

The Private Library

THE QUARTERLY JOURNAL OF THE
PRIVATE LIBRARIES ASSOCIATION



Vol. 2: No. 2

October 1958

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Ravelston, South View Road, Pinner, Middlesex, England.
Printed in Great Britain by Wm. Clowes & Sons Ltd.,
London, Colchester and Beccles.

On collecting old Army Lists, by <i>Ernest J. Martin</i>	..	..	74
Classification for private libraries: i, by <i>D. J. Foskett</i>	..	..	76
A T. J. Wise collection, by <i>Maurice P. Pariser</i>	86
Classification for private libraries: ii, by <i>D. J. Foskett</i>	89

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The Quarterly Journal of the Private Libraries Association

Volume 2 1958-9

edited by Roderick Cave

28 Parkfield Crescent, North Harrow, Middlesex

CONTENTS

Regular Features

Association Affairs	.. .. .	pages 2, 18, 33, 49, 61, 85
Reviews	.. .. .	..12, 25, 44, 56, 77, 92
Recent Private Press Books	.. .. .	48, 55, 80, 91
Correspondence	.. .. .	16, 56

Special Articles

Inscribed books, by <i>H. E. James</i>	.. .. .	2
Bookplates, by <i>Philip Beddingham</i>	.. .. .	6
Peruviana, by <i>K. M. Woodhead</i>	.. .. .	10
Commonplace books, by <i>B. S. Marston</i>	.. .. .	19
About my books, by <i>Adrian Coates</i>	.. .. .	20
Private Scripture versions in English, by <i>Walter A. Coslet</i>	.. .. .	23
The Regensburger decimal classification, by <i>Philip Ward</i>	.. .. .	34
Twelve by eight, by <i>John Mason</i>	.. .. .	38
Some neglected xix century fiction: i		
De Quincey's 'Klosterheim', by <i>Roderick Cave</i>	.. .. .	41
A Radclyffe Hall collection, by <i>Sheila Bolton</i>	.. .. .	50
Collecting bookplates, by <i>Philip Beddingham</i>	.. .. .	53
Some neglected xix century fiction: ii		
Stevenson's 'The Beach of Falesa', by <i>E. J. Mehew</i>	.. .. .	62
Railway libraries, by <i>Alan Walbank</i>	.. .. .	65
Foreign bookplates, by <i>Philip Beddingham</i>	.. .. .	70

The Private Libraries Association
28 Parkfield Crescent, North Harrow, Middlesex

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The Private Library

Quarterly Journal of the Private Libraries Association

Hon. Editor: R. Cave, 5 Oakworth Ct, Nelson Rd, London, N.8

Vol. 2 No. 2 October 1958

Criticisms

In the last issue of *The Private Library*, there was a letter from B. S. Marston, in which he complained that most of the articles published previously were of too technical a nature for the average member of PLA. With the letter, I printed a note asking for readers' comments - and I am glad to say I have received them.

The general reaction was, if Mr. Marston did not like the articles printed, why did he not send me one himself. In fact, he did so with his letter, and I am glad to print it now. Several members agreed with his criticisms of the type of article published: 'I don't want the technical articles to be less technical (I hate a watered-down, "popular" treatment), but I would like a slightly larger proportion of articles about books as things to read' was one member's comment. All, however, seem to want a certain number of 'technical' articles.

With Mr Marston's remarks on bibliomaniacs there was in general less sympathy. H. E. James points out that libraries formed of finely-illustrated books, or of beautiful bindings, are not less respectable than those formed for reading, and says that the collector however maniacal, treasures his books. Another member commented that Mr Marston is lucky indeed if he knows what the 'average member' wants, as she wants information about her fellow-members' collections more than anything else - while another said that articles on other peoples' collections are a complete bore to her.

This correspondence has been very useful to me, and I hope that future issues of *The Private Library* will profit from the suggestions I have received. Obviously I won't satisfy every member with each issue - but if I never do so, *write and tell me!*

October 1958

17

Association Affairs

Exchange Scheme Developments

As a result of the general satisfaction expressed by members with the April 'Offers Cumulated', October will see the publication of the first complementary 'Desiderata Cumulated' announced in the January number of this journal. Taking the place of the normal bi-monthly Exchange List, 'Desiderata Cumulated' will contain a select list of unsatisfied wants from the previous twelve lists, together with all wants submitted to the List Editor since August.

Offers of books for sale and exchange and free offers will consequently be held over until December, when the Exchange List will revert to four sections. The provisional publications schedule reads: October, 'Desiderata Cumulated'; December, List 14; February 1959, List 15; April 1959, 'Offers Cumulated'.

