

bald MacLeish's stirring five years as librarian is told under the caption, "The Brush of the Comet." Throughout the narrative, quotation heaped upon quotation shows that the library was continually referred to by its librarians and others as the "National Library."

In the second part of the *Report*, the new librarian, Luther H. Evans, takes up the narrative. In vigorous sentences, he describes frankly and forthrightly the events of "fiscal 1946." Special emphasis is laid on the fate of the 1947 budget, described above, and on the appointment of the Library of Congress Planning Committee, composed of eminent scholars and librarians, selected by the librarian to advise him on the proper functions of the library in the future. Other chapters of the *Report* proper deal vividly and always frankly with the "Service of Materials," "Acquisitions Grand Scale," "Preparation of Materials," and "Administration, Personnel, and Finance." These chapters depict the library in action in its service to the Congress and the national government and to libraries and scholars throughout the nation. Students of library administration will be specially interested in the complete organization chart of the library, which shows for each administrative unit the number and grades of its staff members.

The third part of the *Report* is a most unusual administrative document. It is a complete reprint of the "Justification of the Estimates, Library of Congress, Fiscal Year 1947." This the librarian himself de-

scribes as "the most important state paper to issue from the Library since the Report of the Committee on Library Organization in 1802." In cold figures, with cogent supporting statements, this courageous document sets forth in "man-years" and dollars what the present administration of the library thinks will be required to operate the national library at full capacity. The framers of the "Justification" sought to cope fully, for the first time, perhaps, with the needs and problems of the library in all its technical procedures and its many services.

Last of all come the statistical appendices. Even these are interesting. A few illustrations may serve to indicate the complex problems of processing and servicing with which a great library must grapple. Accessions for the year 1946 totalled 4,291,346 "pieces." The national union catalog now comprises 13,718,489 cards. Printed catalog cards to the number of 27,584,211 were sold or distributed. Readers served were 699,740. Nine pages are required merely to list the publications issued by the library.

The reviewer finds no statement in the *Report* itself of the number of "man-years" required to write it. Whatever the correct figure may be, he has no complaint to make. As a librarian and a taxpayer he is quite ready to contribute his mite to the cost of setting down in cold type, for the Congress and the people to see in complete detail, the facts and figures about their national library in 1946 and in the years before.—*Carleton B. Joekel.*

Further Progress in Cataloging

U. S. Library of Congress. Descriptive Cataloging Division. *Rules for Descriptive Cataloging in the Library of Congress*. Preliminary edition. Washington, U. S. Government Printing Office, 1947. 125p.

In the July 1947 issue of *College and Research Libraries*, this reviewer discussed the two significant documents¹ which prepared

the way for the publication of the new *Rules for Descriptive Cataloging*. To any one familiar with these two documents, the rules come as no surprise. They are merely the crystallization—the formal expression—of functions and principles which, in their earlier fluid state, had already been widely discussed and publicized. And while there are doubtlessly rules which in application will need

¹U. S. Library of Congress. Processing Department. *Studies of Descriptive Cataloging, a Report to the Librarian of Congress by the Director of the Processing Department*. Washington, U. S. Government Printing Office, 1946; and U. S. Library of Congress.

Advisory Committee on Descriptive Cataloging to the Librarian of Congress. *Report*. Washington, Library of Congress, 1946.

modification or clarification, the preliminary code is no less excellent than was expected.

There is first a foreword by Herman H. Henkle, which is a brief statement of the background out of which the rules were developed, then a preface by Lucile M. Morsch. Chapter I, called "Introduction," defines descriptive cataloging and reviews the history of the Library of Congress rules. The functions and principles of descriptive cataloging are declared in Chapter II. For this chapter we are indebted to Henkle. The rules relating to separately published monographs are presented in Chapter III. These are, in a sense, the basic rules to which are appended seven additional chapters containing special rules for supplements and indexes; analytical entries; serials; maps, atlases, etc.; music; facsimiles, photocopies, and microfilms; and history cards. The appendices include a glossary which supplements the *A.L.A. Glossary of Library Terms*, rules for capitalization which supplement those given in the U. S. Government Printing Office *Style Manual*, a list of abbreviations, and examples of miscellaneous notes.

As expected, the most striking feature of the new code is its logical structure and method. It is more than a set of rules; it is a theory of descriptive cataloging expressed through rules. Attention is directed first to the functions of description, which are briefly and clearly stated. These are the prescribed objectives, and whether we like them or not, we learn from them what the code proposes to do and can judge it accordingly. Derived from these functions, then, is a group of principles which tell us in a general way how the functions are to be served. Presumably, no principle is valid which does not tangibly serve the prescribed functions. Derived, then, from the principles are rules which detail the application of the principles in typical cases. Presumably, no rule is valid which is not consistent with the stated principles. The principles, not rules, are the determining guides to practice—the criteria by which the cataloger is expected to shape his work.

