

Book Reviews

Can New Principles of Administration Be Formulated to Meet the Enlarged Opportunities of the College Library?

Principles of College Library Administration. Second Edition. William M. Randall and Francis L. D. Goodrich. American Library Association and The University of Chicago Press, 1941. xiii, 249p. \$2.50. (The University of Chicago Studies in Library Science)

THE PUBLICATION of a new edition of an indispensable book is an event of importance in any field. In no field is it more important than in that of the literature of the college library, where authoritative books of full stature have never been abundant. It is, therefore, with especial interest that the second edition of the *Principles* has been awaited.

The publishers, in a descriptive note on the new edition, say:

The revised edition of this important text includes recent developments in the field, new statistical material concerning salaries, book expenditures, and other items important in the administration of college libraries, extensively revised bibliographies, and detailed instructions for the making of library budgets.

Using this statement as a point of departure, the review will endeavor, first of all, to show in summary fashion the extent of the revisions made by the authors.

The second edition reproduces in format, chapter headings, and statistical tables the satisfactory organization of the first edition. Edition one is printed on 245 pages; edition two, on 249 pages. The first edition gave 117 bibliographical citations; the second edition gives 131, of which 28 are new. A random selection of chapters two, three, five, and nine has

been made to indicate changes in subject matter. In the earlier edition, these chapters fill slightly more than ninety-one pages; in the new edition, they amount to ninety-five pages. Additions, revisions, and omissions in lines and paragraphs of these chapters result in a combined total of slightly more than nine pages of new material. All of the tables in the work are set up in revised figures.

On page seventy-four, a sample library budget showing the distribution of a total budget of \$16,500 appears as a new feature. The list of "Library Plans Suggested for Study," printed at the end of chapter seven, includes nineteen plans in both editions; of these, four represent new names, and there is a corresponding elimination of four names from the original list.

Passing from the consideration of mechanical features, one is glad to find still present the economy and precision of statement that characterized the presentation of materials in the first edition. As before, urbanity and tact are present, without sacrifice of forthrightness. Trenchant statements, greatly valued in the first edition, could hardly have been improved upon, and they are wisely repeated verbatim in the new edition. Authoritative opinions on library costs (p. 34); on the competency of librarians (p. 28); on "muddling along" with insufficient budgets (p. 46); on the college librarian as scholar, educator, professional by right of attainments and hence worthy of suitable rank (p. 56-57); and on the library building as a tool designed for a purpose

(p. 192)—all these favorite passages are repeated, as they well deserve to be.

Since it is the ungracious task of the reviewer neither to bury Caesar nor to praise him without discrimination, it becomes necessary at this point to consider how much water has flowed under the library bridge between 1936 and 1941, and what reservoir of it has been made by the authors. At the earlier of these dates, which is the date of the first edition, Dr. Randall's Carnegie Corporation survey of college libraries had been in print only four years. Grants of money, by which the corporation followed the survey, brought the power of \$1,011,000 into the administration of eighty-three four-year liberal arts colleges, so that by 1941 the fructifying influences of the two events have had a history of nearly ten years.

During the last five of these years, the literature of the college library has burgeoned. Today, this literature finds a new focus in *College and Research Libraries*, since 1939 the official organ of the Association of College and Reference Libraries. An examination of *Readers' Guide*, *Education Index*, *Library Literature*, and *Public Affairs Information Service*, between 1935 and 1940, shows as much as seventy-six pages of bibliography devoted to the college library. The *Principles* now being reviewed have taken strangely little account of this growing body of knowledge.

Even more important, perhaps, than the literature of the library itself, is the literature that records what has been a period of *sturm und drang* for the colleges of which the libraries are a unit. Current issues in higher education fill the *Proceedings* of an important institute.¹ The influence of

government on education; professional education in liberal arts colleges; election and prescription in relation to college education; the survival of the four-year college—all these and other vital issues have been faced by colleges with courage and candor.² Mr. Butts has projected a chart for the course of the college, designed on historical principles that have been built up after a reconsideration of the curriculum as far back as the time of its domination by the seven liberal arts.³ Miss Beesley has proved the revival of the humanities in American education.⁴ Mr. Arnett recommends a comprehensive study of the total resources of the country, as these are available for higher education, and as they relate to the plans and procedures of privately supported colleges and universities, now facing diminishing returns on investments, possible shrinkage in gifts, and increased competition from publicly supported institutions.⁵

Another significant study reports on 57 types of educational change and experimentation, involving 1322 cases of institutional participation, among 315 colleges of liberal arts. All of these innovations are directed toward the solution of problems caused by the extension of the normal period of formal education; by the assumption that graduation from high school and college is the right of the many, rather than the privilege of the few; by "the growth of an inexorable demand for education beyond the twelfth grade" which "puts a very heavy strain upon established procedures at the college

² *Ibid.*, Vol. 11, 1939.

³ Butts, R. F. *The College Charts Its Course*. McGraw-Hill, 1939.

⁴ Beesley, Patricia. *The Revival of the Humanities in American Education*. Columbia University Press, 1940.

⁵ Arnett, Trevor. *Recent Trends in Higher Education in the United States: with Special Reference to Financial Support for Private Colleges and Universities*. New York, General Education Board, 1940. (Occasional Papers No. 13).

