sums ever paid for poetical composition, for a six-line eulogy on Venice?

Books ... includes sections on bookmaking, the physical book, the enemies of books, and the love of books. There is a selective bibliography in addition to subject and author indexes. The illustrations are plentiful, but only moderately effective (particularly those in colour). One would hope that Gerald Donaldson profits well with this effort; for, as he quotes Dr. Johnson, 'No man but a blockhead ever wrote, except for money.'

REVIEW EDITOR

Bookman's Price Index: A Guide to the Values of Rare and Other Out-of-Print Books. [By] Daniel F. McGrath. Detroit: Gale Research Co. annual, cloth, $78.00 ISSN 0068-0141

Bookman's Price Index is an annual publication that lists entries from the catalogues of out-of-print and antiquarian dealers. The volume examined covered the catalogues of some seventy dealers, mostly American, but including nineteen in the British Isles, two in Switzerland, and four in Canada—Dora Hood, October Books (now D. & E. Lake), Old Author's Farm, and Wolfe—a list that could bear improvement.

The entries are arranged alphabetically by author, personal or corporate, with pseudonyms indicated. Each entry includes the author, title, and place and date of publication, a description of the item or copy, the dealer's name and his catalogue and item number, the date of the catalogue, and the price asked. The descriptions are not quoted verbatim, but omit or condense 'details not essential to establishing condition or determining price.' According to the publisher, some 35,000 titles were included in the volume under review. The full names and addresses of the dealers are given at the front of the publication.

This work has become a standard tool for librarians, antiquarian booksellers, and those interested in the current value of rare and out-of-print books. It is of particular interest in Canada because of the lack of any other recent source for such prices. For this reason, it would be good to have more Canadian dealers represented in BPI. As with all such listings, it is well to keep in mind that these are the prices asked, but not necessarily received. Also, as the publisher warns, 'An individual dealer's evaluation of a book may not represent a professional consensus.'

WILLIAM F.E. MORLEY
(Mr. Morley is Curator of Special Collections at the Douglas Library, Queen's University, and former Review Editor of the BSC Papers.)

Directory of Special Libraries and Information Centers ...

Volume one of this three-volume set (each is marketed individually) is arranged alphabetically by institution. Descriptions for libraries in the United States and Canada are listed separately: the U.S. section numbers 13,863 special libraries and archives; the Canada section includes 1,792 Canadian repositories. The coverage is
extremely broad, ranging from departmental subject collections in college, university, and public libraries to the technical and business information centers of governments and industries.

The entries are well organized, clear, and concise, with a possible twenty-five 'points of information,' including staff names and telephone numbers, as well as a fairly detailed description of holdings. The subject index provides basic subject access and analysis to the listings and is, quite usefully, broken down geographically. While not attaining as high a level of subject refinement as Lee Ash's *Subject Collections* (5th ed., New York: R.R. Bowker, 1978), in all other respects, especially design and organization, the Youngs' massive enterprise is far superior. It is highly recommended for the quick reference area of any research library or archive, or for the library of the professional researcher.

It is unfortunate that volume two in this series, *Geographical and Personnel Indexes* ($125.00), could not be amalgamated with volume one; a completely geographical approach to holdings is exceedingly useful. Volume three is entitled *New Special Libraries* and retails for $135.00.

REVIEW EDITOR


In June 1980 the first fruits of Canada’s ambitious RETRO project appeared on the market in COM microfiche. (RETO is the code-name by which the project is better known and which is more widely used than its formal name, *Canadiana 1867-1900, Monographs.* The quarterly issues of fiche each contain a register of all entries for the period, together with a set of indexes (A: author/title; B: chronological by year of publication; C: publisher/printer; D: place of publication/printing; and, E: subject), which cumulate and supersede the indexes of the previous issue. The last quarterly set was expected to appear by the end of 1981, but late 1982 would now seem a more realistic date for its completion. The final quarterly issue is then to be superseded by one last re-cumulation of everything – register and indexes. It is possible that regular up-dates will be prepared thereafter, as missing items are discovered and added to the data base or the criteria for entries are later altered.

Certainly, issuing the work in less costly microfiche is more sensible than producing it in that ‘once and for all’ hard copy, and it also helps overcome that bugbear of all bibliographers – the inevitability that, however carefully compiled, the publication will contain errors and omissions for which the issuing of later hard copy supplements provides only a partial (and annoying) answer.

The gestation period for this project has been a long one, going back to 1953, and it is a pity that the National Library did not wait just a little longer until some of the ‘bugs’ were eliminated from the data base before presenting the first fiche to an eagerly awaiting public, for then the credibility of the output would have been greatly enhanced. As it is, the project has already gained a rather bad name with many users that will be hard to live down.

The COM fiches (42x reduction) are produced from machine-readable records stored