

tional Nursing Index (v. 1, 1967) prepared by the National Library of Medicine and published by the American Journal of Nursing Company. When *INI* is studied by the historians of the future, Dr. Pings' *Plan* will be often blessed for the information it contains on the personal and administrative interactions between the several nursing associations and the National Library of Medicine.

To criticize Dr. Pings' prose as structurally involved and barren of lightness is valid, but hardly fair; the papers were written to be used as working tools by a committee, not for publication in monographic form.—*Joan Titley, University of Louisville.*

Librarianship in the Developing Countries. By Lester Asheim. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1966. 95p. (66-29774).

Here are ninety-five pages of sage counsel, born of great experience, for the American librarian who is called upon to advise the library industries in developing nations. Constituting the 1966 Windsor Lectures in Librarianship at the University of Illinois, these three brief essays are entitled "Some Parallels and Contrasts," "Some Overarching Problems," and "The Role of Librarianship." They of course draw heavily upon the author's wisdom and the store of understanding of his subject which Dr. Asheim has built up during his five busy years as director of ALA's International Relations Office.

In his first lecture Dr. Asheim warns of the Culture Shock often experienced by extroverted, reader-oriented American librarians when they meet their first case in another society of "the philosophy of primacy of the book over the reader." Seek first within the setting where it is found the reasons for such a philosophy before condemning it out of hand, he urges. Must our rightness, he wonders, be assumed in all situations? Must the way we do things apply universally? Perhaps; but he admonishes that we reply affirmatively only after much searching contemplation of a complex of historical, social, physical, and cultural factors which are often overlooked.

In his second essay, the author points

specifically to some such factors. These include the aristocratic tradition that exists in many developing lands; it often makes untenable such an ideal as universal education. Another influence which is often more important elsewhere than it is in our own society is "deference to age, authority, and the past." Out of these two factors alone comes a range of special problems for library management which are related to colonialism and class privilege, civil service, red tape, and strong attachment to the status quo. There are, of course, economic and psychological factors which must be pondered, including problems of illiteracy and neo-literacy, outmoded teaching method, manpower shortages, and the prestige or the lack of prestige of librarianship, and there are such physical problems as climate, undernourishment, and geography. Again we must ask if *our* answers are valid in view of *these* problems?

The concluding lecture asks how we can help, as well as such harder questions as whether or not anyone really wants the help we offer. What of the strings and implications for the recipient that so often accompany our help? How can we help to educate without encouraging the great "brain drain" from developing countries? Also, he observes, the very existence of United States and other national information libraries in developing countries reinforces "the suspicion that a public library . . . is a special-interest, brain-washing agency rather than an institution of disinterested education." The basic question to which Dr. Asheim's deliberations lead him, however, is "what exactly do we in America have to offer the developing nations that will help them to generate the kinds of libraries, librarians, and library services best suited to their needs and their aspirations?" This is a tough question, but he does well at approaching a whole congeries of provocative answers before he concludes, and his answers have far-reaching significance and implication.

Every librarian heading for an overseas assignment should be denied his visa until he memorizes this little book *verbatim ac litteratim*; it is that important. It will also be darned good reading for those of us who stay home.—*D.K.*