It is this relationship between functions, principles, and rules, which distinguishes the code. This relationship may be analyzed by looking first at the stated functions of descriptive cataloging and then by tracing their

effect upon the principles and ultimately upon selected rules. If the structure of the code is sound, it should be possible to justify each principle by means of the functions and each rule by means of the principles.

The prescribed functions of descriptive cataloging are:

1. To describe the significant features of the work to be cataloged: (a) to distinguish it from other works and other editions of the work and (b) to characterize its contents and scope, and explain its bibliographical relations

2. To present the data in an entry which will: (a) provide the most intelligible arrangement with the entries for other works and other editions of the work in the catalog and (b) best serve the needs of the users.

That is not a surprising statement, but its implications are important. We are to describe only features which are significant for two purposes, identification and characterization, not those which serve only to supply bibliographical information. Elaborate description for special bibliographical purposes is out. We are, moreover, to concentrate on describing the significant features of the *book*, not the title page as such; and the arrangement of the data in the entry is to be determined not by its position on or absence from the title page, but by the requirements of intelligible filing and according to the needs of readers. Let us see how these functions are translated into principles.

The statement of principles consists of sections dealing with extent of description, the organization of the elements of description, terms of description, description of a perfect copy, documentation of descriptive data, and capitalization, punctuation, and accents. The section on extent of description relates to the first part of the statement of functions—the functions of identification and characterization.

The work is to be described as fully as necessary for the accepted functions, but with an economy of data, words, and expression; no item of description should be given which will duplicate the information of another item, unimportant matter or detail should be curtailed, and unnecessary words and phrases should be omitted.

In other words, we are to omit all matter and repetitions of matter which are not essential

for identifying or characterizing the book. Under the subheading, "Identifying Data," a general account of what is required for identification is presented.

. . . To distinguish one work from another, the title (together with the author's name as heading) is generally sufficient, although in certain circumstances the author statement is also necessary. . . . To distinguish one edition of a work from another of the same work, one or more of the following must be known: (1) number or name of the edition, (2) the name of the editor, illustrator, or translator, (3) the publisher or date of publication, and (4) the name of the series to which the edition belongs, or (5) some one detail of physical description such as the number of pages or volumes in the work.

The only other items of description which can justifiably be admitted to the entry are those which characterize the content and scope of the book or explain its bibliographical relations. These are limited by the principles to data showing the relationship of the work to other works, such as sequels, supplements, and concordances; data showing its relationship to other editions of the same work, such as those issued under different titles or in another language or physical form; and data characterizing the work's content, such as the elaboration of inadequate titles, collation, and the enumeration of contents.

In the subsequent rules, these principles relating to extent of description are applied fairly consistently, the general effect being that of omitting various descriptive details which were formerly regarded as necessary. First, transcription of the title proper, but not of the title page as such, is called for, since it has been demonstrated that title page transcription is not essential for identification or characterization. Ellipses are therefore to be used only to indicate omissions from the title proper, not omissions of data preceding or following the title.

The author statement is to be duplicated in the catalog entry only when necessary to show important variations in forms of names or to supply additional information for purposes of characterization. It will not be regarded as necessary simply to show the form of name which appears on the title page. The imprint statement is to be shortened ex-

cept in one circumstance to a single place and publisher, and publishers' names are to be abridged as much as possible without loss of intelligibility or identification. The exact forms in which they appear on the title page, again, do not matter. To avoid another unnecessary duplication, the publisher is ordinarily to be omitted from the imprint when the work is entered under his name.

The application of these principles to collation also results in simplification. In order to identify the modern book and to characterize its scope and contents, nothing is ordinarily needed but the last numbered page or leaf of each section that is separately numbered. These functions are not served by noting changes from Roman to Arabic numerals with the same sequence, by detailing unimportant, unpagged preliminary matter, or by counting blank leaves. A book with unusually complicated or irregular paging may be described simply as "lv. (various pagings)." Accounting in detail for the completeness of the volume is not an accepted principle, since it is necessary for neither identification nor the characterization of contents.

These examples will suffice to illustrate how the functions and principles relating to extent of description are borne out in the rules. When any problem in this area confronts the cataloger, he is expected to recall these principles and ask two questions: Are the data necessary for identification of the book, that is, for distinguishing it from other books and other editions of the same book; or are they necessary for characterizing the scope and contents of the book or explaining its bibliographical relations? If they are not necessary for these purposes, and these only—they are to be omitted.

The resulting simplifications are in large part already practiced in many libraries, including some of the major research libraries, which have long since abandoned so-called "bibliographical" cataloging. "Bibliographical" cataloging like "bibliographical" bibliography, will now be reserved for early imprints for which detailed title page descriptions and precise collations are still required, as always, in the identification of editions.

