Book Reviews

The American College President. Harold W. Stoke. Harper, New York, 1959. ix + 130 pp. $3.50.

This is a good book in every respect. College and university presidents who read it will find themselves nodding in agreement and wanting to make it required reading for faculty members, trustees, and publicists.

Stoke, in this nicely written explanation and interpretation of the job of college president, has proved himself to be an analyst of a high order. As president of Queens College, he knows all of the urges, ambitions, and challenges, all of the joys, exhilarations, and satisfactions involved; but he also shows a keen appreciation of the causes of vicissitudes, frustrations, and failures which fall to the lot of the vast majority of college presidents.

It is really quite an accomplishment that in 171 pages the author has been able to weave into one meaningful tapestry so many divergent factors whose haphazard occurrence makes the president's calendar interpretable only to himself and his secretary. Stoke deals with problems concerning fund-raising, academic freedom, the "pathology of administration," deans, *in loco parentis,* alumni, intercollegiate athletics, "duty speeches," fringe benefits, "learning versus competence," curricular changes, proliferation, faculty rivalries, salaries, budgets, correspondence galore, public versus private institutions, management skills, higher education as big business, selection of new faculty members, visiting speakers, publications, fraternities, student rating of professors, campus tensions, tenure, clinics of all kinds, housekeeping problems, more "duty speeches," more correspondence, and more fund-raising. Into this tapestry he weaves all of those things under the chapter headings: "The vested authority," "Personal problems," "The administrator," "Everything takes money," "Boards of trustees," "Public relations," "Among the scholars," "The students," "The uneasy campus," and a final splendid chapter on "The uses of a philosophy of education."

In his preface Stoke says that this book is meant to be "an interpretation of an important part of higher education, a report on some of the problems of the president, and an indication of some of the pleasures and pains of his position." He says that he has written these comments for "administrator, faculty member, alumnus, trustee, and the general reader," for everyone "who is genuinely concerned about the improvement of American higher education."

Now if other college presidents somehow can get their faculty members, their trustees, and other persons of influence to read this book, the average tenure in office of presidents (now 4 years) may be lengthened to approach the 6 years enjoyed by football coaches. Great strides in the advancement of American education would then result.

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Physiology of Fungi. Vincent W. Cochrane. Wiley, New York; Chapman & Hall, London, 1958. xiii + 524 pp. Illus. $9.75.

The history of mycology has, in a sense, been a miniature of the history of biology as a whole. The early studies on fungi were primarily taxonomic; they were followed by a period of morphology, and later the comparative approach was adopted. Finally, there has been a period of physiological and biochemical studies. Of course, this history reflects an expansion rather than a succession, because the specialties which began early have remained as vigorous and essential components of the discipline. Moreover, each specialty did not begin immediate, rapid growth, but exhibited a sort of growth curve. The study of some aspects of the physiology of fungi, for example, began relatively early; other aspects which required more sophisticated techniques or backgrounds drawn from other disciplines have begun only recently. In any event, it is perhaps an indication of the recentness of the widespread study of the physiology of fungi that there was no single, reasonably complete treatise on the subject before World War II. It is a measure of the rapid growth of the field that five monographs in English have appeared during the past decade.

The first question that a reviewer should attempt to answer is "How does this book compare with its predecessors?" In the case of *Physiology of Fungi,* one answer is simple: it is without doubt the most comprehensive and best balanced book on the subject that has yet appeared. Substantiation for this assertion is only partially to be found in the chapter headings, because each chapter contains many subheadings and a multitude of facts. The major topics treated are: growth of fungi, the composition of fungus cells, carbon, nitrogen, inorganic nutrition and metabolism, vitamin requirements, reproduction, spore germination, and the action of physical and chemical agents on fungi. Discussion of all of these topics is available in one or another of the books published in the last decade, but here they are all in one book, and the space allotted to each is equitable.

The very comprehensiveness of the book is responsible for one of its limitations, because, even with the field of coverage limited to the physiology of filamentous fungi and aerobic actinomycetes, it treats such a multiplicity of subjects that it is impossible for an author to discuss any one topic in detail. For the most part, however, the book is more than an annotated bibliography. The references were selected carefully, and the material was evaluated critically and interpreted objectively, albeit briefly. In most cases, the papers referred to must be consulted for details. The book is logically organized and is written in a clear, conservative style. Despite the winnowing of references, the bibliography is extensive.

Some people will be disappointed that *Physiology of Fungi* is not a textbook, but it is much too detailed for use in any but advanced courses. On the other hand, advanced students as well as professional workers in mycology, plant physiology, "microbiology," and cellular physiology will find this scholarly book a useful and perhaps stimulating reference work. As an inventory of the present status of knowledge concerning the physiology of fungi, the book should help to promote the further growth of the field.

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Colorimetric Determination of Traces of Metals. E. B. Sandell. Interscience, New York, ed. 3, 1959. xxii + 1032 pp. Illus. $24.

Analytical chemists will welcome the appearance of this third edition of a book which for 15 years has been the standard reference on colorimetric methods for determining microgram and submicrogram quantities of metals. The