The book is not without other flaws. At times Kahan seems overwhelmed by his sources. There are several long, awkward paraphrases of correspondence, and occasionally he gets tangled in excessive and irrelevant details. From time to time I had difficulty following the thread of the narrative. Kahan could also have done a better job of explaining the admittedly Byzantine financial transactions related to the capitalization of the various Linotype companies. I am probably not the only reader who will miss the significant facts in Kahan's confusing accounts. Finally, though Kahan furnishes an excellent technical description of the various Linotype machines, its value would have been enhanced by more diagrams and illustrations.

Despite these complaints, *Ottmar Mergenthaler: The Man and his Machine* is an engaging contribution to our knowledge of a pivotal development in printing technology. In addition to the main text, Kahan includes a useful glossary and bibliography as well as capsule biographies of many of Mergenthaler's associates. While Canadian readers might prefer more information on the situation in Canada, Kahan does provide an account of the formation of the British Linotype Co. Overall, Kahan's book provides a useful complement to Schlesinger's edition of *The Biography of Ottmar Mergenthaler*.

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Joseph Rosenblum. *Practice to Deceive: The Amazing Stories of Literary Forgery's Most Notorious Practitioners*. New Castle, Del.: Oak Knoll Press, 2000. xx, 394 pp.; \$39.95 (cloth). ISBN 1-58456-010-X.

Forgery is as ineluctably fascinating as a naked body or a train wreck. It seems highly likely that most forgers want to fail—that is, to be unmasked—because paradoxically only by failing does a forger gain renown. Doubtless for every William Henry Ireland who has been steered into the history books by a dedicated cicerone like Edmond Malone, there are others whose 'talents,' for whatever reason, have remained secret; and a genius, even for criminality, known to none but the perpetrator, must yield an unsatisfying sort of pleasure, despite its appreciable effect of keeping a person out of jail or at least free from obloquy.

Almost everything conceivably of any value has been forged, as the wonderful 1990 British Museum exhibition "Fake?" extensively demonstrated. In the specific field of bibliography widely construed, texts, manuscripts, books, bindings, dust-jackets, type, etc., have all to greater or lesser degree attracted the attention of forgers. (I am hard pressed to think of any examples of forged paper, apart from the special case of currency, but there must surely be some.) As early as 1907, J.A. Farrer (1849-1925) published the classic account of some of the most famous forgers in his still highly important *Literary Forgery*, a book, alas, with no list of sources but nevertheless replete with scholarly details not discoverable elsewhere. (Farrer was an interesting man who wrote many other books on subjects ranging from Adam Smith to Zululand.) Farrer died before Carter and Pollard publicly disclosed the Wise and Forman forgeries, but he did write about a number of the same literary criminals dealt with by Joseph Rosenblum in his new book, *Practice to Deceive*. (Although my advice may be unwelcome to some and perhaps offensive to others, I do think that authors should not dedicate their books to their cats, as Rosenblum has done. It tends to prejudice the reader at an especially prospective and susceptible moment.)

In 1998, Rosenblum published a translation of a contemporary account of Vrain-Denis Lucas, the extraordinary forger of letters, under the title *The Prince of Forgers*, and earlier he contributed an essay on Thomas James Wise to a 1997 volume of the *Dictionary of Literary Biography* devoted to bibliographers. (The chapter on Wise in the book under review is a revised version of that essay.) He has, therefore, a demonstrated interest in the subject of forgery. In *Practice to Deceive*, he devotes chapters to nine forgers of texts, books, and manuscripts: George Psalmanazar, James Macpherson, Thomas Chatterton, William Henry Ireland, John Payne Collier, George Gordon Byron, Vrain-Denis Lucas, T.J. Wise, and Mark Hofmann. All of these men are, of course, well known, and all have been much written about. Hofmann, who also murdered two people, is still alive at age 46, and since 1988 he has been serving a life sentence without parole in a prison in Utah.

Rosenblum's book is well documented, but it is not a work of original scholarship. He has combed the extensive literature on his nine forgers and has read the primary documents—Psalmanazar's and Ireland's memoirs, Chatterton's and Macpherson's poetry and so on—and his stories are based on this reading of the primary sources as well as on what others have written. He is a good gatherer

and he writes well enough, and the reader who has only a passing knowledge of the subject will be edified and entertained. The specialist will find little new, if anything, but then the book is not intended for specialists. I caught a few errors, or instances of what is asserted as fact seeming unlikely. Rosenblum states on p. 261, for example, that there are "only about a dozen copies" extant of Robert Browning's first book, *Pauline* (1833). I have worked in three academic libraries, none of which particularly specialized in Georgian and Victorian poetry, and two of them owned copies of *Pauline*. There are, in any case, fourteen copies recorded in OCLC, not including McGill's or the Ashley Library copy at the British Library. The copy at the Clark Library was acquired from Rosenbach in 1924, and even then it was described as one of eighteen known copies. If we assume that there are at least a few copies in private collections, two dozen copies seems a more likely estimate for the survival rate of this book. The sector of the bibliophilic world that has Locker-Lampson and especially Wise at its point of origin is rife with these sorts of figures—only two copies of this book survive, only one copy of that book survives—and they rarely stand up to close scrutiny.

Practice to Deceive is exactly what it was meant to be: a diverting read for anyone interested in books. It would have benefited from closer proofreading. The names of Descartes, Hofmann, and Buxton Forman are spelled wrong on occasion, the last on the rear panel of the dust-jacket, and Rosenblum's own book, *The Prince of Forgers*, lacks the "The" in the list of his books on p. [ii]. The book is amply documented, however, and it has a useful bibliography of sources at the end.

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William Andrews Clarke Memorial Library, UCLA

Shlain, Leonard. *The Alphabet Versus the Goddess: The Conflict between Word and Image*. New York: Viking-Penguin, 1998. xiv, 464 pp.; \$20.99 US (paper). ISBN 0 14 01.9601 3.

Bibliographers of an earlier generation were largely insulated from meta-history. The Anglo-American descriptive, analytical, textual, and historical bibliographical traditions were primarily focused upon specific instances and hard-won physical evidence. Rarely did large-