

have gotten slightly more than its fair share of space in the book.

I am never quite sure whether the Yalu river should stand between the reviewer of a book and the advertising claims made for it. Since naive book-buyers may be guided by these, it seems only fair to point out that this is *not* "The first book in the specialized information center field that. . . ." Pride of this place is surely occupied by the classic "Centralized Information Services—Opportunities and Problems," Western Reserve University Press and Interscience, 1958 written, oddly enough, by Allen Kent and James Perry.

The librarian, though, should derive some small consolation from this book—the same consolation derivable from one of Samuel Johnson's statements: "Commerce," said he, "can't be so difficult. Look at the class of people who succeed in it." Since the book defines an information center as any library or collection of documents, it not only bridges but annihilates "the existing gulf between the librarian and the documentalists."—*Harold Wooster, Air Force Office of Scientific Research.*

***Clinic on Library Applications of Data Processing. Proceedings. 1963.*** Ed. by Herbert Goldhor. Champaign, Ill.: Distributed by the Illini Union Bookstore, [1964]. vii, 176p. \$2. paper. (65-1841).

This small volume serves as an excellent travel guide through selected data processing installations in libraries across the country. Representing a broad range of libraries by type, all but three of the ten papers presented are case studies of operating systems in various stages of development. As a result the collection is a practical demonstration of how mechanization and automation can help rather than an excursion into theoretical advantages as yet untried. As such, the book is particularly valuable to the novice in the field, although a careful comparison of the variant methods of operation will suggest adaptable alternatives to those librarians already in the systems planning stage.

Public librarians will be particularly interested in Lorin Burns' description of automation in the public libraries of Lake County, Indiana, and John Henderson's very

full explanation of the production of the book catalog in the Los Angeles County system. For those librarians in smaller systems who have justifiable qualms about the expense of mechanization, Burns' figures on the annual cost of handling acquisitions, book processing, registration, circulation control, and catalog card production will probably be a pleasant surprise. James Jacobs' paper on the possibilities of data processing in school library systems appears to be valid enough, although for the most part it depicts planning rather than current operation. Ralph Parker's paper on the evolution of automatic systems at the University of Missouri, on the other hand, represents more than fourteen years of pioneering progress which university librarians just now beginning to develop systems can admire and envy. Special library systems are represented by two papers, Marjorie Griffin's history of the trial-and-error method of development at IBM's Advanced Systems Development and Research Library, and Hillis Griffin's description of processing and circulation at the National Reactor Testing Station Technical Library in Idaho. In the final case study Seymour Taine discusses the preparation of the Index Medicus and the Medical Literature Analysis and Retrieval System (MEDLARS) at the National Library of Medicine.

In the three general papers, Burton Adkinson discusses trends in the library application of data processing, Donald Kraft describes Key Word in Context indexing and the selective dissemination of information, and Louis Schultheiss contributes a brief but useful exposition of flow charts as the basic step in systems design. Included as an appendix is Edward McCormick's "Bibliography on Mechanized Library Processes," which is an excellent starting point for further investigation.

Two conclusions are inescapable in considering the contents of these papers. First, it is apparent that with the exception of some efforts of limited scope in the special library field, all applications of data processing to date have been in the area of the library's housekeeping operations, technical services, and circulation. The time is ripe for some significant experimentation in the application of machinery to general biblio-

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graphical and reference functions of the type proposed for Florida Atlantic University. Second, it is obvious that much productive mechanization can be accomplished by the imaginative use of unit record equipment without requiring access to a computer, and at a cost that is well within the operational budget limitations of many libraries. Library administrators please note.—Carl R. Cox, University of Maryland. ■■