to the