

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

study or social case work. As long ago as 1963, Galvin explained and defended the method in the *Journal of Education for Librarianship*. He has used it himself at Simmons College as a means of combating the detachment from a real situation of the cut-and-dried problems traditionally employed in reference teaching. If the problem method is necessary to emphasize the necessity for a thorough knowledge of the books themselves, the case study method is equally necessary to prepare the student for actual work in a library. What a fine thing it would be for the profession if mature librarians took the time to write up their experiences for the use of others! The cases would make good reading, and the writing would be a lot of fun.—*Isabel Howell, Tennessee State Library and Archives.*

**Rare Book Collections.** Ed. by H. Richard Archer. (ACRL Monograph No. 27.) Chicago: ALA, 1965. viii, 128p. \$3. (65-19754).

Over six years ago the Rare Books Section of ACRL decided to sponsor a handbook that would serve as an introduction to the field of rare books. This was a large order since any knowledge in this exacting field is acquired only through long years of working with rare books and with those who know rare books. Articles which appeared while this project was still in the planning stage changed the scope of the book somewhat since certain subjects already had been covered. The editor states that the purpose of this volume is "to stimulate intelligent thinking about many problems which curators and administrators are facing . . . when collections are expanding . . . and the demand for trained personnel has not been satisfied; to present information which will help correct certain unfortunate situations [the situations are not specified]; to establish some means for the prevention of careless practices, and to dispel the misconception that all rare books 'deserve the same kind of treatment.'" The scope of the book thus would seem to be the management of rare book collections and the preservation of their contents.

Ten distinguished contributors have discussed the topics assigned to them as informatively and helpfully as possible. The

articles have been logically arranged, and they present a straightforward account of administration and activities or rare book institutions. The authors have tried to anticipate problems and give of their knowledge and skills; the book contains a wealth of sound advice.

It also contains a few pitfalls. Through "editing" (not the work of Mr. Archer) the American Library Association's *Cataloging Rules for Author and Title Entries* was changed from the 1941 edition, cited by the author of the article on cataloging, to an edition of later date and less pertinence—an error so serious that an erratum slip should be included in every copy. To list the well-known firm of Hodgson as "Hodgkin" is apparently a result of hasty proof-reading.

More disturbing is the statement that in the repair of books "either the paper or the binding" lies within the competence of some curators. The specialist knows what the writer of this article meant, but the beginner, seldom one to doubt his own abilities, may commence repairs without bothering to read the ensuing paragraphs which might have set him right. The best advice to an inexperienced curator is to let things alone and consult an expert.

The most serious pitfall, perhaps, is the implication—and it comes from none of the authors—that we at last have a textbook on the administration of rare books. This happens to be a field that cannot be learned through a textbook. Most rare book specialists are self-taught. In their long apprenticeship they have been forced to read widely and with discrimination. They have acquired a considerable range of knowledge from general reading, from each other, and from the books themselves. There is no substitute for this apprenticeship. *Rare Book Collections* has much that is valuable, but it does not encompass all knowledge of rare books in a single volume—and single volumes are what today's student is eager to seize upon. Of more value to the novice would be a visit to any of the notable collections maintained by the authors, or an hour's chat with one of the curators. The book does not emphasize this strongly enough.—*Ellen Shaffer, Free Library of Philadelphia.*