

## LOUIS R. WILSON, TEACHER

By WM. H. JOHNSON

I am one of the many hundreds of people who had the good fortune to be a student in one of Dr. Louis R. Wilson's classes at the University of North Carolina. Although I have talked with him occasionally during chance meetings in the library honored by his name, our relationship has been primarily that of student and instructor. Therefore, it is as a teacher that I should like to write of him now.



Dr. Wilson had already been "retired" for a number of years when I first became acquainted with him, but he was the most active retired man I've ever known. He still came to the library every day, and he was still teaching in the library school he had founded. The course was library administration, and I took it.

The first day of class we were presented with a thick sheaf of mimeographed pages which was not, as I hoped when I first saw it, some reading material for the course, but only the bibliography of material to be read. Dr. Wilson was definitely very well informed on what had been published in any field he studied or taught, and he was going to be sure his students were equally well informed.

We were not only expected to read this material, we were expected to understand it. To

insure this, each student was called on as often as possible to report on what he had read. Whenever Dr. Wilson saw we were not getting the full import of the material he would explain it to us. His remarks were always pertinent, illustrative, and often humorous. It was always a pleasure to see his lips quirk into a little half-smile as he thought of a story, usually from the vast fund of his own personal experience, to illustrate a point.

Although he was a librarian teaching a library course, there were many books in that thick bibliography which were not related in any way to librarianship. They dealt with the problems of administration in other fields, and Dr. Wilson believed in covering all phases of a subject. He assumed we were in his classroom to receive an education, to learn something, and he was determined that we would receive as much from his store of knowledge and experience as could be imparted to us in four and a half months. As a result there are hundreds of us who know a surprising amount about the theory of administration. I doubt if there is any student who ever took that course who has forgotten the meaning of POSDCORB and the many things covered by the seven words it stand for.\*

I was very fortunate to have come to Carolina when I did. Had I come a few years later, I would have been too late to receive the benefit of Dr. Wilson's ideas and personality first-hand. I say first-hand because although he is retiring from the activities of his "retired" years, his influence on the library school here at North Carolina and in the profession as a whole will be felt for many years. Still, future students will miss something by not coming into direct contact with Dr. Wilson, some intangible enthusiasm he communicated to us for which we are all deeply grateful. I'm sure we are all better

\*Planning, Organizing, Staffing, Directing, Co-ordinating, Reporting, Budgeting.

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librarians, whether in administrative positions or not, for having associated with this man who embodies the highest ideals we should all strive for in our profession.

I know I speak for all his students everywhere when I wish Dr. Wilson a long and pleasurable retirement. Like everyone who knows him, I wonder how retired this retirement will be?