

32), and later writes:

I had occasion to take a bath today, which was far from pleasant under the circumstances. We were on quite thin ice and Mr Hamilton, who was walking ahead, called to me to ask my opinion on a spot which he had noticed ahead and which did not seem safe to him. I walked forward a few paces trying the ice with a pike, when suddenly I disappeared from Hamilton's sight. He had just time to throw himself backwards to avoid following me in my submarine excursion. (page 59)

One final example of de Bray's pleasantly dry understatement warrants comments. Describing the busy scene of activity as the men prepared to stage one of the theatrical performances that amused them during the long Arctic winters, de Bray tersely remarks that at '4 o'clock, after a hurried dinner, everyone got busy dressing; the ladies shaved and put on their wigs and hair pieces' (page 81). With a pleasing sense of style, de Bray knows when he has said exactly the right amount — 'the ladies shaved,' and no more. Such an artistic sense is often sadly missing in the many naval accounts of Arctic exploration, and de Bray's more subtle voice is much welcomed.

As one has come to expect from William Barr, *A Frenchman in search of Franklin* includes a complete 'Translator's introduction' and 'Postscript' that assist the reader in understanding the larger context into which this document fits. Barr also describes the evolution of the specific text from which his translation is made (Barr works from a polished draft in which the experience is 'recollected in tranquillity' and, consequently, lacks some of the immediacy of a daily record) and provides useful biographical information about de Bray himself. In addition to the 63 pages of notes, Barr includes a substantial bibliography, four appendices, and a useful index. The production level of the book is generally high, with good illustrations and maps and extremely few printer's errors. Any aficionado of this period of Arctic history will be pleased with Barr's new book. (Richard C. Davis, The Calgary Institute for the Humanities, The University of Calgary, 2500 University Drive NW, Calgary, Alberta T2N 1N4, Canada.)

THE NORTHEAST PASSAGE: FROM THE VIKINGS TO NORDENSKIÖLD. Nils-Erik Raurala (Editor). 1992. Helsinki: John Nurminen Foundation and the Helsinki University Library. 287 p, illustrated, hard cover. ISBN 952-9745-02-8. FIM 275.

This superbly produced volume somewhat belies its title. Adolf Erik Nordenskiöld, the first man to navigate the Northeast Passage, is the peg on which it hangs, but the text ranges far beyond the Northeast Passage. It might be more accurate to call it simply a history of Arctic exploration, but there was a good reason to bring in the distinguished name of Nordenskiöld, because the story does centre round that impressive figure and his manifold achievements in more ways than one. This great scholar-explorer of the late nineteenth century assembled a very large collection of relevant objects — not just books and papers,

but pictures, artefacts, scientific specimens — and these are in the care of the University Library at Helsinki (Nordenskiöld was a so-called Finlander, born in Finland but by temperament and personal predilection a Swede). In 1992 an exhibition was arranged that sought to draw public attention to this collection, and this book is in effect a guide to the exhibition. It is what may be described as 'popular-scholarly': easily readable, but with enough of the apparatus of scholarship to allow the non-specialist to identify the source of important statements and the whereabouts of important objects. There are a great many illustrations, and they constitute the chief glory of the book. But it is not the sort of catalogue the visitor carries around with him, for it weighs two kilos. It will give pleasure and instruction long after the exhibition has ended (which it now has).

The table of contents shows the scope of the book. Edwin Okhuizen, a historian at the University of Utrecht, covers the early history from the fifteenth to the nineteenth centuries. As befits a Dutchman, he covers ground of which other western historians know little. Esko Häkli, director of the Helsinki University Library, has a special interest in the mapping of Spitsbergen, as well as in charting its waters. Cristoffer Ericsson is the man for how people crossed Atlantic waters under sail, whether whaling, fishing, or exploring, and at whatever period. Juha Nurminen, in addition (one supposes) to giving generous financial support to the venture, has a particular interest in navigational techniques in the pre-radio age. There follow three articles directly related to the collection: Nurminen collects and displays pictures taken during the great voyage of *Vega* through the Northeast Passage in 1878–1879; Wilhelm Odelberg, chief librarian of Stockholm University, discusses articles of material culture, including archival material that he ferreted out; and Leena Pärssinen, of the Helsinki University Library, shows more of this from the 'other place.'

Just as was the case with Nordenskiöld's own collection, there is a strong emphasis on maps. The map-oriented reader will be aware of Nordenskiöld's 'Facsimile-atlas' (1899), in which he brought together reproductions of a large number of the most important, and most attractive, maps illustrating European history. The present volume does something of the same thing. It is only possible to attempt this if the highest standard of colour printing is attained, and this is the case. A credit is quite rightly given to the type of paper used and its maker.

As has been indicated already, the subject matter of the book wanders rather far from the Northeast Passage of the title. The reader may feel that he is being led away from his expected subject, but perhaps will not mind much if he finds himself in the Northwest Passage. But if he discovers he is following Darwin's track in *Beagle*, he may get restless. The difficulty arises from the character of the book — a combination of scholarly contributions to the history of Arctic exploration with a detailed guide to a rich and varied collection of artefacts.

