

Book Reviews

The Administration of Academic Affairs in Higher Education. By Robert L. Williams. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1965. vii, 182p. \$6. (65-13444).

This is not the long awaited general textbook in the management of university academic affairs. The title is in fact somewhat misleading, for the book is not a general text at all but fundamentally a factual report on the minute details of academic administration in one of the major universities of the country, the University of Michigan. The viewpoint is that of one of the new breed of academic administrators, a vice president who was a professional administrator rather than a teacher. Such a man must accept policy decisions made by others and see that they are effected; there is little room for questioning or speculation. Thus the book is not even a true case study, for a case study implies the careful consideration of case problems and alternative solutions. Instead the book appears to be a procedure's manual, slightly enlarged, and committed to print.

As a report on the details of academic management in one of the great universities, the volume is important and it does have value. First, any record of how one university treats academic problems adds to the understanding of higher education in America. Second, there are numerous useful tables, such as those on teaching loads, salaries, per student costs, and percentage distribution of educational and general funds; there also are forms for faculty personnel records, faculty service records, departmental budget requests, and others. Most of these tables and forms are taken from the University of Michigan, but occasionally others are added. There are chapters or sections on all phases of academic management, which make interesting if not very lively reading. All of this information would be quite helpful as background for a new vice president in a very large university, though of course he should proceed with caution because there are a number of oddities in the work, and Michigan does not have all of the answers.

The work has a number of weaknesses. Probably the most serious of these is the author's apparent lack of understanding of the philosophical backgrounds of higher education. It is true that he is in a position, as academic vice president, in which his initiative in this area is much curtailed by circumstances, and furthermore he is not in the center of the power structure—regents, president's seat, or faculty senate—where policy decisions are made. He should have demonstrated at least a sympathetic understanding of the nature of higher education. But, for example, the author finds it difficult to understand faculty unrest: "More than anything else, each school and college within a university, and the university as a whole, would like to have a happy faculty. Inevitably, however, a certain amount of unhappiness and unrest creeps into most faculties . . ." usually because individuals did not understand the terms of their appointment! Now it is an inalienable right of every faculty member, as unassailable as his right to academic freedom, to complain, and academic prestige requires that he do so. Fortunately for the administration, these gripings are much reduced around the administration. Furthermore, some of the most eminent departments in the country have been notorious for virulent internal feuds. There is no necessary correlation between harmony and excellence, for there is unfortunately the greatest harmony in mediocrity. Again, the author discusses tenure and cites at length Michigan rules and regulations, without even once mentioning the subject of academic freedom for which tenure exists. As still another example, Mr. Williams has apparently never heard of Flexner's four functions of a university, judging from the short shrift he gives to the library and the university press.

The author demonstrates little understanding of the nature and role of the library in the university, having little grasp of it either as a research resource or as a specialized teaching agency. This is rather surprising in view of the strength of the libraries and the professional staff at Michigan. He does not seem to know that about two-

thirds of a modern university library staff are clerical and nonprofessional, but one-third highly trained and qualified professional librarians and that the distinction between the two groups is very clear. He proposes to class them all with secretaries and physical plant personnel, to deny them tenure, and to refuse even a table of equivalents. It is unfortunate that the achievements and progress of modern librarianship still are not recognized in isolated instances such as this. Fortunately for universities, most take a far different view.—*Arthur McAnally, University of Oklahoma.*

Problems in Reference Service; Case Studies in Method and Policy. By

Thomas J. Galvin. Foreword by Frances Neel Cheney. New York: R. R. Bowker Company, 1965. xix, 177p. \$6.50. (65-15285).

Since the beginning, the profession of librarianship has enjoyed, in some circles, a reputation for a sort of charm which seems to have stemmed, in large measure, from the humorous stories told about odd and interesting questions answered at the reference desk. That reference librarians themselves are often witty raconteurs probably contributed to the impression that glamour, if any, belonged to that branch of the service. The value of reference work in maintaining good public relations is recognized by everyone, but the complicated relationship between the reference function and the other technical processes calls for frequent new definition, and the double-edged responsibility of reference personnel to interpret the administration on one hand, and represent the public on the other, has not yet been sufficiently explored in professional literature.

Thomas J. Galvin's engaging textbook, *Problems in Reference Service; Case Studies in Method and Policy*, preserves in its narrative form the fascination of the original reference questions; the case study method is well adapted to reach the beginner in the profession who must learn that he is not the only pebble on the beach even though he may be the glamour-boy.

The cases are skillfully arranged to serve the teacher who wishes to proceed from trade bibliographies and serial indexes to

fact-finding reference books, coming at last to the more complicated encyclopedias, biographical dictionaries, annuals, and directories. Cases dealing with policy, departmental administration, and the ethics of reference work are interspersed throughout the text. The settings vary from large research institutions to tiny branch libraries, but the emphasis is on illustrations of the operation of a department and on the type of service found in college or research libraries. Bibliography and the selection of suitable editions, the needs of teachers, and the nature of the effective reference interview loom large, but the importance of team work and the reference librarian's ethical standards are the points most forcefully presented.

The author's primary purpose is to analyze the reference function, but he suggests modestly in the introduction that several of the cases would be useful as well for a course in library administration. This is especially true of the one called "The Reorganization of a Collection of Documents." If a special collection is to be set up, should the document cards be removed from the card catalog? The discussion takes place between the assistant librarian and the reference librarian. Doubtless for good reasons, the remarks of the head cataloger are not quoted, but neither is another pertinent matter indicated: what does the new documents librarian need to know about cataloging? Mr. Galvin provides the solutions for only two of the problems and this one is not among the number, but it would provide the material for a lively debate in any library club meeting.

Again, the case dealing with the purchase of the Library of Congress catalogs is surely a matter of concern to other technical services besides reference and the administration. "Participation in a Regional Union Catalog" might be described with equal justice as a cataloger's problem, as indeed are all of the problems dealing with bibliography. In other words, the uses for this interesting text are numerous for the whole staff, as well as for teachers in library schools or in-service training.

The use made of cases in the teaching of library science is more comparable to medical teaching practice than it is to legal case