Second Annual General Meeting

A record number of members attended the second Annual General Meeting and Lecture of the Association held in the library of London University on July 10th. The meeting elected the officers and the Council to serve for a further period. The Chairman's report alluded to the substantial progress made since the last Annual General Meeting.

J. H. P. Pafford's lecture on 'A Modern University Library' was of exceptional interest, and in the time available it was impossible to elaborate more than a few of the problems of a large university library, catering as it does for undergraduates, graduates, and research workers. By courtesy of the University authorities, members present were conducted around the new Louis Sterling library, being given the opportunity to examine many of the treasures of this fine private library.

Publications Fund

The recent improvement in format of *The Private Library*, formerly *PLA Quarterly*, has been made possible by donations to our Publications Fund. In order to maintain this standard, the Chairman wishes to repeat the appeal for 5/- from each member made at this time last year, and to thank all members for their very generous response. In addition, the Council desires to express its appreciation to the following for recent donations to the Fund: A.C.B., R.A.I.-J., S.K.N., W.H.R., E.A.S., A.E.W.

Can any member advise? I wish to send 300 books of assorted sizes to Cornwall, Ontario, from my flat in Edinburgh. I shall not be there to pack them and I want to pay *all* expenses at this end. Time is no object, but money is.

A.T. (PLA No. 53)

COMMONPLACE BOOKS

by B. S. Marston

"Quicquid bene dictum est ab ullo, meum est" (Seneca. Epistolae XVI. 7)

THE stock of significant ideas of which a man is capable is limited, and the number of things worth saying is limited. Language being also a limited commodity, it follows that there are not many ways of saying not many things. Probably the best ways of saying most things have already been discovered, and it merely remains for us to collect together these discoveries which are scattered like ten thousand (or so) needles in several square miles of haystack.

To effect this collection, a Commonplace Book is necessary. In this you write down anything you come across in the course of your reading which strikes you as beautiful, profound, clever or amusing. You also enter the name of the author and, if you can be bothered, the date and perhaps, as an extreme measure, the place where you were when you chanced upon the item in question.

This last is worthwhile in order to build up an association of ideas which helps to fix the item in your mind and provides it with what we may call an environment, wildly incongruous though the latter may sometimes be. For instance, certain passages of Housman still retain for me a special flavour (and even smell) on account of having been first read in the entrails of a troop ship and entered in the Commonplace Book there and then. Similarly, I seem to get something more out of A. N. Whitehead when my Commonplace Book reminds me how he accompanied me on the top of a London bus. The process works in reverse too: the splendours of Kashmir are further enhanced – improbable though that may seem – when I associate them with Morley's *Life of Gladstone*.

One of the problems is to ration the number of needles extracted from the haystack; crooked and rusty ones and those through whose eyes camels have tried to pass, must be eliminated. This is very necessary or the Commonplace Books will multiply too fast. This makes it difficult for the compiler to retain his familiarity with the entries; when that happens he tends to lose interest and loss of interest kills stone dead. Fifty average size pages per annum is sufficient for ordinary practitioners. Addicts will run to many more and incorporate diary entries and press cuttings.

However, even exercising great restraint, one is liable to get into difficulties. An index becomes necessary, but an Author index is both useless and pointless; so I have discovered after making one. A Subject index is too complicated. I intend to leave the matter until my old age and then to make an anthology of the anthology, cutting out the dross and leaving only the pure gold. This plan commends itself in one way, for one of the rather shattering things that one learns from old Commonplace Books is how one's taste and opinions change. 'Did I really think that was funny?' I ask myself. 'Commonplace indeed, I'll say.' 'Why on earth did I copy out that bit? Surely I cannot have thought it true or good or beautiful. But yet I must have done, and perhaps it is, and

perhaps others (wiser than I) would think so too. Maybe I am getting senile or humourless. No, this subsequent selection is not going to work well.

Perhaps we shall arrive at an answer if we consider the object of the operation. One might do a Colin Wilson and write a learned-seeming book full of high faluting, esoteric quotations. I tried this once, and my Tutor at Cambridge said that it reminded him of boarding-house coffee: the same old grounds brewed up a second time. It would be nice to review books and be able to say at frequent intervals: 'As So and-so pertinently remarks . . .' 'Our author has not borne in mind the penetrating observation of Mr . . .' But this brings us back to the need for an index so as to be able to locate the apposite snippet without too much research. And we have had enough of that.

So far as our writing goes, let us read, mark and inwardly digest, but not learn (by heart) the contents of our Commonplace Books, and let us abandon, for the most part, quotation and direct reference. Rather, let us be so steeped in the wit and wisdom of all the ages, that we mirror the best that is available, transmuting it with our own personalities and according to our tastes. That is the nearest that most of us will ever get to originality. But more to the point in this context is our reading. By use of Commonplace Books this may be rendered infinitely more effective and so will be immeasurably enriched.

