

welcome addition to a group of new books on technical processing.—Neal L. Edgar, Kent State University, Kent, Ohio.

University Library Buildings in Southeast Asia. Proceedings of a Workshop Held in Singapore, 22–26 November, 1976. Editor: Peggy Wai-chee Hochstadt. Assisted by: Maria Ng Lee Hoon. Singapore: University of Singapore Library, 1977. 62p. + 6 microfiches. S\$14 (Asian countries excepting Japan); US\$12 (other countries). (Available from: University of Singapore Cooperative Bookstore Society Ltd., Bukit Timah Road, Singapore 10, Republic of Singapore.)

This volume is of some value to those who collect materials on library buildings, but for those who are interested in fast information for the planning process this book is not recommended because of its poor organization.

As the title indicates, it is a record of the proceedings of a building workshop. Abstracts of all the papers are included in the sixty-two-

page book along with the "discussion" that followed the presentation of each paper. But the papers themselves, the real meat of this publication, appear on microfiche in a pocket at the back. Thus, this little book does contain a lot of information, but it's hard to find.

One must read the abstract to determine the extent of one's interest in a given paper and then go on to the microfiche reader to get further information. Then one must alternate between the "discussion" pages of the book and the text of the microfiche to obtain a critique of a particular building plan. The constant referral from hard copy to microfiche is so inconvenient that it becomes frustrating.

Two fold-out pages containing a summary "Table of Statistics of University Library Buildings in Southeast Asia" appear to be useful, except that U.S. readers will find it difficult to convert linear meters to linear feet, square meters to square feet, and cost per square meter to cost per square foot. It seems this could have been done once for all readers by the editor.

The book does record evidence of good library building planning in Southeast Asia, and the fiche even include some drawings of floor plans. It is a volume of principal importance to libraries with in-depth collections on building planning or as a record for those who attended the 1976 Singapore conference.—Hal B. Schell, University of Cincinnati, Ohio.

Steady-State, Zero Growth and the Academic Library. A Collection of Essays Edited by Colin Steele. London: Clive Bingley; Hamden, Conn.: Linnet Books, 1978. 148p. \$11. LC 78-7030. ISBN 0-85157-243-X Bingley; 0-208-01680-5 Linnet.

In the United States the fate of libraries appears to be in the hands of a disillusioned general public. Commencing in California, the reaction of concerned citizens to seemingly uncontrollable governmental spending at all levels has aroused heretofore passive legislative bodies into vigorous reaction to slash spiraling budgets. At institutions of higher education the budgeter's scalpel has been sharpened by an apparent cautious attitude on the part of potential college goers about the real returns from education. It is therefore a period of retrenchment and reexamination.

Steady-state and *zero growth* are terms be-



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coming well known and understood by librarians in many corners of the world. Those in the United Kingdom, and to a growing degree Australia, are confronted less with the whims of an electorate than with specific directives to keep a lid on library costs. The 1976 Atkinson Report, aimed at libraries in the United Kingdom, while moving these institutions closer to the ranks of endangered species, may awaken librarians to the fact that "the old independence of the individual library and librarians" has gone the way of the dodo bird.

Colin Steele's *Steady State, Zero Growth and the Academic Library* is an important stimulant to examining the problems facing all librarians. And while "the essays in this book do not offer any radical solutions," readers will find it a welcome relief to the more-of-the-same philosophy that seems to dominate much current thinking about libraries. Elizabeth Watson's opening essay is by far the most refreshing. She not only discusses the meaning behind steady-state growth but also explores why librarians seem incapable of useful action, namely, "the paucity of information we possess about questions of central concern": the areas of costs, user behavior, and information needs. Watson poses a "value position" that should be carefully considered. Most important, she suggests actions librarians must take.

Following the point of view expressed by John Horacek, that "one can also take the Atkinson Report positively, as a sign of the times and consequently as a stimulus to thought and planning for remedial action," most of the authors in this collection attempt to provide something more than palliatives. Peter Durey stresses the need of librarians to be more effective managers and propagandists (are library schools listening?). John Dean writes a brief text on evaluating and controlling the size of collections. His "trends at Johns Hopkins University" curiously begs the question of a library in steady-state. Bernard Naylor, in assessing the factors involved in library cooperative programs, sounds an accurate warning in his penultimate sentence: ". . . it will need a very great change in libraries' present attitudes towards cooperation, if this is to have a substantial impact on libraries' current financial and space problems."

One could fuss over much that is said—or not said. The primary focus of the book, however, is to raise questions, demand attention to

very real problems, explore the dimensions of possible alternatives, and, above all, to think—probably in terms in which librarians have not felt compelled to think before. As Norman Higham concludes, "Whether individual libraries pursue previous policies, or change course, librarians will be working in a different environment with a sharpened awareness of the issues involved."—*John C. Heyeck, Stanford University.*

Neal, K. W. *British University Libraries*. 2d ed. Cheshire: The Author, 1978. £3.80. LC 78-40372. ISBN 0-901570-11-7. (Available from the author: 59 Redesmere Drive, Alberley Edge, Cheshire SK9 7UR, England.)

This second edition is intended as an introductory text for library school students and newcomers to university library work. Although the thirteen chapters cover all aspects of university librarianship in the United Kingdom, the depth of coverage is very uneven. For example, as much space is given to departmental libraries as to government and communications, or the financing of British universities and their libraries.

The content is also very variable in quality; the chapter on library planning is a good résumé of the methods and problems associated with the design and furnishing of new libraries, illustrated with examples from recent British practice. However, the standard of this chapter is rarely matched in the rest of the book. It is inevitable that an introductory text has to include much detail of basic routines and methods, and this is present in this work. But there is a tendency to highlight idiosyncrasies in the practices of individual libraries at the expense of clearly indicating good general practice, an approach which must be confusing and unhelpful to librarianship students and newcomers to the profession. They would do better consulting the works cited in the bibliography at the end of each chapter.

The author appears to have a lack of understanding of the working relationships within a university library, between the library and its parent institution, within the university itself, and between the university and the University Grants Committee, the provider of 80 percent of British university income. For example, many who have actually experienced the hard work put into preparing for a U.G.C. visitation