Throughout, the volume is wonderfully illustrated, with pictures of books by and about Twain, facsimiles of his letters, and some seventy pictures of Twain himself; of these, about half are relatively unfamiliar or previously unpublished. The illustrations help account for the high price of the book, and they justify it. McBride has gone off the usual path to give us a book whose scope may raise objections from some Twainers, but all of us will find a great deal of value, interest, and pleasure in it as well.

THOMAS A. TENNEY
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This book is a study of the Irish and Irish-American reprint trade between 1750 and 1820. A portion of the work investigates reprints of eight major eighteenth-century 'literary' authors, selected because their works appear in Irish editions in 203 private libraries in Ireland. There are, however, frequent discussions of original material, such as magazines and newspapers issued by the booksellers of the reprint trade.

Cole's main interest is the publishing history of the 101 booksellers with hands in both Irish and American reprint businesses. He is often able to give edition counts, contemporary reviews, the number of times a work was borrowed from a circulating library, and to note a book's presence in Dumfries, Virginia on 2 January 1796. The details surrounding the publishing efforts of these Irish and Irish-American booksellers is truly impressive.

Cole uses such detail to show that Irishmen ignored original works in order to reprint London editions. Because the booksellers paid no copyright fees to the authors, the editions were frequently half the cost of the London originals. The cheaper editions sold well in Ireland, less well in England because of laws set up to quell them, and very well in America. When the English suppressed Irish reprints with importation laws and eventually by union to form the United Kingdom, the Irish book trade simply moved to America. This was bad for Ireland, but good for the new United States. The English did not realize that the reprint business, far from causing them harm, was a powerful aid because the authors were made better known, and this publicity must naturally have spurred the sale of the more expensive London editions.

One senses Cole's detective work - the love of the hunt, the glory of the discovery of that tiny shop in Dumfries, Virginia. One senses Cole's respect for these booksellers, who far from seeing themselves as pirates, rather stood proud as patriots, fostering the book trade first in Ireland, and later in the United States. Beneath all this
mass of detail is adventure, the story of human struggle, the success of daring entre-
preneurs.

Cole gives us none of it. Instead he creates a text which is hiding, somewhere
within it, a list of booksellers, works, edition counts, circulation points, and cus-
toms duty stamps. He spends about a third of his text telling us what he is going to
tell us, in some detail, or what he has already said. He evolves redundant expressions
and redundant patterns for explaining publication. Each time, for instance, that he
mentions Matthew Carey [65 times by count] he reminds us that Carey moved from
Ireland to Philadelphia. It is impossible to ignore the ‘list quality’ of Cole’s work.
One would rather have him provide more lists, and less pretense that there is a story
with characters.

Cole writes in page-long paragraphs of the haystack variety: no topic sentence,
no development, no conclusion. Sentences have few commas, so that the material
has to be reread for sense. Although Cole is not a Thomas Carlyle, I feel that it must
be mainly the fault of the publisher that an unedited text reaches the binding stage.
Cole had no sympathetic editor, and he seems not to have had a proofreader either.
The first spelling error occurs on the verso of the title page in the bibliographical
data, but the highpoint is reached when Cole tells us, again, that Patrick Byrne is
‘the quintessential Dublin-Philadelphia bookseller,’ and the phrase is repeated by a
type-setting error from the bottom of one page to the top of the next.

There are several valuable tables in Cole’s work. One wishes for more. Some of
the edition lists are hidden in paragraph form in the chapters, and the copies exam-
ined are in the notes. A table, clearly relating this material, would be interesting,
and more easily interpreted. There is a detailed index, but one arranged with several
very long sets of sub-entries.

Cole is most certainly an admirable scholar. He has made a valuable contribu-
tion in his book to understanding the relationship between the Irish and the Irish-
American book trade, and one can only feel that he deserved better from his publish-
ers.

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0-9907977-52-9.

The NSTC, as it is commonly known to distinguish it from STC, Wing, and ESTC, com-
menced publication in 1984. Its intention is to provide a listing of all British books
published between 1801 and 1918. ‘British books’ are understood to include all
books published in Britain, the colonies, and the USA; all books in English wherever
published; and all translations from English. In the preface to volume one of the
First Series [1801-1815] the late John Jolliffe, Bodley’s Librarian and chairman of the
NSTC Board, stated that NSTC was ‘intended for the use of almost all students of