ABOUT MY BOOKS by Adrian Coates

A PRIVATE library may be an expression of the owner's personality, a biographical record, a tool to work with or an end in itself, a bibliophile's treasury or a congeries of random volumes, even perhaps an objectification of a Freudian complex. My library, such as it is, may be all of these things, except a treasury of the rare and valuable; it presents itself to me as, more than anything else, an insoluble problem.

I still have about a hundred volumes that date from my school-days, including several volumes of *The Contemporary Science Series*, and copies of the cheap Oxford edition of Chaucer, Milton and Byron: the Shelley I had was lost in the trenches in the 1914-18 war. Secondly, it is the library of an Oxford 'Greats' student - philosophy, psychology and the classics. I not only kept most of my Oxford books, but have gone on acquiring the works of classical authors ever since in a desultory way, so that I now have a fairly comprehensive collection of the better known and more important. I suppose I may consider myself lucky that I have had sufficient leisure to extend my acquaintance over a wider range than that required for academic studies. To avoid giving a false impression of my scholarship I hasten to add that nowadays, when I have occasion to refer to a Greek or Latin author, I usually refer to a translation; and at no time in my life have I been able to read Plato with my feet on the mantelpiece.

Though philosophy was my main intellectual interest for many years, the books I have on the subject have never taken up much room on my shelves. I

have preferred to spend my shillings on the works of the poets on the one hand, and of psychology, anthropology and ethnology on the other. The third edition of Frazer's *Golden Bough* was coming out while I was at Oxford, and I read it then with avidity and delight. Now it seems sadly out of date. But that, together with most of Frazer's other works, occupies a long shelf close to my writing table; and the worn state of several of the volumes testifies to the use I have had of them. A shelf above holds a row of the volumes of *The International Library of Psychology, Philosophy and Scientific Method*.

Before the opening of the 1939-45 war I began to concentrate my attention on the origins of humanity and human culture, the result of which was my book *Prelude to History*. That gives only half the story, however, and for the last six years I have been working on a sequel dealing with the origins of civilization. In the course of this work I have acquired the only specialized section of my library - books most of which have been published recently, and many published abroad, which one either cannot obtain at The London Library, or one needs to have by one for recurrent study and reference. Gradually they have ousted the earlier occupants of my near-by shelves. Then there are the dozen or so periodicals dealing with this particular subject which I subscribe for, and which have to be accommodated somehow within easy reach, as they accumulate month by month, in piles, or double rows.

Here is where the problem arises. It is a problem, primarily, of course, of accommodation. But it is more than that, and involves the question of what my collection of books stands for, and means to me. Is one's library to represent a dispersal, or a concentration of interest and effort? Is it to be a choice collection of rare and valuable items, or an accumulation of reading matter? Concentration on some special line or subject or period has its obvious advantages and rewards; and the narrower the field, the more practicable it becomes to build up a comprehensive, unique, and within its limits valuable collection. But then one needs room as well surely for the great writers at least of one's native literature, and for some coverage of the vast fields of history and the sciences; and once they are entered, there is no obvious limit you can set yourself to reach, and not overpass. My own interests have been all too dispersed. Besides the works of English and foreign poets and novelists I have on my shelves a large, miscellaneous collection of books on European history, military history, and local history, books on art, books on Japan (where I lived for some years), books of travel, of biography, of science and natural history, and then of course the necessary works of reference - a heterogeneous lot, most of them of very little monetary value. But there are not so many of them, of which I can certainly say that I shall never want to open them again. There are also the sentimental associations which some of them have. I have often hankered after Skeat's six volume edition of Chaucer when I have seen it listed in a catalogue; but I should be loath to throw away the shabby little volume I bought when I was a schoolboy.

A good many years ago I went to an auction sale of the library of Bernard Holland at Canterbury. One item was a first edition of Sterne's *Sentimental Journey*, which two booksellers bid against each other for; and it was knocked down to one of them for about £20 - I hope this story is reasonable accurate,

but it is a mere memory of what happened a quarter of a century ago, and I am prepared to be corrected – and a few weeks later it was sold at Sotheby's for something like £120, because the pages were still uncut. I respect this kind of collecting; but it is not my kind. I have tried to make it a rule never to buy a book unless I intend to read it, and not to buy another lot of books till I have read the last lot. I have some four thousand volumes, collected over some forty years. If I had read them all, it would work out at two volumes a week, year in and year out; so I must have allowed myself some latitude. Some hundreds which I inherited from my father I have kept, but I certainly have not read them all. Sets of volumes do not have to be read all through to justify their position on the shelves. If I have read several chapters out of the twelve volumes of *The Cambridge Modern History* (which I in fact inherited from my father), that 'counts'. So too it may 'count' if I have read one or two of the plays in the six volume Nonesuch Press edition of Dryden's *Dramatic Works*, which I quite recently bought, with the pages uncut.

