

CASES AND MATERIALS ON CONSTITUTIONAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE
LAW. By G. Wilson. [Cambridge University Press. 1966. xxv
+ 609 pp. 70s.].

This is the second volume to appear in the Cambridge Legal Case Book Series and is an excellent compilation of leading cases and other original sources of constitutional law such as extracts from statutes, parliamentary debates and official reports of various commissions and committees. The book is thus a departure from an exclusive court-oriented approach to the study of this branch of the law. As pointed out by the compiler in his preface, the activities of the courts cannot be taken as the focal point in such a study else it will not be possible "to present constitutional law as a coherent subject or relate it in a meaningful way to the functions it has to fulfil or the social and political context in which it has to operate." This becomes obvious if one considers the system of cabinet government and ministerial responsibility. Much of the materials relating to this subject are not found in the law reports but in the parliamentary debates. On the question of dissolution of Parliament, appointment of the Prime Minister, and the dismissal of Ministers, materials in the Royal Archives at Windsor which throw light on the matter are reproduced and made readily available. These are merely examples to illustrate why this book abandoned a court-oriented approach towards the study of constitutional law. Indeed, even those cases which are presented are "put in their larger constitutional and social context" by the author. This is certainly an admirable casebook on constitutional law.

However, the book has one major drawback. It is inadequate as a casebook on administrative law which is much less fully treated than the first part of the book which is devoted to problems of constitutional law. Thus the whole problem of administrative remedies is compressed into one case of *R. v. Electricity Commissioners, ex parte London Electricity Joint Committee Co. (1920) Ltd.*;¹ the principle of natural justice is illustrated by the solitary case of *Cooper v. Wandsworth Board of Wales*.² This can hardly be adequate in view of the developments in this area of the law. The impression imparted by the skimpy treatment of the vital problems of administrative law is that the compiler was restrained by the problem of keeping down the size of the book. If this part of the book had been given as full a treatment as the first, the book would probably have trebled its present size and price, as the compiler explained in the preface, had to be kept down.

1. *Singapore Printing Employees' Union v. Straits Times Press (M) Ltd.* [1962] G.G.S. 2337.

1. [1924] 1 K.B. 171.

2. (1863) 14 C.B. (N.S.) 180.

It is suggested that this problem of keeping the book to a reasonable size and price may be solved by limiting the materials to primarily constitutional matters and to give administrative law materials a separate treatment. In this way, perhaps more relevant materials on constitutional law (e.g. an extract from Heuston's interesting essay on sovereignty of parliament) which is notable by its absence from the section on parliamentary sovereignty and the practical relevance of which to English constitutional law is fortified by *Ranasinghe v. Bribery Commissioner*³ could be included which may have been excluded because of the desire not to produce an overly large volume.

S. M. THIO.

3. [1964] 2 W.L.R. 1301. [1964] 2 All E.R. 785.