

NORTH CAROLINA LIBRARIES

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THE EDITOR RECOMMENDS

An intimate story on a subject close to every librarian's heart is told in a new book published by the University of Minnesota Press, "The H. W. Wilson Company; Half a Century of Bibliographic Publishing," (\$3.00) by John Lawler. As every librarian knows, the great basic library services and indexes published by the Wilson company are indispensable working tools of the modern library.

But even to most librarians, the story behind such Wilson reference works as the Cumulative Book Index, the Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature and the Book Review Digest is little known.

The cards and pages of these catalogs leap to life as John Lawler tells in vivid narrative how they came to be, what they are, and what manner of people make them. In his book, the author takes the reader on a journey, first back to the 1880's when Halsey W. Wilson's "bibliographic urge" was germinating in a small venture at the University of Minnesota, then through the anecdotal years of development of his unique idea, and finally into the vast operation that is the Wilson firm today.

Lawler, an experienced newspaperman, imparts revealing detail with a keen reporter's eye. Thus he describes how the indexes are made up, step by step, with specific examples, following single listings through the maze of processing. He explains how classifications and subject headings are evolved through careful deliberation. The basis and workings of the service charge plan are outlined clearly.