I bought one or two of the less expensive Nonesuch books when they first began to be published after the 1914-18 war, and have added a few more since. Recently too I have indulged in some of the elegantly produced, luxuriously bound Golden Cockerel Press books. They are articles of virtu which one enjoys and cherishes rather as one does a piece of china. I have a few Elzevirs and such like, and an assortment of modern first editions. But these are the accidentals, as it were, among the rows of ordinary, workaday volumes. When I look through some of the catalogues of Fine Books that I receive from time to time, I wonder who the people are who are able to buy these valuable objects, so highly prized and priced on account of their rarity, sumptuous bindings, fine illustrations, or unique associations. A few score of them would be worth all the contents of my cluttered shelves.

Well, there it is—a library, it may be called by courtesy; a problem certainly to me the owner, or rather a whole bundle of problems. Shall I replace my cheap editions of the poets with other copies in the more luxurious *format* which the contents deserve – and if I do, shall I read them again? Or shall I make up my at present very weak and patchy collection of French authors? I have long wanted a well bound set of Balzac. Or shall I concentrate on the field of pre-history and early civilization, which is my special interest? To do so means buying generally rather expensive new books, which will be worth much less second hand. Or shall I go in for binding the many paper-covered books and periodicals I have, and repairing the various damaged leather-bound volumes that disgrace my shelves? Such are my problems. I shall never solve them. After all a problem which is solved ceases to be interesting.

PRIVATE SCRIPTURE VERSIONS IN ENGLISH

by Walter A. Coslet

MY interest in English translations of the Bible dates back to 1941 when I was 'exposed' to New Testament Greek and the existence of English translations thereof more up-to-date than the common King James version. I decided to obtain other English versions and make interlinear comparisons of them, since I couldn't spend years trying to obtain mastery of the original languages of the Bible, myself.

The first decade was slow, as I knew of few sources of supply, had no guide to what versions had appeared, and was unable to locate others with a similar interest. This was changed by the March, 1953, issue of *Friends*, which contained a photo and writeup of the Bible collection of Professor Paul E. Keen, of Naperville, Illinois. Among Bible collectors with whom he put me in contact were O. M. Orlic who had recently mimeographed his own translation of the New Testament, and Ora Huston who travels constantly and has had personal contact with several collectors and translators. That summer I published a title-page checklist of the versions in my collection, running over twenty-five pages. By 1955 I was able to publish a 20 page wantlist, but I still regularly discover unrecorded versions in the sale lists I receive.

Besides authorised translations, Protestant, Catholic and Jewish, I now have about 50 Bibles, a dozen Old Testaments, and 120 New Testaments. However, I have not limited my field to complete Bibles and Testaments, but include any differing English portion, large or small, wherever found. This has expanded my field to include Josephus' works (about 15 versions) for his *Antiquities* paraphrase much of the Old Testament; Church Fathers for they often quote Scripture differently, and works 'excluded' from the Bible. Naturally, I include any Commentary which incorporates its own translation.

To many, a particularly old or costly volume is the prize item, but my favourites are the strikingly different translations, particularly those that strive to bring out the full meaning of the original idiomatically in modern English, such as G. W. Wade's 1934 *Documents of the New Testament*. I have a few early items, such as Udall's translation of Erasmus' *Paraphrase upon the New Testament* (1548-49), and microfilms of some of the high-priced rarities such as Richard Taverner's 1539 Bible, but a modern facsimile or reprint is of as much value to me as a copy of the original edition, and often more convenient.

I do, of course, include 'authorised' versions in my collection, and the anonymous revision editions thereof (such as the King James 1616 Roman letter folio and the 1629 Cambridge Bible) but I do not collect editions which presumably represent no editorial changes in the translation. Such minor changes, silently inserted, seem to have been common place up to the 18th century but apparently died out with Dr Paris' and Blayney's revisions of 1762 and 1769.

English translations and paraphrases of Scripture by private individuals is a much larger field than generally imagined. Most books on the history of the English Bible cover the field up to 1611, then skip to the Revised version of 1881-85, and perhaps mention a few of the better-known private efforts. This

means that some two-hundred New Testaments or larger portions of Scripture, and the translators who produced them, have been ignored, forgotten; not to mention perhaps a thousand other translators whose work was limited to smaller portions of the Bible. The private efforts were at low ebb during the century following the King James version (Haak's Bible, several editions of Hammond's, Baxter's, and Whitby's New Testaments, and Ainsworth's and Patrick's smaller portions) but they have increased continually each following century.

