

Recent Publications

BOOK REVIEWS

Library Development in Eight Asian Countries. By David Kaser, C. Walter Stone, and Cecil K. Byrd. Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow Press, 1969. 243p. \$5. (68-9322).

Three university librarians have collaborated to fill in what is being done by a quarter of a billion people to provide themselves library service. The study is a country-by-country description—more comprehensive as well as more detailed than we have had before—of library problems and activities in a great arc comprising South Korea, the Republic of China (Taiwan), the Philippines, South Viet Nam, Laos, Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, and Indonesia. Malaysia and Singapore are treated as one.

The authors draw on more than a hundred references, some of them not generally accessible, and on the results of study in the field to describe libraries of various types (public, school, university, national, and special) both indigenous and foreign. In addition, they look past libraries themselves and take into account two sets of factors that are less palpable. One set has to do with how favorable the social climate is to library development—whether a sound political and economic base for the purpose exists, to what extent continuing social commitments and in particular educational commitments are generating a real need for national library development, what teaching customs or other cultural characteristics put the brakes on creating library services to meet these needs, what the language of learning is and how many are equipped to use it, whether there is an indigenous booktrade to provide readable books in the vernacular, and what use is made of non-print media.

The other set has to do with how favorable the climate of management is to library development—the condition of library legislation and government, the place

of library planning in national planning, established arrangements for the development of librarianship as a profession, arrangements that affect the attractiveness of librarianship as a personal career, the organization of librarians and their national activities, and measures that the nation supports to further bibliographical control.

Using this general pattern of analysis, the study sketches not one picture but eight pictures of what is to be done next. It is here that the significance of the study begins to emerge. It has not been common since the Commonwealth library program of the Carnegie Corporation to treat library development as a problem that requires more than perfunctory attention at the level of national policy. More commonly governments of developing countries and their foreign advisers on national planning treat it as a cluster of problems bounded by four walls—problems that may require outside purchases of books for shelf enrichment, gifts of scholarships for training, expatriate librarians, foreign libraries to serve as substitutes for local libraries, but no real involvement of the indigenous power structure. This study throughout considers outside aid as important in its place, and the place is a large one. But while the work was largely sponsored by a foreign agency, USAID, it reflects a consciousness that the best way to develop a national library program is not to try to buy it or give it or throw it together in haphazard fashion, but to build it, each nation according to its own specifications.

Does the study provide a satisfactory set of specifications for each of these eight countries?

No, this would be too much for a territory so large in time so short, especially when there is such a big bundle of problems to be sorted out. The authors set for themselves the more modest goal of producing a first draft to aid all those who may be interested in Asian libraries. Their work will provide readers, native and foreign, useful information on these libraries; it shows refreshing recognition of national

library development as a necessary element in nation-building; and it illustrates needed use of professional guidance in shaping this aspect of national policy.—*Carl M. White, University of California, San Diego.*

Roads to Research: Distinguished Library Collections of the Southeast. By Thomas H. English. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1968. xiii, 116p. \$1.95, paper (68-54088).

Early in 1967 officers of the Association of Southeastern Research Libraries decided to sponsor publication of a guide to research collections in the libraries holding membership in their organization, and Professor Thomas H. English, scholarly chairman emeritus of Emory University's Department of English, was selected as compiler and editor. Professor English proceeded with dispatch and good judgment to produce within slightly more than a year's time this useful, small volume.

Roads to Research is a collection of fifty-one brief sketches each of which describes a special collection that can be regarded as of value to serious scholars. The collections are listed in the table of contents and by each title is the name of the library of which it is a part. The range is surprisingly broad; included, of course, are the regional collections—Georgiana, South Caroliniana, Virginiana, etc.—but in addition one finds such diverse topics as emblem books, detective stories, ornithology, children's poetry, Irish literature, and New Orleans jazz. Twenty-eight libraries are members of ASERL and sixteen of them reported collections which the librarians and Professor English judged worthy of inclusion. Those reporting the largest number of research collections were Duke and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill with eight apiece; they were followed by Louisiana State University with six.

The descriptive notes were prepared in collaboration with the holding libraries, and the editor visited the libraries to gain firsthand knowledge of the collections and to bring a measure of uniformity to the whole. In spite of this the reports vary in quality and usefulness, but perhaps this is

only natural since the collections themselves vary so widely. However, by bringing this information together in one published work ASERL has performed a service that will be appreciated by librarians. With the collections identified and the general facts made available, scholars who need detailed information can inquire directly and more intelligently.

In general the format of the volume is good. There is a bibliography which is probably too general to be of much help, and there is a well-prepared, selective index. It is to be regretted that at least three of the more important libraries in the Association are conspicuously absent. Also, this reviewer wishes that the essays had been arranged by some plan or classification; an alphabetical arrangement might have served nicely.—*J. Isaac Copeland, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.*

Encyclopedia of Library and Information Science. Ed. by Allen Kent and Harold Lancour. 18 vols. Vol. 1: A-Associac. 676p. illus. Marcel Dekker, 1968. \$45. per vol. (nonsubscribers); \$35. per vol. (subscription). (68-31232).

Publication of the first of the projected eighteen volumes of this work has partially satisfied the curiosity and expectation of many librarians, information specialists, and possibly others. Although a studied and just review of the encyclopedia should await completion of the set with its index, a preliminary estimate may now be based on Volume 1, *A to Associac.* This reviewer's evaluation is mixed, but with the balance on the plus side. The work establishes two major firsts: it is the first encyclopedia published anywhere covering the two related fields of library and information science, and it is the first American encyclopedia on the former discipline. Information science is well represented, filling about 40 per cent of the first volume, but in terms of articles it is outnumbered by library science by about three to one. There has been a recognized effort to be international, both in choice of articles and in the information included in the articles, rather than limiting the scope to topics and practices applying only in the United