¹ Institute of Administrative Offices of Higher Institutions. *Proceedings*. Vol. 9. University of Chicago Press, 1937.

level."⁶ And, finally, one great state has made a study of the relation of secondary and higher education throughout its borders, and has found that the self-education of each student should constitute the controlling object of any educational agency that deals with him. Incidentally, it may be significant for the future administration of college libraries that among the four recommendations made for reaching this desired goal, the section referring to libraries requires that they shall be organized and administered primarily for the student's convenience in learning.⁷

These selections from the literature of the college today, infinitesimal as they are in view of all that is being written, serve to show that "The gap between American faith in education and satisfaction in its results is sufficiently great to give rise to a continual stream of diagnosis and cures."⁸ In this cure, it is not impossible that the library may have a role of far greater importance than has been thought. Guidance in planning this role would have been welcome from the authors of the *Principles*.

If excellent libraries are an index of institutional excellence, as investigators have found, the survival value of a college may be greatly advanced by the superiority of its library. Colleges may find that in the quest for such value it is later than they think. At least one commentator on the subject, who speaks with unusual authority, has intimated that this is the case when he says:

⁶ National Society for the Study of Education. *The Thirty-Eighth Yearbook*. Pt. II. Bloomington, Ill., Public School Publishing Company, 1939, p. 42, 351-52.

⁷ Learned, W. S., and Wood, B. D. *The Student and His Knowledge*. The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 1938, p. 46. (Bulletin 29.)

⁸ Carnegie Corporation of New York. *Report of the President and the Treasurer*. The Corporation, 1939, p. 36.

There are today in the United States far more universities, colleges, and other operating institutions, and far more voluntary organizations for worthy purposes than the nation can possibly afford. In the years to come many of these are bound to disappear, and one of the most difficult duties that face the foundation is that of so directing its grants that its influence will be directed toward the survival of the fittest.⁹

It is, then, in relating the library to the survival of the fittest colleges that the college library administrator finds his greatest opportunity at such a critical hour. As Mr. Branscomb has intimated, "The answer to a number of academic problems is to be found in a greater emphasis on the reading aspects of college work."¹⁰ In 1932, one of the most brilliant of the schoolmen said the same thing in a different way:

The college does not build up maturity by the same methods as those employed in a mill or an office. Its chosen material is literature; its chosen instrument is the book. The intention of the college is that, in the case of these favored young people who are allowed to study after the high school period, minds shall be fed, and trained, and strengthened, and directed by the use of books. The whole procedure points forward to a mode of life in which persons, by the aid of books, are enabled to live in ways which are not open to their nonreading fellows, are trained to practice special forms of intelligence in which the use of books plays an essential part . . . we must ask in every case, What effect will this arrangement have upon the eagerness and capacity of a student to use books in the right way and for the right purpose?¹¹

At least a few college libraries in the country are studying their responsibilities in the light of the pressure being put

⁹ *Ibid.*, 1940, p. 32.

¹⁰ Branscomb, B. H. *Teaching with Books*. Association of American Colleges and American Library Association, 1940, p. 62.

¹¹ Meiklejohn, Alexander. *The Experimental College*. Harper, 1932, pp. 34-35.

upon their institutions to be so excellent as to deserve not only continued existence, but also gifts leading to ever-increasing opportunities for serviceableness to youth. Certain efforts of this kind are reflected in the financing of far more spacious library programs than those made possible by a total annual budget of \$20,000, the Randall and Goodrich estimate of the cost of good service. That these efforts are neither farfetched nor utopian is indicated by available statistics. Fifteen miscellaneous colleges, serving from 336 to 1259 students are offered as examples of generous library support. This support rises, in one case, to \$40,000 more than the Randall and Goodrich estimate of reasonable adequacy.¹²

From the February issues of each *A.L.A. Bulletin*, beginning with that of 1937, the "Small College Library General and Salary Statistics" yield a composite list of twelve additional libraries, even in the class of small institutions, that enjoy an annual budget of more than \$20,000. In none of these twenty-seven cases is the college anything but a college, nor is enrollment in excess of that suitable to a college, rather than to a university.

Is it possible that the time has come for all college libraries to reconsider their calling and the potentialities inherent in them for cooperating in the ideal of colleges today—the ideal of self-education for students, education independently acquired under guidance, but not through indoctrination? The director of a famous research library has said: "The hope of the future lies, I think, in the college library."¹³ Such a statement is an invita-

tion to librarians to reconsider their principles of administration, not in view of practices at 66 or 95 or 200 colleges, but in the light of educational needs brought into sharp focus by this hour of self-examination on the part of colleges.

Have college libraries been too well content to use principles of administration derived from majority practices, rather than from observation of library excellence, wherever found? Mr. Randall and Mr. Goodrich have warned librarians that the way to increase the willingness of the colleges to pay for library service is to demonstrate the value of that service (p. 46). Will not the principles upon which such service depends be more convincing if based on the genuinely good as well as on the reasonably adequate? Is it not possible that new principles, as new truth, may emerge from "thesis, antithesis, synthesis" derived from practices in many grades of college libraries, among them the very best as well as the reasonably good? It is to be hoped that the joint authors of *Principles of College Library Administration* will find such wishful thinking on the part of their readers an inspiration to the early preparation of a third and much enlarged edition of their invaluable book.—*Blanche Prichard McCrum, Wellesley College.*

The Literature of Junior College Terminal Education. Lois E. Engleman and Walter Crosby Eells. American Association of Junior Colleges, Washington, (1941). 322p. \$2.50.

THE GROWTH of the junior college reflected in the increase in its numbers and its enrollment leaves little doubt regarding the significance and permanence of this new institution. The name "junior college" describes fairly accurately the educa-

¹² U.S. Office of Education. *Biennial Survey of Education, 1934-36.* 2 vols. U.S. Government Printing Office, 1939, Vol. 2, pp. 208-51. (Bulletin, 1937, No. 2).

¹³ Adams, R. G. *Address at the Dedication of the Stockwell Memorial Library, Albion College, June Fourth, 1938.* p. 26.