

Book Reviews

Primer for Agricultural Libraries. By Dorothy Parker, Frank C. Hirst, Theodor P. Loosjes, and Gerrit Koster. Oxford: International Association of Agricultural Libraries and Documentalists, 1967. 72p.

The authors of this slender volume (two of whom would more properly be called compilers) have produced an admirable guide for secretaries and others who have had thrust upon them the task of organizing and operating an agricultural library service, without previous training or experience. The number of such individuals must be very large indeed, for agricultural research stations have multiplied rapidly these past two decades in the urgent quest for ways to produce enough food to support vastly increased numbers of people.

Dr. Parker's introductory chapter makes abundantly clear the widely diversified fields of science embraced in agricultural practice and research. It also underscores the tremendous challenge confronting agricultural librarians in assisting researchers to chart paths through the ever-thickening forest of the literature of agriculture and related sciences.

Her description of the ways in which agricultural scientists use publications, and of the role librarians can play in making that use fruitful and effective, will effectively broaden the horizons of persons coming untrained to the task. The practical aspects of building a collection of materials and of developing reference and other services are outlined in a helpful and stimulating way.

The specifics of library practice are dealt with in Frank Hirst's section of the Primer with great thoroughness and clarity. From suggestions concerning selection of materials and their acquisition, he moves on to measures designed to exploit book-and-journal information and create an awareness of current research developments. He treats also, in relatively simple terms, of classification, cataloging, and storage of

library materials. Rounding out this section is a somewhat less explicit, although quite helpful, consideration of reference and circulation functions in the small agricultural library.

The final section of the volume is an invaluable compilation of tools put together by Messrs. Loojes and Koster. Librarians of large as well as small agricultural libraries will do well to consult this list of bibliographical tools, abstracting journals and services, and broad annual reviews, because of its comprehensive coverage.

This edition is labeled "preliminary," for IAALD definitely plans to revise and expand this Primer. A good beginning has been made, one that admirably meets a pressing need.—*Fleming Bennett, University of Florida.*

Copying Methods Manual. By William R. Hawken. ("LTP Publications, no. 11" [Chicago: ALA 1966].) 375p. \$15. (66-25095).

In 1936 Robert C. Binkley published his now classic *Manual on Methods of Reproducing Research Materials*. Long out of date from a purely technical standpoint, Binkley's work is still valuable for its many fundamental insights into basic aspects of reprography (a silly word, but apparently well grafted into the vocabularies of European languages).

Mr. Hawken, one of the most respected technicians in the business, has written a literate and highly dependable work which covers the field comprehensively. It is in four major sections, *viz.*, factors affecting the characteristics of copies; the physical characteristics of research materials; processes; and methods and techniques. It is extensively illustrated, and even the novice in any branch of reprography will be able to use the work without difficulty in understanding terminology or technical explanations.

The author makes cautious evaluations and explanations about specific equipment,

machines, and processes. He points out, for example, the economies of micro-opaques, not generally understood by scholars, or even librarians. He provides specific addresses from which detailed information may be secured. The glossary and bibliographical essay (by Allen B. Veaner) are useful addenda, although the latter could be improved by better coverage of European literature. Charles F. Gosnell's concise essay on copyright as applied to document reproduction pulls together the vast body of material on this subject and, incidentally, is an effective contradiction to an equally large corpus of misinformation.

Of special interest to those who still care for the physical condition, form, size, and even feel and smell of a book is Mr. Hawken's concern for the effect of copying on the original. Photographers, circulation people, and rare book folk should study these sections diligently. Too often microphotography as well as full-size facsimile copying have been categorically condemned because of a careless operator, or a rare book librarian who permitted a book to be copied without giving specific handling instructions. The clear, sharp photographs and diagrams in this section are especially pertinent.

The one great deficiency of this work, or of any comparable one, is that it probably will be out-of-date within a year. The rapid changes in copying technology will make almost any book on this subject virtually obsolete soon after publication. The Library Technology Project might well consider a newsletter adjusted to style and organization of the *Copying Methods Manual*. If it is cumulative and well indexed, it could be a valuable interim reference tool between editions of Hawken.—*Lawrence S. Thompson, University of Kentucky.*

Diffusion of Abstracting and Indexing Services for Government-Sponsored Research. By Irving M. Klempner. Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow Press, 1968. 319p. (67-12065).

To most librarians scientific and technical reports are a monstrous nuisance: trouble-

some to locate, acquire, inventory, store, and use. The distribution of reports is haphazard, and the amount, kind, and quality of information in them is extremely varied. Nevertheless, the report has become a viable medium among the range of devices for recording and disseminating information on science. In the field of atomic energy, the distribution of AEC reports to depositories and the indexing of the reports in *Nuclear Science Abstracts* is considered sufficient dissemination to constitute publication, at least according to the editors of a few journals.

These same channel characteristics create problems for scientists and engineers. Scientific and technical reports are known to contain a considerable amount of useful information, not only for the primary purposes for which it has been developed, but also for other, perhaps disparate applications. The report channel obviously needs to have applied to it those elements of management (e.g. peer evaluation, announcement, and control of access by subject) that will allow the information in reports to pass economically into the hands of those who can extract value from it. Because the traditional indexing and abstracting services are oriented towards formally published information in journals and books, and tend to exclude the vast number of technical reports, the Federal government has assumed the task of announcing and providing intellectual access to information in reports. It does this through four published services, namely: *Nuclear Science Abstracts*, *U.S. Government Research and Development Reports*, *Scientific and Technical Aerospace Reports*, and *Technical Abstracts Bulletin*. These services were the objects of Dr. Klempner's attention in this study.

The important underlying assumptions in Dr. Klempner's research are "that the utilization of technical information can be accelerated and intensified through the purposeful exploitation of national documentation center abstracting and indexing services," and that "if imaginatively distributed and used, the services can, in effect, act as social instruments capable of pro-