

Review Article

Public Administration and the Library.
Arnold Miles and Lowell Martin.
University of Chicago Press, 1941. xiii,
313 p. \$3.

IN 1933 the Graduate Library School of the University of Chicago undertook a general study of the relation of the public library in the United States to government. The third and last volume of this so-called trilogy, *Public Administration and the Library* by Arnold Miles and Lowell Martin, is not directly connected by the authors with the second volume, *People and Print* by Douglas Waples, but it is very closely associated with the first, *The Government of the American Public Library* by Carleton B. Joeckel.

Dr. Joeckel directed his study to government rather than to administration:

Our field of interest is primarily in the library as a piece of governmental machinery and its efficiency as such. The practical problems of internal administration—the detailed operation of the machine—have in general been considered to be beyond the scope of the inquiry. In other words, the field covered may be regarded as extending from the state and city down to and including the governmental authority in direct control of the library. Below that level there has ordinarily been no attempt to go.

In the light of both this distinction and the title they have chosen, one might expect the authors of *Public Administration and the Library* to continue the inquiry from the “governmental authority in direct control” to “the practical problems of administration,” an expectation that is encouraged by their statement of general purpose: “the examination of public

library organization and management in terms of emerging principles of public administration.” Public administration is defined as “management in the area of public controls and services,” and management, in turn, is referred to Fayol’s “planning, organization, command, coordination, and control” and Gulick’s “planning, organizing, staffing, directing, coordinating, representing, and budgeting.” “The fundamental point,” according to Miles and Martin, “is that the librarian is a public administrator. . . . In accomplishing his purposes the librarian performs administrative operations essentially similar to those of other public agencies.” Extended consideration of these “administrative operations,” however, is disclaimed in the preface: “The area of internal library management is only touched upon, and the important task of developing the theory of internal library administration remains to be accomplished.” In the sense in which Dr. Joeckel used the terms, Miles and Martin devote a third of their space to topics in administration; two thirds to topics in government.

Recapitulation

The bulk of the book is in part a recapitulation and in part an extension of *The Government of the American Public Library*. Chapter two offers the best summary treatment in print of the library functions of state government: services to state departments and agencies; services to local agencies in providing supplementary book and bibliographic aid, library promotion and supervision, and state library planning; and direct services to the pub-

lic, particularly in rural areas. There is also a statement of the principles that should govern the organization and reorganization of state library services.

Obstacles to the extension of library service to unserved areas are judiciously reviewed in chapter three. Attention is also given to the problem of reorganizing both urban and rural services in larger units, parallels and precedents being drawn freely from other fields.

In chapter four the authors tilt with the controversial subject of the public library and education. No new data are adduced. The chapter advances rather as an exercise in dialectic, reviewing arguments pro and con, to the conclusion that "competition, duplication, and incompleteness in the community's educational system, whether at the adult or the juvenile level can be avoided. . . . It is through voluntary coordination of effort that progress must be made."

Library Finance

Library finance is the subject of chapters five and six. The topics treated include the current tax situation, the future of library revenue, the independence of library revenue, types of intergovernmental financial adjustment, financial assistance and central control, state aid, and proposals for Federal aid. The essential

facts of this difficult subject are selected and marshaled with great skill. These admirable chapters need to be read, pondered, and applied by every public librarian.

Chapter seven epitomizes the arguments for and against the board form of library organization. This concludes the portion of the book dealing with library government.

Topics in library management are noted cursorily throughout the volume and four are selected for somewhat fuller treatment. The relevance of centralized purchasing to library extension, with which it is combined in chapter three, escapes the reviewer, but the observations offered on this head are sensible and deserve wider application. The discussions of budgets and cost accounting are appropriately embedded in the chapters on finance and gain from the association; they justify the authors' method of exhibiting a subject first in its full setting, with parallels from other fields, and gradually narrowing it down to the point or points of immediate applicability in library practice. Discussion of the fourth topic, library measurement, has never been surpassed in relevance or insight by any treatment of equal length.—*Ralph A. Beals, Public Library of the District of Columbia, Washington, D.C.*