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Nemesis

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The Janus-Like Nemesis

by Chuck Hamaker (LSU)

As the new year begins, it is time to be Janus-like and look both forward and backward. It has been a year of amazing changes in both the world and in library land. Perhaps the biggest news of the year for Scholarly publishing was the sale of Pergamon Press to Elsevier. The 1st and 3rd largest publishers of STM material joined to form a super-conglomerate dedicated to the proposition that quality science publishing demands quality pricing and, of course, price increases. Elsevier distribution arrangements, as often as takeovers of journals, are surefire signs of larger dollar amounts for publications. From a correspondent at U.T. Austin comes the example of the Pesticide Society of Japan, whose subscription rate for its *Journal of Pesticide Science* was \$69 for nonmembers in 1991, and distributed by JPT in 1991. For 1992, Elsevier will be distributing the title at the new improved price of \$179.00. What's good for the goose isn't always good for the gander.

A recent example of middle-man activities includes Faxon's new program with six Soviet publishers which will have the Faxon Fulfillment Center receiving claims for damaged or missing issues for Faxon clients, obtaining the claimed issue from the publisher and then the FFC will: "immediately reproduce the issue needed and mail directly to the client without the usual delay experienced when dealing with both an agency and a publisher for claim fulfillment." (from the Winter, 1991, v.2, no. 4, issue of *The Faxon Report*.) I recommend Faxon ask customers if a "reproduced" issue is sufficient for replacing a missing issue, before initiating the service. Some of us don't much like photocopies. Faxon also ran a seminar at IFLA on the business of publishing. About 50 publishers attended and heard Joel H. Baron, Jan Willem Dijkstra, who is director of sales for Elsevier Science Publishers and Joe

Sollitto, manager of Soviet information for Faxon. Sollitto estimated the market for Soviet journals in the West as having a potential of \$25-30 million, "compared to the present actual market of \$3-4 million." To increase their "market share" Sollitto told the publishers they had to overcome some obstacles: "most publications available only in Russian; slow delivery of materials; and inability of subscribers to get replacement issues. Sollitto then explained how a subscription agent could help Soviet publishers address these issues." (see p. 6 of the Winter *Faxon Report*). My only question—where's all that market, anyway?

Speaking of which, one of the most interesting developments of the last year or so is how good many of the company based newsletters have become. *Faxon Report* has become must reading for me, and I suspect many others. Some issues, like the present one, are extremely competent in explaining in terms I understand, very technical issues. The lead article discusses "Dialing in to CD-ROMs." Not only us generalist librarians, but I suspect many publishers, need to read that article apparently written by the editors of the newsletter.

Other newsletters from vendors that have become "must" readings include the wonderful product from Yankee Book Peddler, *Dialogue: The Business of Publishing*, which contains great articles and lots of useful trade information. I know these are marketing tools, but boy are they good. Even if you aren't a Yankee customer, you should try to get on the mailing list—it's too good to miss. It is written and edited by Helmut Schwarzer, Director of Publisher Relations for Yankee Book Peddler. Phone: 800-258-3774.

And Arly Allen's *Journal Promotion Series*, which has a November/

December issue entitled "Your Journal and Survival in the 1990's" consistently has articles on the technical end of journal production and sales and distribution that are just too good to be kept a secret. Try to get on Arly's mailing list: call him or John Breithaupt or Gene Kean at (800) 627-0629. The little Lawrence Kansas company ain't so little no more. The major article in the November/December issue is by Raelly Cole, managing editor of *Limnology and Oceanography* entitled "Staying Afloat in the '90's (or How to Walk on Water)." One of the problems pointed out: over-referencing by authors who haven't even read what they cite. She notes, "Long ago I printed (a reference) that had the correct author and title, but the wrong journal, volume and pages. I still see that same incorrect reference cited elsewhere—certain authors are reading their references off someone else's reference list and not bothering with the original." I wonder how many Inter Library Loan requests have been made based on that original incorrect citation?

