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Contents

Foreword	29
How Taylor Introduced the Scientific Method Into Management of the Shop	30
By Charles deFremenville	
Scientific Management Made Clear	41
By Irving Fisher	
Taylor's Intellectual Contribution	62
By Ordway Tead	
An Authentic Genius	66
By Stuart Chase	
Taylor the Creative Leader	69
By Oliver Sheldon	
Making the Most of Men	80
By Ida M. Tarbell	
A Hero of Industrial Progress	81
By Allan Nevins	
Taylor a Scientific Revolutionary	83
By Edward Eyre Hunt	
An Appreciation of a Contemporary	84
By Fred J. Miller	
Taylor the Cooperationist	86
By Richard A. Feiss	
A Promoter of Harmony	88
By Scudder Klyce	
Scientist of Work	88
By H. S. Person	
"Take Nothing for Granted"	89
By Edward P. Leonard	
Excerpts from other reviews	61, 65, 79, 92
By L. P. Alford, Joseph H. Willits, Lillian M. Gilbreth, Paul Atkins and Alice Bradley.	

Foreword

THERE was a time when an occasional new book inspired reviews which were essentially independent essays on the subject-matter of the book. That is now rarely the case. So relatively infrequent is the appearance of a work which makes noteworthy addition to existing knowledge that reviewing has become largely perfunctory. Rarely does there appear a book of such merit as to break through the barrier of present reviewing convention and inspire appraisal after the earlier manner.

COPLEY'S life of Frederick W. Taylor¹ is one of the exceptions. It has stimulated during the year since its publication a number of reviews in the nature of critical essays on scientific management. So informing are many of these essays, so various are the angles from which the life and work of Taylor are viewed, that taken together they constitute a valuable addition to the literature of scientific management. It seems to the Taylor Society so important that these essays be made available to students of management, that with the permission of various publishers they are brought together in this supplementary issue of the BULLETIN.

IT IS important that a book be readable. The reviewers are unanimous in their judgment that the story of the man's life and work is made as interesting as the story of any imaginary character in fiction. "Not since as a boy I read Robinson Crusoe have I been so thrilled by a story of adventure," says Irving Fisher. Yet all agree also that accuracy has not been sacrificed for interest; that throughout the work is abundant evidence of thorough investigation, and of painstaking and successful effort to picture the man as he was, why he was what he was, and why, being what he was, it was inevitable that he should do the work he did.

BUT the characteristic of the Taylor biography which has stimulated reviews in the nature of essays on scientific management is that it is the history of an epoch in American industrial history and of the origin and development of scientific management. Taylor's industrial career began about 1880, a date which marks the beginning of a second industrial revolution. That industrial revolution has not yet been adequately written up; therefore the life story of a man who lived through it, fought it, helped it and influenced it is an important historical document. As a treatise on management the biography is a genetic account of the origin and development of scientific management, more informing and more important than treatises which are but sets of generalizations, as most of the literature, including Taylor's own expositions, has been. The biography is a text-book on scientific management, and these review essays are valuable comments on the text-book.

¹"Frederick W. Taylor, Father of Scientific Management," by Frank Barkley Copley. Harper and Brothers, New York, 1923. 2 Vols., \$10.00; pp., Vol. I, xxvii, 467; Vol. II, 472.