

shall therefore meet the editor's request for a review of it largely by an attempt at a synopsis.

In his introductory section the author refers to an alleged shortage of good administrative material for government service and asks if it is going to be necessary to turn again and again to the business world, to the legal profession and other places in the hope of locating capable administrators. Librarians will not have any difficulty in transferring this question to their own sphere. The author then goes on to discuss the possibility of the government recruiting potential administrative talent for its own service, and proceeds to consider the conditions under which it can be brought to light and developed. Following this is some discussion of the functions of administration. Librarians will, I think, in the main, agree that this includes both policy making and the function of management.

In section 2 he gives a vivid picture of the able administrator in action, a man "who has formulated a little nucleus of well-thought-out purposes and basic policies . . . so that every proposal . . . can be put to the test of these fundamental aims." His ideal administrator consults his staff to get real criticism and ideas; he does not merely go through the motions. This section the reviewer especially commends to young administrators still elastic enough to be affected by it. I wonder if the story of how one young assistant fathered an idea on his chief in order to get it accepted could still be told of this generation. Section 3 defining the abilities desired in an administrator, is relatively slight, but section 4, dealing with two kinds of thinking desirable in an administrator, rational inference, that is judgment based on the analysis of factual data,

and the capacity for intuitive sound decisions where the information is inadequate or there is little time for investigation, is admirable. Section 5, the last one, is short and in the main a summary, with the conclusions that administrative ability is a complicated pattern of many talents and that the desired abilities must, to a large extent, be learned.

The failure of most of our large university libraries to develop young administrators to go out and head other scholarly libraries is marked in my time. It is to be hoped that the current and next generations will do better. This pamphlet should help them.—*Sydney B. Mitchell, University of California, Berkeley.*

The Library of Tomorrow: a Symposium. Emily Miller Danton, ed. American Library Association, 1939. 191p. \$2.50.

IN HIS forecast of an ideal Israel the prophet Joel predicted, "Your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions." In this symposium Mrs. Danton has accomplished more than Joel anticipated. The twenty contributors include the librarian emeritus of Congress; four ex-presidents, the secretary and a division chief of the American Library Association; a university president; a professor of education; two professors in library schools; and the heads of public, university, children's, special and National Youth Administration libraries. Two outstanding non-librarian advocates of public libraries, Mrs. Dorothy Canfield Fisher and William E. Marcus of the Montclair (N.J.) Public Library Board, complete the list. Library users *per se* are not included.

These contributors vary widely in their

experience in and with libraries as well as in the types of library work they discuss. Their contributions, nevertheless, have at least two common characteristics. The older members of the group as well as the younger see visions. Practically none of them pays enough attention to the past even to dream about it. Several points of fairly general agreement are noticeable but there is no insistence on regimentation or close approach to uniform approval of technique or the evaluation of many specific phases of library work. "To-morrow" seems to range from just around the corner to the not very remote year 1976.

Social forecasts tend to follow three fairly general patterns: first, a future society based on radical differences, good and bad, from the time in which the forecaster writes; second, a society in which good or bad social changes evolve from contemporary conditions with relatively little essential dissimilarity; third, those based on fantasy and not to be realized under conditions generally considered normal. This book is definitely of the second type with emphasis on the optimistic viewpoint. Not many things appear in the forecasts that are new or which are not easily recognizable as developments of present conditions or practices. General mechanization of buildings, equipment, and administrative techniques are suggested at one end of the composite picture. An "attempt to stock the literature of the left (pamphlets, books, and periodicals) in quantities that are adequate for the present and potential demand" is at the other end. The *carte blanche* character of this professional menu permits a fairly wide variety between these extremes.

A composite graph of the suggested changes would show an uninterrupted curve of sharp ascent with an upper

terminus approaching the incommensurable if not trailing into the infinite. Federal aid is usually postulated when mentioned or discussed. The most specific article, which seems to be most generally approved by reviewers, is entitled "National Leadership from Washington" and stands or falls with federal grants. The pervasively optimistic tone of the book ignores the possible operation of the law of diminishing returns in readers' interests, public conviction of the essential place of libraries, or increasing funds to meet anticipated increases in use and expense.

Probably this is the main weakness of the symposium as a whole. The library's past justifies hopeful anticipation. Nevertheless, it is not defeatism to insist that permanent growth must be intensive as well as extensive. More readers do not necessarily mean the maximum of public service. What they read as well as how much is important. Though several articles inject this note at times, it is far from dominant.

In the very frequent insistence on future cooperation, the mutual character of cooperation is less stressed than equalization. In social service, as in a city water supply, there is a difference between building a reservoir high enough for pressure sufficient to supply all levels of the territory served and opening the reservoir outlets in an attempt to raise the general level of the sources of the reservoir's supply.

Most of the contributors are primarily interested in public libraries or extension services. Reference and research needs and services consequently receive comparatively little attention. President Wriston's views on college and university libraries are both discriminating and provocative in their suggestions of selec-

tive limitation. It is unlikely, however, that the excellent special collections on Lincoln, Napoleon I, or American poetry at Brown will be drastically reduced or that agreement on limitation of college and university libraries will be soon or easily reached.

Contradictory as it may seem, this very lack of definiteness and agreement makes the book of more than temporary interest and value. The library must be unsettled in a world of social confusion. The points of agreement reached independently indicate possible avenues of advance. Disagreement indicates more than one road to improvement.

It will not be popular to note that, while the potential social service of the library is well recognized, its necessary and often desirable limitation by general social conditions is not always as frankly admitted. Future depressions and diminishing interest in reading are quite possible. Plans for forced entrenchment should be in readiness by the most optimistic librarian even if not publicized or acted upon until unavoidable.

Librarians who do their own thinking will be ready to make these reservations. They will not mistake the occasional evangelistic outbursts for factual statements. Those who think by proxy will for the most part find the excess optimism more profitably stimulating than a similar excess of even plausible pessimism.—*Frank K. Walter, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis.*

Vitalizing a College Library. B. Lamar Johnson. American Library Association, 1939. 122p. \$2.

MORE AND more the college library must be regarded in its relationship to the other educational divisions on the campus.

Librarians have recognized this, perhaps more keenly than professorial and administrative groups, and here and there a few bold spirits have, on occasions, made threatening gestures toward reform. At Stephens College, the administration, the library staff, and the teachers, recognizing the essential unity of library work and teaching, discarded conventional library practices for a program which would bring students, faculty, and books together and which would make it more nearly possible for the student to associate with books as in a private library. By establishing the dual position of librarian and dean of instruction, by employing in this position a man whose training, experience, and interest have been primarily in the field of teaching, and by securing a special foundation grant to conduct an experimental library program, the Stephens College administration set the stage for the library program described by Dr. Johnson in *Vitalizing a College Library.*

The library program described provides for decentralized service under centralized administration, for classroom libraries (languages and dramatics with modification of the plan in English and other humanities), division libraries (social study and science departmental libraries adjacent to teaching quarters under supervision of subject-librarian specialists), the use of the general library for informal student-teacher conferences as well as for formal class instruction, joint library-teacher responsibility in instructing students in the use of books and libraries, book collections in residence halls and in the infirmary, and for the encouragement and building up of student private libraries. The range of services commonly thought of in college library work has been expanded to include the circulation of