

stances influencing an author—or rather, a successful literary author. However, as analysis of the works under discussion, they are merely a beginning; we will still need to have full-length studies of the relations of each of these authors to his publisher. However, Sutherland has succeeded in substantiating his claim that publishers share responsibility for much of what was written during England's golden age of fiction.

This is an excellent and stimulating account of the best-known aspect of one particular branch of nineteenth-century publishing and will be the preferred introduction to the subject for students of literature, bibliography, and economic history. One only wishes that someone would do the same for the altogether less studied genres of the Victorian age.—*Joan M. Friedman, Yale Center for British Art and British Studies, New Haven, Connecticut.*

***Collections of Official Publications in Canada.*** Research Collections in Canadian Libraries. II. Special Studies. V.5. Ottawa: Resources Survey Division, Collections Development Branch, National Library of Canada, 1976. 888p. \$10 Canada; \$12 other countries. (Available from Information Canada, 171 Slater Street, Ottawa, Ontario IIA OS9.)

This is the National Library of Canada's fifth state-of-the-art report in the series Research Collections in Canadian Libraries intended to assess Canadian libraries' holdings of government publications. NLC surveyed a wide cross-section of libraries, employing a preliminary questionnaire for all libraries and then follow-up checklists of specific titles, subjects, countries, and agencies for those libraries collecting at more concentrated levels.

The report consists of two parts: a narrative summary of findings and appendixes giving detailed information on the content of collections of government publications in about 250 libraries. What emerges, as a result, is a 136-page report and 735 pages of appendixes including holdings lists, questionnaires, checklists, and collection development statements—a potpourri of information and data on official publications not found between two covers anywhere else.

The report itself is, of course, the most important segment and contributes to our knowledge not only of official publications in Canadian libraries but of documents generally. One must be mindful that the emphasis of the report is on selection and acquisition, and any discussion of administration and staffing is related to these two facets. The chapter on selection and acquisition itself is excellent. This chapter relates how types of libraries acquire government documents and also discusses depository arrangements, purchase, gifts and exchanges, retention, and weeding. It is a valuable supplement to texts on library acquisition practices.

After the discussion on selection and acquisition, the report focuses on special areas of publications: parliamentary, nonparliamentary, municipal, foreign, international organizations, and microforms. The data and information reported about these publications were general, from the follow-up checklists returned by libraries that reported some in-depth collecting in the various areas. It is here that some unevenness appears in the report. For example, there is an inventory of parliamentary holdings (debates, journals, etc.) by specific titles, while the survey of nonparliamentary is by subjects.

In the area of municipal documents, the report emphasizes their elusiveness and difficulty and surveys the provinces to determine where notable collections exist. When it comes to international inter-governmental organizations (IGOs), the report gives scant narration about holdings. One has to rely on the appendixes that list IGOs and which libraries collect them. A chart that would simply indicate which libraries are depositories for various IGOs would be helpful. The attempt of the report to wrestle with "working documents" of IGOs and technical reports was admittedly a failure. So what one has to deal with is a whole range of government publications entities: specific titles, names of organizations, countries, cities, and subjects. This is not to indict the report, since the variety and scope of government publishing would not permit otherwise, but only to indicate that an interested reader is going to deal with a range of dissimilar information.

Overall, the report is a laudable, ambitious undertaking. The final chapter is a conclusion that summarizes its findings from the variety of data, spots gaps in holdings, points towards a rational system for document collecting, and suggests a role for the National Library. Together with Edith Jarvis's *Access to Canadian Government Publications in Canadian Academic and Public Libraries*, this report permits one nation to see where its libraries stand in relation to government publications.—*Harry E. Welsh, Government Documents Center, University of Washington Libraries, Seattle.*

Urquhart, J. A., and Urquhart, N. C. *Relegation and Stock Control in Libraries.*

Stocksfield: Oriol Press (Routledge and Kegan Paul), 1976. 154p. \$25. ISBN 0-85362-162-4.

The British Library sponsored this 1973-75 study of practical methods for selecting periodicals and monographs from the open stack for storage and current periodical subscriptions for cancellation. It was inspired by the shrinkage of construction funds plaguing British academic libraries and the concurrent coming of age of national library services that have prompted the revisionist concept of the "self-contained library" (cf. review of *Capital Provision for University Libraries* in *C&RL*, July 1977).

The study's purpose is "to reduce the dangers of arbitrary cuts and restrictions on the operation of academic libraries and to foster their continued health. It seeks to protect them both from the risk of unskilled amputation by the administrator as well as from what might be described as the iatrogenic perils resulting from the ministrations of well-meaning and dedicated librarians" (p.14-15).

Attempting to identify specific quantitative criteria by which materials can be selected for storage, the research used statistical techniques applied to surveys of circulation, in-library use, and national interlibrary loan data in the stack-filled 400,000-volume library of the University of Newcastle on Tyne. Its methodology, statistical findings, and conclusions—much of which must be gleaned from eight appendixes—deserve to be consulted by every librarian faced with the specter of

weeding for storage or discard. The volume includes a useful though not exhaustive bibliography.

Periodicals, the study indicates, can be most economically selected for storage on the basis of national interlibrary loan statistics (in this instance those of the British Library Lending Division), though local circulation and in-library use data are also good predictors. Cancellation of current subscriptions can also be reasonably based on national interlibrary loan data. The "15/5 rule" evolves as a practical approach: Runs of fifteen years or more can be stored if they have not been borrowed during the last five years.

For monographs the study casts serious doubts as to whether past use is a valid predictor of future use (as concluded in the studies of Fussler and Simon, Trueswell, and others) in the case of seldom-used books. Current use is found to be independent of the last circulation date for books that have not circulated in six to fifteen years. The amount of use, however, varies strikingly among subject areas, with the humanities surprisingly appearing to have the fastest obsolescence rate. The researchers conclude that the most practical—and economical—method of selecting monographs for storage is to dispatch the majority of books by entire sections, keeping only the heavily used monographs in the open stack. Catalog cards for only the retained books would be revised to indicate their location. Books borrowed from storage a single time should not be transferred back to the open stack.

Most American library administrators are not yet economically constrained to release a volume to storage or rubbish whenever a new one is acquired. Most do not anticipate a substantial relegation budget, much less one that will soon approach the cost of acquisitions. But many will agree that "the main value in terms of current use of a working academic library lies in its recently acquired stock."

The experience of the British as they face the challenge of strengthening academic library collections by acquiring the recent and used materials while releasing the unused—whether recent or dated—may in time serve as a model for libraries in this