

sion of other approaches. Again librarianship needs all the theory and invention it can obtain, but it would be unfortunate if there should be as universal devotion to any single approach as there has been to the experience approach among librarians generally.

The most important need of library administration is for studies of, say, law in relation to library experience, sociological and economic backgrounds, and theories and invention. *A Metropolitan Library in Action* has set the pattern by its admirable synthesis of the various approaches. It is to be hoped that other similar contributions will follow.—*E.W. McDiarmid, University of Illinois Library School.*

The Chicago College Plan, by Chauncey Samuel Boucher, Revised and Enlarged after Ten Years' Operation of the Plan.
A. J. Brumbaugh. University of Chicago Press, c1940. 413p. \$3.

THE FIRST EDITION of this work presented a description of the organization of the Chicago College Plan and its first years of operation, a discussion of the philosophy and content of its curriculum, a description of its personnel and materials, and of the many problems and difficulties of its operation. The present edition adds to the first work the record of successful additional years of operation of the plan, and some highly important as well as highly interesting material concerning the guidance and personnel work, the four-year junior college, the student evaluation of the program, and the modifications and additions to the original program brought about by study of that program in operation.

At first glance, this work seems to be for the professional educator. To li-

brarians the volume is extremely disappointing since the discussion of the library facilities of the University of Chicago College is limited to sixteen pages. Taken apart from the rest of the volume, these pages present little to us, it is true, beyond a record of circulation and a description of library materials and their organization. A thoughtful reading of the whole volume, however, gives meaning to the library statistics—so much so, in fact, that the reviewer ventures the opinion that this volume is one of the best available discussions of the objectives and problems of college library administration.

The materials of a college library are its books and its readers, and its field of operation is the contact between the two. Whether we think of reading in the critical, analytical sense used by some, or in the recreational and dilettante senses used by others, this contact between the book and its user is the opportunity and the responsibility of the college library.

The Chicago College Plan places a heavy emphasis on the careful, critical reading of books. It does not presuppose, as some people seem to think, that good reading is all that is required for an education. It does, however, make that contact between the book and its reader a highly important step in the educational process. Consequently, this descriptive volume about the plan has much to say about the methods and results of reading, and, both directly and indirectly, about the problems, the methods, and the achievements of the library.

For example, in the discussions of the philosophy and content of the curriculum, and the organization and presentation of course materials, considerable emphasis is placed on the suitability of books to their users and to their purposes. Again in

the chapter "Student Guidance and Personnel Work," much attention is given to identifying the student's previous and present use of books, to measuring various factors which go to make up his total reading ability, and to using information thus gained to further the individual's educational progress. In the section "Special Instructional Material," constant reference is made to the relationship of books to other methods of presenting educational materials. The full, excellent documentation in the Appendices also contains much information and many suggestions regarding the selection, organization, and use of books in the college program.

In a narrow sense, this book is a detailed description of a single institution of higher education. In a larger way, the book is a significant contribution in the field of American democratic education, and in that sense, for the librarian is a significant contribution in his own field. The college librarian today is constantly faced with the problem of defining his position and that of his unit in the college community. The problem is largely that of defining the objectives of the college library, and the methods of reaching those objectives in practice. If the librarian will study this volume on the Chicago College Plan with the words "Books" and "Reading" in mind, he will find a large portion of his own difficulties discussed there, and many suggestions for his own procedure.—*G. Donald Smith, Mary Washington College Library, Fredericksburg, Va.*

TO THE EDITOR:

In the June issue of *College and Re-*

search Libraries, there was a review of our publication, *Review Index*. May I have the opportunity to reply to two of the criticisms made in that review?

One criticism was that the reviews of foreign books are very important, but that *Review Index* does not list foreign periodicals. At the price for which we are furnishing *Review Index*, it is impossible for us to index foreign language periodicals. Another reason for not including this type of material is the European war, which makes receipt of most foreign publications quite uncertain. We believe it should be pointed out that *Review Index*, unlike the *Book Review Digest*, indexes reviews of all foreign books which appear in the periodicals on our desk. This fact gives *Review Index* a decided edge over *Book Review Digest* in the matter of Foreign Book Reviews.

Our second point is that the reviewer mentions only the number of titles (1500) which *Review Index* gives in addition to the *Book Review Digest*.

Our main purpose is not to provide reviews of titles not found in the *Book Review Digest*. Rather, *Review Index* proposes to provide critical, professional reviews for every book it lists. Therefore, we believe it should be mentioned that *Review Index* lists more than 5000 reviews per year which cannot be found in the *Book Review Digest*.

The editors of *Review Index* agree with H. S. Canby that only a specialist can write a reliable review, and, therefore, *Review Index* proposes to index reviews written by specialists rather than those written for the more popular book review periodicals.—*Lyman W. Newlin, Business Manager, Follett Book Company.*