to the Hall of Records because Maryland has no General Index to the Acts of Assembly, and the Acts themselves are on deposit at the Hall of Records. More time-consuming, however, are the endless requests—almost universally addressed either to the Governor or the Secretary of State—on the part of Almanacs, Encyclopedias, Year Books and journals of every kind, asking for the history of Maryland, its natural resources, its industrial product, the number of its school children, etc., etc. And these requests, too, come to the Hall of Records and are answered, because the transfer of records from an agency immediately removes from it the raw materials from which replies of this kind are framed.

There is, then, no question in our minds about what should be done for other governmental agencies or their clients. In each case we do all that we can. It is not so easy to decide what to do with the request of an individual. It is obviously impossible for any archival staff, no matter how extravagantly supported, to write doctoral dissertations for those ill-equipped scholars who think it can be done by mail or "themes" for the ambitious high school boy who has chosen "The History of Maryland" for his subject. It is quite as ill-advised, and in addition it is dangerous, to trace a family line for an aspirant to membership in one of the patriotic societies which demands the prerequisite of Colonial or Revolutionary ancestry.

But because we cannot do all that is required there is no excuse for doing nothing. We make it a point to answer every request promptly, usually within a day or two. It would seem to the lay reader that answering the letter is only a courtesy which should be extended to anyone and which might be expected from any governmental agency. But such is not the case. Among the most hearfelt letters of appreciation which we receive are those which remark that, in spite of repeated letters of inquiry to the director of such-and-such a custodial agency over a period of months or years, no reply has been forthcoming. In some cases it is true that letters of this kind are absolutely ignored; in others they are not answered because the correspondent does