

libraries will find it imperative to bind the volumes before making them available.—*William Vernon Jackson, University of Wisconsin.*

William Frederick Poole and the Modern Library Movement. By William Landram Williamson. (Columbia University Studies in Library Service, no. 13.) New York: Columbia University Press, 1963. x, 203p., ports. \$6.

William Frederick Poole (1821-1894) was one of the giants of librarianship. Yet there are probably few librarians who are familiar with his work, except for a vague awareness that he compiled the monumental nineteenth-century periodical index which bears his name. The library profession is fortunate indeed that William L. Williamson, Butler librarian, Columbia University, has revised his doctoral dissertation and produced the definitive treatise on Poole. Possibly the highest praise that can be given is that Williamson's biography does not read like a dissertation at all; it is an absorbing account of a "librarian whose career epitomized library development in the United States during the last half of the nineteenth century." Although Williamson apologizes for the lack of a complete picture of Poole the man because almost none of his private correspondence survives, he need not have. He has gleaned the public and printed sources well and there emerges a very human portrait of a man with a paternal interest in his subordinates, generous to his opponents, and zealous for his profession.

During the span of Poole's life he served as a student librarian at Yale, he was librarian of the oldest mercantile library (Boston) and the foremost social library (Boston Athenaeum), and he led two public libraries to greatness (Cincinnati and Chicago). His last seven years were years of "stress and strain" as he acquired collections, planned a building, and set the organization for what was to become one of the nation's great research institutions, the Newberry library. Williamson has recorded all of these activities with a clear insight into Poole's qualities as an administrator, both good and bad. Certainly one of Poole's most interesting innovations was his decision to use a sewing machine manufacturer in Europe

as a transfer agent for paying the bills of his European book dealers!

Here too is the story of Poole and the ALA. One of the legends of librarianship, propagated by its high priest Melvil Dewey, has to do with Poole's initial opposition to the 1876 conference. Williamson treats the Poole-Dewey clashes with a thoroughness and fairness which leaves little question about the case. The present reviewer would like to obtain that correspondence to which Poole referred when he said that he had letters which showed the truth of the matter and even called into question Dewey's own claims to having originated the conference idea. No doubt Williamson would also have found them intriguing; but as he earlier remarks, "A collection of books, perhaps a building, some reports, catalogs, and correspondence, and a set of dry statistics are the major things a librarian leaves behind him" (p. 17). It is almost inexplicable that some of the chief figures in librarianship felt so little need to preserve their private correspondence.

Poole did become one of the major forces behind the ALA and was said "never to be so happy as when he went off by train on one of his regular trips to attend the association's conference" (p. 92). The association was also an important factor in the preparation of the third edition of the *Index*. By assigning the work of indexing certain journals to a number of libraries, Poole brought into being the first really significant cooperative venture among librarians. Yet his was the chief work, that of editor, and he also indexed by far the largest number of journals himself. Poole was positive that a cooperative enterprise could succeed at length because the final authority and direction were in the hands of one individual.

One of the unusual facets of this book is the author's willingness to make interpretations in terms of today's situation. Of Poole's falling into difficulties in his later years through lax administration, Williamson comments "It is an unfortunate but perhaps necessary characteristic of librarianship that the head of a library can never pick out and concentrate upon one aspect of his library's operation to the neglect of the whole. . . . The history of librarianship in the United States is filled with sad stories of librarians

who, having made great contributions and reputations, relaxed their vigilance over the whole in order to pursue one aspect which particularly appealed to them or in which they were particularly gifted" (p. 179). And in speaking of the Newberry's cataloging rearrange he remarks, "It is always difficult for a layman to understand that cataloging takes time and a certain amount of backlog is a necessity to efficient operation of a cataloging department." Not that Williamson ex-

cuses some of Poole's mistakes; he has given as objective a view as a biographer probably can, and there is no special pleading to cover his subject's weaknesses.

The reviewer shall resist the temptation to cover the final chapter with Williamson's evaluation of Poole's contribution to professional life. This is an excellent biography, well written and thorough, and every librarian ought to read it for himself.—Edward G. Holley, University of Houston.

Books Briefly Noted

American Theological Library Association. Seventeenth Annual Conference. Summary of Proceedings. Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary, Mill Valley, California, June 17-21, 1963. Austin, Texas: 1963. \$2.50.

Basic Tools of Research, An Annotated Guide for Students of English. By Philip H. Vitale. Great Neck, N.Y.: Barron's Educational Series, 1963. 173p. \$1.95.

Calligraphy and Handwriting in America, 1710-1962. [Exhibition] assembled and shown by the Peabody Institute Library, Baltimore, Maryland, November 1961-January 1962. [Comp. by P. W. Filby]. 1 vol. Caledonia, N.Y.: Italimuse, 1963. (unpaged) illus., facsimis. \$6.

A Guide to Information Sources in Space Science and Technology. Vol. 1. By Bernard M. Fry and Foster E. Mohrhardt. New York: Interscience Publishers, 1963. xiv, 579p. \$9.50.

International Dictionary of Literary Awards. By Jane Clapp. New York: Scarecrow Press, 1963. 545p. \$15.

Introduction to Bibliography and Reference Books. By B. Wynar. Denver, Colo.: University of Denver, 1963. 225p. \$3.50.

Jo-ho Kan-ri Bin-ran [The Handbook in Information Control]. By N. Muroo, O. Ide, S. Kanemura, T. Kono, Y. Tsuda. Tokyo, Japan: Nik-Kan Ko-gyo Shin-bun-sha, 1963. 1330p. 4500 yen.

Kentucky Literature, 1784-1963. By Ish Richey. Tompkinsville, Kentucky: Monroe County Press, 1963. 236p. \$5.25.

A New Dictionary of British History. By S. Steinberg. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1963. vi, 407p. \$10.

Periodica Philologica Abbreviata, A List of Initial Abbreviations of Periodicals in Philology and Related Subjects. Compiled by Tor Ulving. Stockholm: Almqvist and Wiksell, 1963. 137p. Sw. Kr. 15.

PR Blue Book. Ed. by Edwin C. Mead. Meriden, N.H.: PR Publishing Company, 1964. xiii, 286p.

Swedish Commentators on America 1638-1865. By Esther Elisabeth Larson. New York: New York Public Library, 1963. 139p. \$5.50.

The Talfourd P. Linn Collection of Cervantes Materials. Ed. by Paul J. Kann and Rolland E. Stevens. Ohio: Ohio State University Press, 1963. 91p. \$2.

United States and Canadian Publications on Africa in 1961. Ed. by Peter Duignan (Hoover Institution Bibliographical Series XIV). Stanford, California: Stanford University, The Hoover Institution on War, Revolution, and Peace, 1963. vi, 114p. \$3.

U. S. Office of Education Library Statistics of Colleges and Universities, 1961-1962. Washington, 1963. \$1. ■■