Perhaps the hardest translations to trace are the Jewish versions. Many are completely anonymous and must be compared to ascertain new revisions. Also, few of them ever seem to be reported in the cumulative lists of books published. Among these may be mentioned the version 'translated in accordance with Jewish Tradition' published in 1947. Ora Huston even visited the publishers in an attempt to obtain copies, but they claimed to have no knowledge of the book!

But versions exhibit another difference than the variations of expression provided by the translator. Much depends on the text translated, for there are variations in early manuscripts and consequently in printed editions, and in the selection of the text preferred and the arrangement of the translation by the individual translator, sometimes to show the results of modern 'higher' critical theories, but more often to conform as closely as possible, by means of the oldest available evidence, to what is believed to be the inspired original. No doubt each translator is honest in presenting what he believes to be the meaning of what, in his opinion, is the text to be translated. Therefore, the background and attitudes of the translator have to be taken into account. This is where prefaces and introductions come into their own: if they are ever important, they are doubly so in a translation. Thus it is greatly to be regretted that the preface to the King James version is practically always omitted. There are a few works, however, which are English translations of particular ancient manuscripts, or of translations into other languages. The value of these to the English-limited enquirer should be evident to all, and one regrets that more have not been made available.

This past year, I have been fortunate to obtain a holograph translation in an interleaved copy of a Triglot Gospels. It is a word for word translation of the Syriac version. And I was pleased to learn that one of our PLA members, George Rust, is at work on a modern English translation from the original Greek.

REVIEWS

WOODCUTS, by John R. Biggs. Blandford Press, 27/6.

One of the most remarkable things about the sometimes rather self-conscious typographical renaissance which started in the twenties has been the continued success of the wood engraving as a medium of illustration, and the almost complete failure of the woodcut to challenge its younger brother. Mr. Biggs' new book is an extremely valuable treatise on the techniques of both and of related methods of relief print making, and as such makes an excellent companion to Buckland-Wright's *Etching and Engraving*.

Perhaps the most interesting feature of this book for the bibliophile is its two hundred-odd illustrations. These are superbly printed, many from the original blocks, and together form a remarkable gallery of contemporary wood-engravings and woodcuts. Although some are familiar, many have not appeared in England before—some of the Russian and Jugoslav work is especially stimulating. The author and publishers are to be congratulated on the quality of this volume.

J. M.

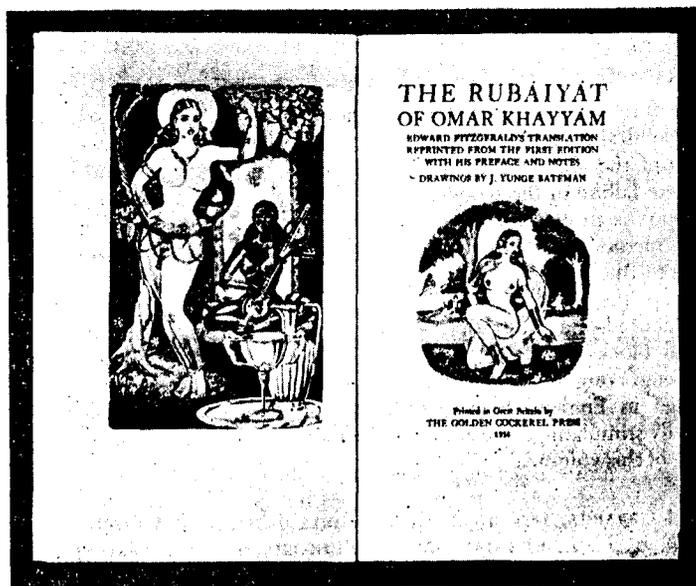
ENGLISH LIBRARIES, 1800-1850: three lectures delivered at University College London, by C. B. OLDMAN, W. A. MUNFORD, and SIMON NOWELL-SMITH. H. K. Lewis, 7/6.

These lectures were delivered as part of a series on the history of English libraries, and claim no more than to shed light on the early days of British community libraries by examining the work and achievement of three men none of whom, let it be remarked, claimed fame primarily as a librarian. It is profitable to reassess our debt to these pioneers in our age of rapid library development and consolidation.

The first contribution— it is also the most substantial— is by Dr Oldman on his predecessor, *Sir Anthony Panizzi and the British Museum Library*. Panizzi, who played a prominent role in the cause of the liberation of Italy, appears to fall outside the period indicated by the title, since although much of his epoch-making work was done before 1850, it was only then that he was appointed principal librarian of the Museum. There is not a great deal in this essay that can claim originality, but it is convenient to have so much relevant material in a single essay.

