

“*Administrative Tribunals at Work*,” A Symposium edited by Robert S. W. Pollard, pp. xx, 154. London. Stevens and Sons Ltd. 1950. 17/6 (Stg.).

This collection of essays, published under the auspices of the Institute of Public Administration, shows how various administrative tribunals in England actually function, with the object of revealing bad practices and principles which should not be perpetuated when new administrative tribunals are erected and of ascertaining good practices and principles which might be capable of application to new tribunals.

This work proceeds on the basis that, now the need for administrative tribunals has been recognised, some effort should be made to rationalise existing tribunals, and that, to enable this to be done, the views of persons experienced in the practical working of these tribunals should be made known. This book provides such views in relation to a number of tribunals now operating in England.

Following a foreword by Professor W. A. Robson and an Introduction which illuminates the problems involved, there are seven essays. In the first, the editor describes the working of tribunals operating under the *National Service Act 1948*, for conscientious objectors to military service, and then considers how their constitution and practice compare with the well-known principles stated by Professor Robson in *Justice and Administrative Law*.

He takes each principle as a generally desirable standard and discusses whether its application to the tribunal under discussion is warranted, and, if so, how far the tribunal actually measures up to that standard. Miss D. Scott Stokes follows the same course generally in dealing with some tribunals appointed by the Minister of Labour, as does Mr. G. Lach in describing appeal tribunals under the *National Assistance Act 1948*. One would have thought that the value of the book would have been enhanced if this technique had been adopted by all the other writers who deal with such diverse tribunals as those approving the rents of furnished houses, assessment committees concerned with fixing values of land for rating purposes, tribunals for appeals in town and country planning law, and, as an example of a domestic tribunal, the Disciplinary Committee exercising disciplinary jurisdiction over solicitors.

Despite this variation in mode of treatment, the essays effectively bring to light the questions which require consideration by any government proposing to create new administrative tribunals if those tribunals are to function well and at the same time to deserve the same measure of public respect as is accorded to the Courts of Law.

The book can be commended to all who are interested in the problem of ensuring that administrative tribunals are fitted to perform the functions made necessary by our present-day belief in social responsibility.

H.A.J.F.