The principles relating to the organization of the elements of description in the entry

may now be examined. This section is derived from the second part of the statement of functions; "to present the data in an entry which will (a) provide the most intelligible arrangement with the entries for other works and other editions of the work in the catalog and (b) best serve the needs of the users." Negatively, this means that the arrangement of descriptive items in the entry will not be determined by their position on or absence from the title page. Positively, it means that a regular order, designed primarily to facilitate filing and to aid the reader, is to be followed regardless of the sources of those data. The order prescribed in the principles is the familiar one of "title, subtitle, author statement, edition statement, and imprint; followed in succeeding paragraphs by the collation and series note, and supplementary notes."

Turning then to the rules, one finds, for example, that a subtitle, as well as an edition statement, which precedes the title on the title page is now to be transposed without notice. Edition data, no matter where it comes from is to follow in its regular place. This takes us back to Dorcas Fellows. Editor, illustrator, and translator are similarly to be transposed when necessary to their regular position. Brackets, moreover, are to be used only to set off data supplied from sources other than the title page, not to indicate transpositions of data on the title page. Information regarding dates of publication and collation is also to be integrated. All this means simply (and this is significant) that the reader or filer will no longer have to hunt all over the card for information of a specific kind, but will be able to count on that information being given constantly in the same place on the card. The arrangement will now follow a logical pattern designed to serve a specific purpose, unaffected by the whims of the printer. Again, description of the title page as such is not accepted as a principle which serves the functions of descriptive cataloging.

The principles relating to extent of description and to the organization of the elements of description are clearly and logically derived from the statement of functions, and the corresponding rules are consistently developed from the principles. There are two

sections of the principles, however, which are not so easily traceable to the stated functions. These relate to terms of description and to capitalization, punctuation, and accents. The functions cover what is described and how the data are to be arranged but give no clear direction about the terms and style of expression. The logical structure of the code might therefore be strengthened if a third paragraph were added to the statement of functions—a paragraph reading something like this: to express the data in terms and styles which are: (a) most authentic and accurate and (b) intelligible to the user. The principles relating to terms, capitalization, etc., might then be regrouped under such a heading as terms and style of description.

The principles relating to terms of description in the main paragraph of the entry call, as usual, for authenticity by employing the words of the author or publisher. They call for accuracy by appending corrections of inaccurate statements and for intelligibility by appending explanations of ambiguous statements. In collation and elsewhere, intelligibility is sought by limiting the description to terminology having accepted definitions—that is, terminology familiar to the ordinary reader. The principles relating to capitalization, punctuation, and accents call for authenticity, accuracy, and intelligibility by following the normal, correct usage in the given language. The authority adopted for this usage is the U. S. Government Printing Office *Style Manual*, the only important exception to this manual being that only the first word of the title proper is to be capitalized instead of all the principal words as in normal rhetoric.

In preparing this new code, the Processing Department of the Library of Congress has discharged a great responsibility with imagination, reason, and courage. The code is significant, it is even unique, because of its method. It gives us a valid and systematic procedure for the solution of cataloging problems. It is a way of thinking and a way of working which is distinctly professional in character. We are asked not merely to learn rules and follow precedents but to apply general principles to the construction of a catalog designed to perform definite func-

tions. These principles and functions take us back to the elements of librarianship—the nature of books and the needs of readers. The method was followed in compiling the code, is inherent in its organization, and will be necessary to its most effective use. The method is not new, of course, but it has never before been applied so explicitly to cataloging.

The application of this method has led to a recognition of important changes in one of the elements of librarianship—the nature of books. The principles of title page transcription and detailed collation were and still are necessary for the identification of early editions produced by handicraft methods; but neither is required for the identification of modern editions which, as Seymour Lubetsky has noted, “are issued and reissued under different title pages, for or by different publishers, and at different times and places, from the same original plates; and where the interest of the title page is only that of an introduction to the book.” This fact has been demonstrated objectively, and its recognition has had a profound effect on the new rules. By no longer trying to reflect the organization and, to a lesser extent, the detail of information on the title page, we are enabled to present a more consistent and orderly description of the work itself.

The recognition of changes in the nature of books has led to simplification of the description. It should be noted that the Library of Congress decided to simplify not merely in response to pressure from other libraries, but primarily because it became clear that the functions of descriptive cataloging could be served better by simpler entries. The new cards will be cheaper to make, easier to file, easier to find, and more intelligible to everyone.

That the code will be acceptable to enough

libraries to become a new standard of descriptive cataloging practice is the urgent hope of all those who, like this reviewer, have followed its development enthusiastically and approvingly. If it should prove to be widely acceptable, if it should resolve some of the controversial issues of recent decades, if it should gain the confidence of both catalogers and administrators, the profession will have paid a richly deserved tribute to Mr. Henkle, Miss Morsch, Mr. Lubetsky, and the many others, both within the Library of Congress and without, who were responsible for its preparation.—*Raynard C. Swank.*

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