W. A. Munford's "George Birkbeck and Mechanics' Institutes" pays disproportionate attention to the nomenclature of these early workmen's educational societies, emphasising the absence of uniformity also evident in the early days of public libraries. There is a useful passage on the *Manual for Mechanics' Institutes* published in 1839 by the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge; Mr Munford quotes with aptness Dickens' scathing commentary on the 'Dulborough' M.I. in the *Uncommercial Traveller*.

The third lecture is by Simon Nowell-Smith. Entitled *Carlyle and the London Library*, it adds very little to Frederic Harrison's account of the same title published in 1907 by Christie and long out of print. The London Library was founded in 1841 to enable scholars to read books otherwise available only in



the British Museum. Its usefulness has necessarily declined with the advance of interlibrary co-operation and self-sufficiency but its coverage of foreign literature remains a strong feature. Mr Nowell-Smith retells with some vigour the revealing story of Carlyle's antipathy to the British Museum and consequent passion to establish the London Library, and his more remarkable later indifference. Some of his memorable sayings on books at home are quoted:

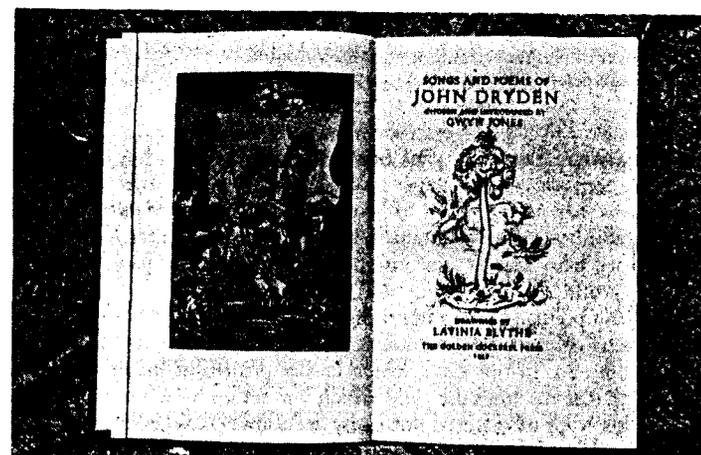
'A book is a kind of thing that requires a man to be self-collected. He must be alone with it . . . [he] can do more with it in his own apartment, in the solitude of one night, than in a week in such a place as the British Museum.' And, Carlyle might have added, he can do even more if it not the property of an impersonal library, to be returned on or before the date last stamped.

P. W.

THE RUBAIYAT OF OMAR KHAYYAM in Edward Fitzgerald's translation, with drawings by J. Yunge Bateman. Golden Cockerel Press, 8 guineas (special), 4 guineas (standard).

One of the most curious things about the private press movement in this country has been the way in which the presses' owners have nearly all been impelled to issue an edition of the *Rubaiyat* or *The Song of Songs*. Hardly a press before the war failed to issue one or the other. Yet here the Golden Cockerel Press is issuing its second *Rubaiyat*! Can it be justified?

It can, and is, by this superbly produced new folio. Printed by the Chiswick Press in Caslon Old Face, the paper, presswork and layout are as good as we have come to expect from 'Cockerels' - very good. To many tastes the illustra-



tions will be too individual an interpretation of Omar's poem: it is my private opinion that there is a small group of books which it is impossible to illustrate satisfactorily, and this is one of them. This new edition, charming as it is, has not persuaded me otherwise, but certainly the drawings harmonise with the text admirably. With Fitzgerald's introduction and notes to the first edition included, this volume deserves a place on anyone's shelf.

R. C.

SONGS AND POEMS OF JOHN DRYDEN, chosen and introduced by Gwyn Jones, with drawings by Lavinia Blythe. Golden Cockerel Press; 12 guineas (Standard) 24 guineas (Specials).

It is difficult to write an unbiased review of a Golden Cockerel Press book today. Thirty-eight years of Cockerels have made us expect a higher standard of production than from almost any other press in operation, and we feel entitled to grumble at books that from any other press we would praise to the skies.

The new Dryden that was issued recently does not, however, make us want to complain - far from it. Not since before the war have we seen such a monumental edition from this press. The text is handset in Eric Gill's type especially designed for the Press, and is printed on a rag-paper made by T. H. Saunders. The face is one of Gill's happiest designs, not so meagre and starved as many he produced, and the superb machining by the Chiswick Press shows it at its best.

Less happy, perhaps, than the text, are the illustrations. They are very witty, and reminiscent of Rex Whistler's best work (and their collotype-reproduction is excellent,) but in my mind they do not always seem to 'marry' very well with the text - the monochrome decorations, however, harmonise much better. The binding of the 'specials' is in half-morocco tooled with an irregular design which is very effective. All told, the production is fully worthy of the contents, in which the principle of selection seems to have been the pleasure of the reader. For the reader who does not know his Dryden this is an excellent introduction

while for those who *do*, the scholarship which Professor Kinsley has put into the preparation of the text makes it equally valuable.

