

different from that postulated by Woodward. Several papers discuss improvements in the refereeing system, either as their main subject or incidentally. The editor of *Current Anthropology* uses 20 to 50 referees for each paper, and the editor of the *Mental Health Journal* proposes to select them by computer. M. Gordon, of the Primary Communications Research Centre, University of Leicester, provides a thoughtful paper on unconscious referee bias; he concludes that the probability of a favourable report depends as much on the status of the author's institution as on the contents of his paper, and he confirms with a high degree of statistical significance that there are other human failings that an experienced editor could have predicted and would have allowed for. [The data are not entirely unambiguous; they could be rearranged to show that papers from high-status institutions are, on the average, of higher quality than those from low-status institutions – a proposition that seems not unlikely *a priori*.] Thirteen papers deal with 'Standards and Style'; they indicate that the journals of the Union are one jump ahead of the game for the moment.

Eight papers deal with the economics and organization of scientific publishing. Anders Kylin describes the study by the committee of the West European Science Research Councils of the possible rationalization of publication in his particular field (plant physiology). The interesting point is that he feels it necessary to postulate that the journal would contribute the appropriate fraction of the editor's full salary (one-quarter to three-quarters, depending on the amount of time involved) to the university or other institution to which the editor is attached, instead of expecting a large hidden subsidy from the institution in return for a token honorarium paid to the editor. E. H. Hare, of the *British Journal of Psychiatry*, describes the progress of its finances since he took it over a few years ago. In the early 1970's the deficit reached alarming proportions and, amusingly, was found to result to a great extent from carrying advertisements. The cost of printing these, plus the extra postage on the weight that they added to the Journal, far outweighed the advertising revenue.

The conference generated considerable enthusiasm among the editors who participated in it, and an international association of scientific editors has since been formed; this organization is arranging a 'second' international conference. Was the publication of the proceedings of the first justified? The answer must be a qualified 'yes'. There is much in the book that would be useful to a new, or even to an experienced, editor, but there is also much that simply gets in the way. Some really tough pruning, or even rejection, on the part of the editor would have made a more useful publication, but obviously those whose papers were eliminated would have taken a poor view of the organization resulting from the conference.

A. J. C. WILSON

*Department of Physics
University of Birmingham
Birmingham B15 2TT
England*

Acta Cryst. (1979). B35, 2286

Books Received

The following books have been received by the Editor. Brief and generally uncritical notices are given of works of marginal crystallographic interest; occasionally a book of fundamental interest is included under this heading because of difficulty in finding a suitable reviewer without great delay.

Glass, 1977. Vols. I and II. Edited by J. Götz. Pp. 423 and 614. Amsterdam: North-Holland, 1977. Price: Vol. I, Dfl 160.00; Vol. II, Dfl. 240.00; Vols. I and II together, Dfl 330.00. A review of these books, by A. K. Chaudhuri, has been published in the August issue of *Journal of Applied Crystallography*, page 428.