

acid composition of proteins in one chapter is rather inadequate, and the description of some analytical methods, at a time of expansion into the newer chromatographic and biological methods, is not of permanent value. The supplementary index, tabulating the page reference of various types of data for certain amino-acids, peptides and proteins, is extraordinarily useful.

KENNETH BAILEY.

## MANAGEMENT OF A SPECIAL LIBRARY

### Manual of Special Library Technique

With Particular Reference to the Technical Special Libraries of Commercial and Government Establishments. By J. E. Wright. Pp. viii+104. (London: Association of Special Libraries and Information Bureaux, 1945.) 8s. 6d.

THE discussions devoted to the organization and problems of special libraries and information departments have always been among the most popular at the annual conferences of the Association of Special Libraries and Information Bureaux, and the interest which was aroused by the symposium of papers on the organization of technical information services in industry arranged by the Society of Chemical Industry in October 1943 is further evidence that Mr. Wright's book should have a wide appeal. In contrast to Mr. J. L. Thornton's book on special library methods published in 1940, which was largely a survey of university and university college libraries and those of learned societies and institutions, Mr. Wright's book is a manual of practice, and has particular reference to the technical special libraries of commercial and Government establishments. Within its limits it is a thoroughly competent piece of work. The right points are emphasized and although some of its chapters, for example those on indexing and on classification, may be rather too condensed, it should meet a recognized need. While the manual contains little that is new, Mr. Wright has brought together information which a beginner might not easily trace, and such beginners, as the Association has discovered, are by no means rare.

Most libraries maintained by an industrial firm begin as a small collection of books in a manager's office, with some inflow of trade and other periodicals. Chemical and engineering firms and some others may have enough research interest to acquire some bound runs of the periodicals of the learned societies, and sooner or later the expansion of this nucleus requires a separate room. As soon as even only a small separate room is required, someone is needed to handle the periodicals and take care of the collection, and by this time some special abstracting or card-indexing of particular information may have been requested by busy technologists. The part-time amateur or casual attendant thus finds himself or herself blossoming into a full-time works librarian, and however qualified in knowledge of the manufacturing or scientific side of the firm's business, usually lacks, and is ignorant of, any literature of librarianship as a vocation. Mr. Wright's book is a valuable addition to those published remedies for growing pains of which such beginners are often unaware, and the chapters on the inquiry desk and on information service, based on a paper given to the Association's Conference in 1942, should be particularly appreciated.

For a short manual this book is well balanced, but it would have been better not to have brought in so much reference to ephemeral conditions. In what is presumably intended as a standard and permanent manual, matter relating to war hindrances, if included at all, would better have been relegated to an appendix and discarded at the appropriate time from the subsequent and enlarged editions which will doubtless be called for. The section on patent specifications is excellent, but could with advantage be amplified to include information regarding United States, German, Swiss and French Patent Office publications. In regard to questions of library co-operation, however, Mr. Wright might have made the position of the library of an individual firm a little clearer. In practice, firm's libraries may and often do respond generously to requests for assistance, but such requests are considered on their merits; and it is not clear why Mr. Wright suggests that it is not possible to co-operate in one matter while refusing to co-operate in others. The point is that a firm's library, by its constitution and purpose, cannot offer service outside in the way that a library under public auspices, such as a university library or a Government library, might be expected to do, and this circumstance has to be kept carefully in mind in formulating any large schemes of library co-operation.

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## MILK HYGIENE

### Bacteria in Relation to the Milk Supply

Third Edition. By G. H. Chalmers. Pp. vii+272. (London: Edward Arnold and Co., 1945.) 8s. 6d. net.

THE scope of this book has now been clearly defined by this third edition. The book in its present form will without doubt find its greatest value in the hands of students of the methods of milk production, processing and distribution, who require some knowledge of elementary bacteriology. As such the book is extremely valuable, since it is the only modern British text on the subject of hygiene applied to milk handling in all its stages. The section on the control of dairy plant is particularly well done, and collects together all the subject-matter otherwise scattered throughout various text-books, research papers and Government pamphlets.

It must be understood, however, that the book is in no way a text-book of bacteriology, and serious students of dairy bacteriology cannot rely on this volume for any great help in their subject apart from the particular aspects of the hygienic control of production and processing methods and plant. From the systematic point of view it is to be regretted that the existing confusion over nomenclature is increased by such terms as *B. coli*, *B. welchii*, *B. subtilis*, *B. tuberculosis* and *B. cyanogenes*, organisms which, by usual custom, represent five separate genera. It is also perhaps a pity that there is, in the technique of the plate count and coliform test, slight deviations in details from those published by the Ministry of Health. Lack of uniformity in such details renders more difficult the reproducibility of tests already difficult to reproduce.

One further small point: the value of this generally recommended book would be greatly enhanced by the addition of more references to work mentioned in the text.