CHAPTER V

OTHER OFFICERS
We have already noted that the Vice-Chancellor is the pivot of University administration. He must have a firm knowledge of all aspects of administration and must concern himself with all that goes on the University. This may impose an unbearable burden on the Vice-Chancellor, particularly in Universities which are both affiliating and residential. Under these circumstances the Vice-Chancellor however versatile he may be, may not be able to look after all aspects of administration. If he burdens himself with too much details of administration he may not have that freshness of mind for policy making and development of the University. In a place like Guwahati and Dibrugarh where tensions exist at all times, the Vice-Chancellor will have to spend considerable amount of time in anticipating trouble and devise means to meet them. Although provision has been made in the University Act for the appointment of Rector or Pro-Vice-Chancellor no appointment has so far been made in any of the Universities. The reasons are obvious. The Vice-Chancellor is the chief executive and academic officer of the University. In the performance of his duties he is assisted by the Registrar on administrative and policy matters and by the Deans in the
co-ordination of teaching and research in the faculties or schools. In the Gauhati University the Secretary of the University Classes and the Director of students' Welfare look after the needs of the students. The Universities in North East India have not yet assumed unwieldy size and the need of a Pro-Vice-Chancellor or Rector has not been felt. In our opinion there is no need of a Rector or Pro-Vice-Chancellor in any University in this region until the Universities assume larger proportions in size and volume of work.

Registrar:

Next to the Vice-Chancellor the most important officer is the Registrar. All the University Acts have provided for the appointment of Registrar. All the Universities except the Hill University have a Registrar.

The Registrars of the Gauhati and Dibrugarh Universities are appointed by the Executive Councils. But the Registrar of the Assam Agricultural University is appointed by the Vice-Chancellor subject to the approval of the Board of Management. The Board laid down the condition that an experienced officer from the State Government should be
recruited for the office. In the Gauhati and Dibrugarh Universities the Registrar is the member-secretary of the Court and the Selection Committee. He is non-member secretary of the Executive Council and the Construction Committee. In the Dibrugarh University the Registrar is also the Secretary ex-officio of the Post-graduate Board, the under-graduate Board and the Finance Committee while in the Gauhati University Treasurer is the member-Secretary of the Finance Committee and the Academic Registrar-cum-Controller of Examinations is the non-member secretary of the Academic Council and the Faculties. In the North Eastern Hill University the Registrar is the ex-officio Secretary of the Executive Council, the Academic Council and the Boards of Studies, but he is not a member of these bodies. He is however the ex-officio member secretary of the Court as in Gauhati and Dibrugarh Universities. In the Agricultural University the Registrar is the ex-officio secretary of the Academic Council but not of the Board of Management.

The Registrar is an important functionary in the University administration and is the head of the University secretariat. He works under and with the Vice-Chancellor and is his confidential adviser. In all Universities the Registrar is the secretary of the Executive Council. He has to be
its continuing adviser and is expected to offer an opinion or to make a suggestion, though not to decide or vote. He has also come to be recognised as a regular adviser of people in the University holding responsible academic positions. They come to him first on their problems. The Registrar has also many other duties and taking all these together he has to work as a principal. He should have a good academic background and experience of administration.

'The Registrar represents the permanent part of the University executive. The Vice-Chancellor holds office for a limited period. The Registrar is therefore the custodian of the traditions of the University, of its efficiency and integrity. It is also necessary that his entire loyalty should be to the University. He must, therefore, exercise his powers with discretion and understanding. His practices should always be responsive to the academic traditions of the university he serves'(1).

The Registrar of the Gauhati University is appointed for a term of five years with eligibility for re-appointment.

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while the Registrars of the Dibrugarh University and the North Eastern Hill University are to be appointed permanently.