And if I were Elsevier, I'd try to get Arly to trade what he does for what Elsevier does, an in-house publication that really provides a fascinating look at what really goes on, what the different "branches" of the house do, an insiders "in-side" that could be one of the best PR tools Elsevier ever created—mostly because it is so clearly not designed as external PR. Issues and activities, history and technology blend with pictures of people who were only names. Called, I believe, *Elsevier Science World* the two issues I've seen have really been dynamite. They told me more about Elsevier and how it works than any conversation I've ever had with any Elsevier rep—and those folks are good at what they do. Please John, mail me a copy every time it comes out! I'd rather have that than all the multiple copies of the

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And We Weren't There

by Nat Bodian (Publishing Consultant)

Fictionalized Account of Japanese Attack on U.S. Published 33 Years Before Pearl Harbor

The Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941 was not the first time Americans as a nation were given to thinking about a Japanese attack on U.S. territory. The Baker & Taylor Company had published a novel based on a Japanese attack against the U.S. some 33 years earlier.

It happened in 1908 when The Baker & Taylor Company was both an active publisher of current interest books and a wholesale book distributor.

From its quarters at 33-37 East 17th Street in New York City, on the north side of Union Square, Baker & Taylor copyrighted and subsequently published in the United States a German work, *Bonzai*, — an illustrated novel about an attack and invasion of the United States west coast by the Japanese fleet with the cooperation of a Japanese “fifth column” already positioned in this country.

That same year, public concern about the growing influx of migrants from Japan gave rise to talk about the “yellow peril.” President Theodore Roosevelt had earlier signed an order excluding Japanese laborers from future emigration to the U.S.

The Baker & Taylor book had the Americans triumphing at its end, closing dramatically with the italicized statement, “The yellow peril had been averted!”

Origins of The Baker & Taylor Company

The firm, operating under the name of Baker & Taylor originated in 1884 when James S. Baker, senior member of Baker & Pratt Co.*, joined with Nelson Taylor of South Norwalk, Conn., to buy out the book department of that firm.

The resulting company, The Baker & Taylor Company, began operations in January 1885 at 9 Bond Street in Manhattan, primarily as a whole distributor of the books of other publishers.

But book distribution alone did not satisfy the literary tastes of Mr. Taylor who soon drew the company back into the active production of books.

One of the early successes of Baker & Taylor, three years after the company's organization, was a facsimile edition of *The Pilgrim's Progress* as originally published by John Bunyan in 1678. To ensure authenticity, the type used for the facsimile edition had been cast from moulds made in 1720, which were taken from the Dutch type used for the original edition. The paper, too, was a close imitation of that manufactured two centuries earlier for the original edition.

*Baker, Pratt & Co., originally organized in 1874 with its main

emphasis on book distribution, had by 1884 diversified into a company which described itself as “wholesale booksellers and stationers, manufacturers of school and hall furniture, and dealers in general school supplies.”

Nat Bodian researched and wrote a history of The Baker & Taylor Company while serving as its sales manager in 1960. The history appeared in a 1960 issue of The Book Buyer's Guide, a B & T monthly periodical for bookstores and libraries. These articles were derived from that research.

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Elsevier Price lists we get and multiple the mailings announcing the same title. Now that's a simple New Year's wish, isn't it?

And how do we get a copy of Pergamon's new price list for 1992? So far we've not seen a single copy at LSU. Trying to keep it a secret, Michael (i.e., Boswood-Pergamon's Managing Director)? Afraid we'll see what Princeton was so upset about?? The late lamented Robert

Maxwell, for all his faults, and we know now they were many, never kept secret what he charged libraries, although, in fact, some libraries had better “deals” than others on the two year “prepayment-lock on prices” option. I'll tell you about that sometime if you are interested. With Maxwell's death and the loss of Otto Rapp, the international STM publishing scene has seen in this past year a major change in the personalities who are part of the charm of the big companies. Even though Elsevier now owns Pergamon, I don't think

they acquired the Chutzpah so characteristic of those two that were part and parcel of the Pergamon character. There is almost a lore about Maxwell, and now without him around to sue, I predict many of those fabulous stories will begin to appear in print.

Well, we've started the New Year with at least one prediction, a New Year's wish and a review of some great in-house publications. What more do you want on a balmy February day?