The book is excellent in many ways: most of all, perhaps, in physical attributes such as materials used and quality of production. But, of course, it is not perfect. Details one would like to see corrected, if ever a second edition were contemplated, are: deletion of hyphens in odd places (nort-h, the-se); slightly over-colloquial English ('pretty good,' but this is exceptional — the quality of English is in general excellent); some duplication (the story of Nelson and the bear); some hard-to-recognise place-names (Chatany for Khatanga); the index is not analytical (that is, the searcher for some particular incident involving Nordenskiöld must sift through 94 page references); the printing of superscript numbers to indicate notes is often very faint; Prince Krapotkin may be pronounced that way, but it would be happier to use the normal form Kropotkin; and the English explorer Palliser's first name was John, not Elling.

These are very small points, and would not be worth mentioning at all if the general standard were not so high. There is no disputing that this is a very special book. If one had a rich uncle, one might even be persuaded that the price is acceptable. (Terence Armstrong, Scott Polar Research Institute, University of Cambridge, Lensfield Road, Cambridge CB2 1ER.)

THE ANTARCTIC. Janice Meadows, William Mills, and H.G.R. King (Compilers). 1994. Oxford, Santa Barbara, and Toronto: Clio Press (World Bibliographical Series volume 171). xxvi + 383 p, illustrated, hard cover. ISBN 1-85109-121-1. £57.95.

Literature dealing with the Antarctic is well documented in comprehensive, ongoing bibliographies, namely *Polar and Glaciological Abstracts* and *Antarctic Bibliography*. One might justly wonder, therefore, why there should be a need for another bibliographic volume on the subject. The answer becomes obvious as soon as one opens the book: while bibliographies striving for completeness overwhelm the reader with tens of thousands of citations annually, this selective bibliography cites a manageable amount (1195 items) of carefully chosen, representative literature. The benefit derives from the compilers' value judgments. All three compilers are specialists in Antarctic literature as well as in bibliographic practices, a fact reflected in the soundness of their selections and presentation.

While being selective in its choice of works to be cited, this bibliography is also comprehensive as far as subject coverage is concerned. The pattern of subject arrangement loosely follows that of other volumes of the World Bibliographical Series (of which this is volume 171), modified to accommodate the peculiar conditions of a continent without permanent inhabitants, and the surrounding ocean and islands.

The compilers' introduction serves to put the geography of the region, the history of its exploration, and related subjects into proper perspective. It also traces the development of Antarctic bibliography and explains the methodology followed in compiling this volume. This excel-

lent introduction could almost serve as an 'executive summary,' containing the essence of the material set forth in the body of the bibliography. By reading this introduction alone, the proverbial 'tired businessman' would be able to form a fair idea of the region.

The material in the bibliography itself is grouped under the following main headings: the Antarctic region in general; geography; flora and fauna; the Southern Ocean; development of Antarctic science; history; biographies; international relations and geopolitics; conservation and environmental management; economic resources and development; science and policy; logistics, expeditions, planning, and survival; medicine and psychology; living in the Antarctic; the arts; libraries, museums, archives, and research institutions; periodicals and series; and bibliographies. Several sections are further sub-divided. For example, the one on geography is divided into sub-sections on geology and geophysics; glaciology; meteorology and climatology; upper atmospheric sciences and astrophysics; maps, charts, and atlases; and gazetteers; and the section on history is divided into sub-sections on general accounts; sealing and whaling; voyages and expeditions; historic huts and monuments; and so forth.

Scientific literature (physical, biological, and earth sciences) is well represented in the bibliography: more so than is usual in the series. Still, considering the wealth of such literature in the last few decades, one could have wished for even more thorough coverage. This was made difficult by the fact that much of the best scientific writing is in the form of journal articles. To cite scores of such articles would have thrown the listings into undesirable imbalance. Thus the reader is left without a realization of how large the amount of literature published in periodicals really is. A way around this was found by including a section on periodicals and series. This section is exhaustive in respect of publications devoted entirely or predominantly to the Antarctic. Some of these are rather trivial or of local interest only. It might have been more useful to omit a number of these titles and instead include several major scientific journals that do not specialize in Antarctic literature but include a wealth of literature both in quantity and quality. Listing of such major titles as *Nature*, *Science*, *Journal of Geophysical Research*, *New Zealand Journal of Geography and Geophysics*, *Marine Geology*, *Deep-Sea Research*, *Earth and Planetary Science Letters*, and perhaps others could (with the proper annotations) have alerted the technically inclined user to the existence of these less obvious sources of information.

The section on libraries, museums, archives, and research institutions, with only eight entries, appears to be somewhat too selective. The compilers were aware of this: they state (in the Introduction) that 'the small sample noted here complements the material found in the sections on science programmes and periodicals.' It might have been helpful to offer cross-references to the appropriate items in those two sections. In addition, reports on the International Antarctic Meteorological Research Centre (Melbourne),