

"Special Functions and Aspects of National Libraries," considers in more detail their wide variety, emphasizes in particular how national library responsibilities in many countries are divided among several libraries, how some libraries combine national and other functions, and how in some countries there are subject-specialized national libraries or regional or state "subnational" libraries. In the third section, "National Libraries in Individual Countries and Areas of the World," particular national libraries at a particular time are described. Some of the articles are historical, some describe a national library at a critical period at its creation or reorganization, and others relate its operations to a set of functions. A concluding note to the work summarizes the key issues that have emerged in the papers collected here and also mentions issues not dealt with.

The editors are well-known British librarians. Maurice B. Line, as director general of the British Library Lending Division, has a close and personal acquaintance with a national library.

Since these essays, gathered from many sources not always readily available, are a good survey of problems currently faced by national libraries and present a perception of their actual and desirable functions, this volume is a valuable source of information, recommended for all larger libraries and library schools.—*Mathilde V. Rovelstad, Catholic University of America, Washington, D.C.*

Downs, Robert B. *Australian and New Zealand Library Resources*. London: Mansell, 1979. 164p. \$33.30. ISBN 0-7201-0913-2.

Yet another study has come from the prolific pen of Robert B. Downs, this one giving us "information on special collections and specialized holdings in (Australian and New Zealand) libraries" (p.7). Aside from the usual front matter, this consists of four parts: General Subjects and Types of Material (86p.), Individual Biography, Bibliography and Criticism (6p.), Bibliography (25p.), and Index (14p.); all pages are set in double columns.

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In the first part there are 112 sections on such topics as Arabic history and literature, classics, engineering, fine arts, law and military history, and such forms as almanacs, bookplates, dissertations, manuscripts, and union catalogs. Occasionally a heading containing but slight information is separated from an inclusive subject with which it could have placed (e.g., Sri Lanka and South Asia). Sometimes there is coverage of a specific topic (physical education, political philosophy, Portuguese history and literature, women), but no section on the broader field (education, philosophy, European history, sociology) to which it pertains. Entries generally indicate the nature and extent of holdings in those libraries with significant amounts of material—the most extensive and/or important collection coming first and all Australian institutions before those in New Zealand. Naturally the guide concentrates on the national, university, and other libraries with holdings important for research; there is little information on the institutes of technology and the colleges of advanced education (presumably an area for expanded coverage in a second edition). The descriptions vary from a brief note of existence (e.g., "the University of Sydney Library has a separate section of erotic literature," p.57) to four to six pages for such broad fields as Australian history and periodicals and sets.

Downs singles out for discussion in the second part a mere twenty-four persons—understandably including Captain James Cook, Katherine Mansfield, and William Shakespeare. One wonders, however, why Edmund Husser, Joan of Arc, Napoleon Bonaparte, and Rainer Maria Rilke appear here, when each receives less than seven lines of comment. Would it not have been wise to incorporate such brief mentions into the appropriate topical section?

The extensive bibliography (565 items, consisting of guides, surveys, library catalogs, periodical articles, etc.) constitutes one of the book's most valuable reference features. Although the alphabetical arrangement does not favor the person interested in specific subjects, many bibliographical references (some in abbreviated form) in the text itself help to overcome this limitation.

The index leads the reader back to topics,

to libraries, to individual organizations and institutions, and even to previous surveys of resources (e.g., Burmester, Osborn, and Tauber) but not always to names of collectors who assembled materials. Libraries of universities appear under their distinctive name or place (e.g., La Trobe, Melbourne University), while national and state libraries appear in the *N's* and *S's*.

This reader has mixed feelings toward the volume's layout. The basic text (p.9–120) has generous space between headings and text and between sections, as well as ample white space surrounding the text. In contrast, the bibliography's listings are packed into twenty-five pages (an average of 11.3 entries per column); with no space between items and without "hanging indentation" this entire section is harder on the eye than it ought to be.

Some readers might question the value of six and one-half pages of travel information on the two countries (dubbed "Impressions" by the author), but there is no doubt that, with or without such comments, a map would have proven helpful. Most of the other shortcomings mentioned above probably result from time limitations (apparently the field research was limited to a two-month tour; cf. p.9) and/or hasty editing. The scholarly production of Robert B. Downs is legendary; once again the "dean of library resources" has given us a useful tool.—William Vernon Jackson, *University of Texas, Austin*.

Australian Official Publications. Edited by D. H. Borchardt. Melbourne: Longman Cheshire, 1979. 365p. A\$10.50. ISBN 0-582-71461-3 cloth; 0-582-71444-3 (paper).

The title of this excellent book does not indicate its true scope. Rather than, as might be expected, a list of publications, it is an extensive series of essays on government in Australia and its written records. The contributors to this work are all experts in their field.

Successful use of government publications depends on an understanding of the government(s) involved. Recognizing this, the contributors to the first two chapters describe in some detail the functioning of government in Australia at federal, state, and local levels. Such an explanation is necessary to