We are of opinion that the Registrar should be appointed permanently with a fixed probationary period as in the case of all Universities outside North East India. In regard to his duties he should be the secretary of all the authorities of the University but should not be a member of these bodies except the Court. In the absence of the Chancellor the Vice-Chancellor presides over meetings of the Court and has to act in the manner in which the speaker of the Legislative Assembly works. The Registrar has to reply on many points of information and policies adopted by the various authorities. It is thus necessary that the Registrar should be able to participate in the proceedings of the Court as a member besides being its secretary.

The duties of the Registrar have been enumerated in the Acts. He is the custodian of records, common seal, and all other properties of the university as the Executive Council may entrust to his care. He must manage these properties. He must sign all contracts and agreements made on behalf of the university. He must conduct correspondence with other bodies. He must convene the meetings of all the bodies of which he is the ex-officio Secretary. He must
arrange and superintend the examinations of the university till such time the university appoints other officers if any for the purpose. Finally he must discharge any other duties that may be entrusted to him by the Executive Council. In the Dibrugarh University the Registrar has to exercise general supervision over the funds of the University and advise the Finance Committee in regard to the financial policy of the University. He is also responsible for the preparation of the Annual Report of the working of the University.

The functions and powers of the Registrar enumerated above are by no means exhaustive. The amount of power that he exercised depends on his personality. An honest, hard working and efficient Registrar can exercise more power and influence and can help in the rapid progress of a University.

During the period 1947 to 1977 there were six Registrars in all the four Universities in the region. The Hill University does not have a Registrar. It has an Officer on Special Duty to look after Finances, another for administration and a third for examinations. The Hill University Act has provided for a Registrar but he has not yet been appointed. The OSD (Admn) performs the functions of the Registrar. We
suggest that a Registrar should be appointed to look after the administration of the Hill University.

Of the six Registrars only one was a Doctor of Philosophy. All others are holders of the Degree of Master of Arts. All of them belonged to the teaching profession before their appointment. All of them came to office with rich experience either as Treasurer or as deputy registrar.

Treasurer and Finance Officer:

All the Universities do not have a treasurer. In Gauhati there is a Treasurer; in the Hill University there is a Finance Officer. In Dibrugarh there is neither Treasurer nor Finance Officer. The Registrar is responsible for the management of finances of the University. In the Agricultural University there is a comptroller.

The Treasurer in Gauhati University is a whole time salaried officer of the University and is appointed by the Executive Council for a term of five years on terms, conditions and remuneration determined by it. He is eligible for re-appointment any number of terms.
The Treasurer or the Finance Officer exercises general supervision over the funds of the University. He is also the adviser of the University in regard to its financial policy. He is responsible for sound investment of the University funds and for the preparation of the financial statement for presentation to the Court. He must see that the budget as approved by the competent authority is observed and the moneys sanctioned are spent on services for which they are alloted. The Treasurer may be entrusted with other functions as may be prescribed by statutes and Ordinances.

The Comptroller in Agricultural University has more powers than the Treasurer or the Finance officer. He may disallow any expenditure which is contrary to the terms of any statute. Otherwise he performs the same functions as the Treasurer or Finance Officer.

We are of opinion that each University should have a Finance Officer rather than Treasurer appointed by the Executive Council on a permanent basis. He should be the secretary of the Finance Committee of the Executive Council and should have the powers and duties as enumerated earlier. He should not operate as a brake or an instrument for delaying
progress. Of course, the importance of keeping correct accounts and following the budgetary laws should not be under-estimated.

Deans:

The Gauhati University Act provides for a Dean for each of the Faculties. The Dean is elected for a term of three years from among the Heads of the departments of the faculty. The Dean is responsible for the due observance of the statutes, ordinances and regulations relating to the Faculty. He is the executive Officer of the Faculty and presides over the meetings of the Faculty. But the Vice-Chancellor, when present, presides over a meeting of the Faculty. The Heads of the teaching departments are responsible to the Dean for organisation of teaching in the Faculty. In the North Eastern Hill University the Dean of a School is appointed by the Vice-Chancellor from among Professors of the School for a period of three years and is eligible for re-appointment. He, however, ceases to hold office on attaining the age of sixty years. The Dean is the Head of the School and is responsible for the conduct and maintenance of the standards of teaching and research in the school. He has such other functions as may be prescribed by the Ordinances.
The Dibrugarh University Act does not provide for Deans or Faculties. The University has a post-graduate board and an under-graduate board which are presided over by the Vice-Chancellor.