The pleasure of the reader – it is a good summing up of the book as a whole.
L.B.

ANDROW MYLLAR, a short study of Scotland's first printer, by Thomas Rae. Signet Press, 15/6 (cloth,) 7/6 (paper covers).

Printing was slow in travelling to Scotland, and it was not until 1507 that a patent to establish a press was granted by James IV to Walter Chepman and Andro Myllar, who 'has at our instance and request, for our plesour, the honour and proffit of our Realme and Liegis, takin on thame to furnis and bring hame ane prent . . . for imprenting within our Realme of the bukis of our Lawis, actis of parliament, croniclis, mess bukis and portuus efter the use of our Realme . . .'. In this essay which he has printed at his private press at Greenock, Mr Rae discusses the press which was set up by Myllar in 1508, and brings together a lot of material not easily accessible elsewhere.

The book is charmingly produced: printed in Caslon and with Myllar's device blind blocked on the front cover, it marks the 450th anniversary of his press admirably.
R. C.

Notes and queries

Who can identify 'a book about the cinema, by Anita Loos and her husband John Emerson', heard of at least 20 years ago?

A.T.

Compton, Jemima (pseud.) The Ups and Downs of an Old Maid's Life, 8vo, Bell and Daldy 1868. The British Museum Catalogue calls this 'an imaginary autobiography by Mrs George Gladstone', Can anyone tell me how far it really is imaginary? To my mind most of this book rings true.

A.T.

Aberdeen. When visiting here do not miss 'Cockie' Hunter's celebrated second-hand stores at 10 Castle Terrace. This tall houseful of romantic Squalor overlooking the harbour does not specialise in books and may have none when you call; but it is just as likely to yield an out-of-print book you have wanted for years at a price of 1/-.

A.T.

Bespoke Bookcase. In 1955 I fitted with 800 books into a small flat in an 1827 Edinburgh tenement. The sitting-room is odd but agreeable; one blank wall is curved while the three containing door, windows and fire-place are recessed in the usual Georgian manner. A book-case to hold all my books (even it it could be got up the stairs and in at the door) could stand only against the curved wall, thus at one blow wasting space and killing the personality of the room, so I decided to have one built right round the curved wall. The Scottish Craft

Centre at Acheson House, in the Canongate, gave me the names of several of their cabinet-maker members. I picked the nearest, who proved to be a man of imagination as well as skill. His first question was 'Do you want this book-case to look like an article of furniture or like part of the room?' Now one complete wall of my room is lined with books to a height of six feet and another tier can be added later if needed. For this infinitely satisfying craftsman's job I had to pay hardly more than for the corresponding number of units of a mass-produced sectional book case.

A.T.

Swedish Royal Library. On 12 May 1958 the library of the Royal Palace in Stockholm – which has developed from private royal collections of the 16th century – was newly opened, restored and redeccorated, with modern lighting added to that of its original crystal chandeliers. Already in 1875, when the library was described by Strindberg, it filled the entire north-eastern wing of the palace. It has the appearance of an immensely high, long and wide gallery of deep amber-coloured oak (described by Strindberg as beech). The twelve great windows overlook the rushing waters of Strömmen. It was here, in 1786, that the Swedish Academy (so greatly detested by Bernard Shaw) was founded, and continued to hold its meetings for many years. The recent opening, presided over by King Gustaf Adolf and Queen Louise, was the occasion of the annual meeting of *Nationalmusei Vänner* (Friends of the National Museum). The royal library will be used in future for meetings of certain learned societies lacking suitable quarters of their own.

The books are arranged according to the monarchs who collected them: from Gustav III and Karl XIII up to Oscar I, whose speciality was prison and social reform; and the late Gustaf V, whose collection is mostly of travel books, history and memoirs. Sweden has three other major research libraries, the oldest being that of Uppsala University (1620), Lund University (1671), and Göteborg University (1890). Uppsala has over one million bound volumes and about 34,000 metres of shelving.

C.M.

Normanton. In reading through a pamphlet issued by the Friends of the UCLA Library (Los Angeles 1953) about the dedication ceremonies of the Sadleir collection I came across a reference in glowing terms to a book of this title, by A. J. Barrowcliffe, published in 1862. Can any reader tell me anything about it or its author?

R. C.

Illustrations File. A footnote to Philip Ward's splendid article. Newspapers often have a whole page of pictures which is worth keeping but hard to store flat. A cheap and easily-made file for them is the largest type of carrier bag from the big multiple shops, with cardboard pasted over both sides to stiffen it. Into this you can put a whole page of newspaper folded once horizontally and not at all vertically. I have one 17½" wide which will take the *Scotsman* and the *Canard Enchaîné* neat and the *Observer* with a little margin-trimming.