In the North Eastern Hill University the faculties are constituted in the form of schools—school of life sciences, school of social sciences, school of languages etc. and these schools are headed by the Deans who are their administrative officers. In the case of the Gauhati University the faculties do not act as schools of studies. They are the co-ordinating bodies charged with academic functions, mostly in advisory capacity.

In our opinion, the Dean should be elected in rotation by the Faculty from amongst Professors who are heads of University departments of teaching and research for a period of three years. In the case of a Faculty in which there is no University department of teaching, the Dean should be elected from amongst the Professors recognised by the University. He should have the right to preside over meetings of the Faculty except when the Vice-Chancellor is present. He should also have the right to speak at any meeting of the committees of courses and studies whenever he is present.
He should not be treated as an administrative officer of
the Faculty. He should assist the Vice-Chancellor in his
administrative duties in respect of the faculty of which
he is the Dean. He should however be given sufficient power
to implement decisions of the Faculties in connection with
organisation of common teaching programmes and inter depart­
mental or inter disciplinary research and teaching. Other­
wise the departments should be allowed to function as auto­
nomous units under control of the Vice-Chancellor.

The different universities in the region have other
officers of various designations and with different nature
of duties. In affiliating Universities where conducting of
examination is a major responsibility there should be a
Controller of Examinations to arrange for the conduct of
examinations and publication of results. He may be assisted
by one or more officers of the rank of deputy or assistant
registrar depending on the volume of work. In the Guwahati
University an Academic Registrar-cum-Controller of Exam­
nations exists. He is the secretary of the Academic Council
and the Faculties and has to arrange for the conduct of
examinations and publication of results. In the Dibrugarh
University there is one Chief controller of examinations
and a controller of examinations. We feel that the
nomenclature of this officer should be controller of examinations who will be responsible for conduct of the examinations and publication of results. There should also be a Deputy Registrar for academic affairs to assist the Registrar in his duties as secretary of the Academic Council and the faculties.

Chairman of Students' Advisory Council:

The Gauhati University Act provides for a Students' Advisory Council the functions of which will be dealt with in a later chapter. The Chairman of the Council should be nominated by the Vice-Chancellor for one year and he should be eligible for re-nomination. The Chairman should be a University Professor or senior Reader with aptitude for student welfare. He should be a person who commands respect of the students and is capable of providing guidance to them in their academic and welfare activities.

Dean of Students' Welfare:

In two of the Universities in North East India there is no office of Dean of students' Welfare. The Gauhati University has a Secretary of the University Classes, who in
addition to his primary duty as an administrative officer of the teaching departments, is the President of the students' Union and co-ordinating officer of the students' Halls. A Director of Students' Welfare also exists. The Director looks after the welfare needs of the students and arranges for their games, sports and cultural activities. In the North Eastern Hill University a Dean of Students' Welfare has been provided for in the statutes. He is appointed by the Executive Council from amongst teachers of the University not below the rank of a Reader on the recommendation of the Vice-Chancellor. He is a whole-time officer of the University appointed for a period of three years and is eligible for re-appointment. In the Gauhati University the Director of Students' Welfare is appointed by the Executive Council on the recommendation of the statutory Selection Committee. He is a whole-time officer of the rank of a deputy Registrar.

We are of opinion that the designations of the Officers of the University should be uniform as far as possible. The Officers of the University from the rank of assistant registrar upwards should have at least a second class Master's degree with experience in teaching and administration for varying periods for different grades. As the University
administration is mainly academic administration, the in-
cumbents should as far as possible be drawn from the tea-
ching profession. The number of officers of various cate-
gories may be different for different universities depen-
ding on the volume and nature of work.