A.T.

Horrid Novels. In my collection there is an edition of Peter Will's *Horrid Mysteries; a story from the German of the Marquis of Grosse*, with an introduction by Montague Summers, and published by Robert Holden and Co. in 1927. It is in two volumes, bound in pseudo-yellowback style, lettered at the top of the spine 'The Horrid Novels'. I believe it was Holden's intention to issue all the Northanger novels in this series: can anyone tell me which – if any – of the others did appear?

R. C.

Latin inscription. On an end flyleaf of a thirteenth century copy in my possession of the treatise by Guillaume Perault on the vices and the virtues, there occurs, amongst other additions of the fourteenth century, the following: 'O MORS QUAM DURA QUAM TRISTIA SUNT TUA JURA. NEMO TAM FORTIS QUI RUMPAT VINCULA MORTIS.' Any information as to the source or the author of this piece of melancholy would be very welcome.

B.S.C.

Orthodox liturgy. Dated minuscule Greek manuscripts of the eleventh century are of sufficient importance to justify a note in any journal. I am fortunate in having in my library an exceedingly fine Psalter of the Septuagint version, at the end of which is written, in a hand almost certainly not that of the main scribe, an inscription of which the following is a translation: 'On 9 March in the ninth indication in the year 6594 [= 1086 A.D.] our holy lady received the tonsure.' The year given, of course, is that of the Constantinopolitan era. My manuscript may therefore be said to have been written not later than 1086. I do not know the full significance of the event recorded, and if any reader, learned in the liturgy and rites of the Eastern Church, could enlighten me, I would be most grateful.

B.S.C.

Marbled paper. In *The binding of books* (in the 'Books about books' series issued in 1894 by Routledge) Herbert Horne mentions (p.16) some marbled paper which was made by E. W. Morris of Oxford. Does any reader possess any of this paper, or know where it can be seen?

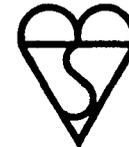
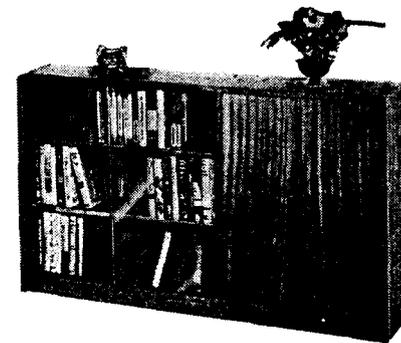
R. C.

Oscar Wilde. In sorting an accumulation of pamphlets I have come across the following which may be of interest to Oscar Wilde bibliographers as it contains on pages 19–24 a bibliography of Wilde's work in English and German: *Die Bibliothek des Bucherfreunds*, 1906, No. 2, Gilhofer & Ranschburg, Wein, 48pp. Available on loan to anyone interested.

J.R.C.

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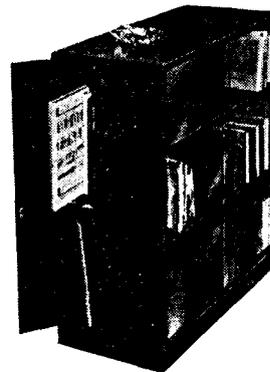


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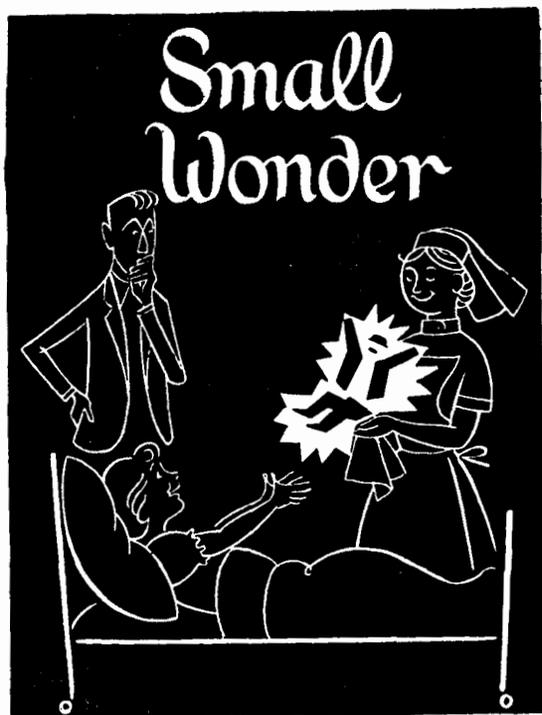


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