

sense of the use of that word, Mr. Taylor was not a philosopher. He had the training of a mechanical engineer, and it was with considerable struggle, so his biographer tells us, that he was ever able to formulate in written expression precisely what he wanted to say. This would naturally mean that when he tried to formulate his views in the more general field of the relations of capital and labor, the meaning of trade unionism, the place of the employes in the control of industry, the problem of allocation to different groups in society of parts of the annual national income,—that he should state himself in terms to which the economist or the social philosopher might take exception.

Nothing is clearer in the light of the biography than that Taylor was far from being his own best elucidator. Unquestionably he alienated many who have since come to appreciate the importance of his essential contribution. Indeed, his whole relation to the organized labor movement and its possible interest in the question of a fair day's work was most unfortunate, although it is easily understood and explained in the light of this volume. One of his friends rightly said of him that Taylor had "a very intense temperament." He was a man of extraordinary physical and nervous energy. He was one of those who believed in working with great intensity while he worked, and he saw so many intellectual challenges and opportunities for creative thinking in work that the motion of labor as a task was foreign to his nature. Also, as an engineer, his method of statement gave great prominence to "facts"—the tacit assumption being that all facts were as objective and as provable as a problem in physics or chemistry. Thus the question of what was a fair day's work was to him a question of "facts." And that there was any opportunity for opinion to enter here was not admitted. However, many of the objections which were raised by publicists and by trade union leaders to Mr. Taylor's proposals and methods were made without adequate understanding of their real nature. And no doubt his manner of utterance frightened some of these very opponents away from a serious attempt to understand what he stood for.

As Mr. Copley wisely points out, the real and central issue that remains out of all the intellectual controversy stimulated by Mr. Taylor's utterances on the broader issues relates to one topic. It is the question of the inevitability of conflicting interests arising as between owners and manual employes in the distribution of the income from industry.

On the subject of trade unionism Mr. Taylor's utterances show him on the whole to have been reasonably understanding and tolerant,—at least in theory. (The biography does seem to supply evidence, however [p. 428], in support of the contention that the idea of collective negotiation with either unions or shop committees became increasingly repugnant to him as he grew older.)

As to the value of defining a fair day's work as scientifically as possible and of insisting that this scientifically-determined standard be lived up to, opposition was at first widespread in the trade union world. Today there is an increasing body of organized labor opinion and practice in favor of precisely this. But when Taylor argued that because workers and owners were equally interested in low unit costs,—which is true,—they were therefore not in conflict as regards the distribution of the net returns from the business as a whole, he saw things from a point of view with which many economists do not agree. Mr. Copley on this point introduces a footnote which deserves attention. He says:

As we understand it, the friends of Taylor who here opposed him were also influenced by this consideration, which they hold to be a fact: That while Scientific Management has discovered laws of production, it has not discovered laws of distribution, and this being so, the only fair way to determine what shall be labor's share of the profits of production is by conference.

This review will inaccurately represent the breadth of Mr. Copley's study if it fails to appreciate the effective way in which Mr. Taylor's personal life is depicted. The biographer provides a splendid balance in the treatment of the man's life and of his ideas. As a matter of industrial history, these ideas in their inception are not to be understood apart from the man's life; although it remains true that any assessment of the value of his ideas as they are today found in action must be made on a basis of their own intrinsic merit. Unquestionably time has brought a gratifying measure of balance and corrected proportions into the popular understanding of the essentials of scientific management doctrine and practice. And the essential kernel of these ideas, apart from the personal peculiarities of the vigorous engineer who first gave utterance to them, is being more and more recognized by all groups in industry.

Mr. Copley's work as biographer has been done with remarkable skill, discernment and sympathy. The work of a man like Mr. Taylor was carried forward with the assistance of a few remarkably loyal

men faced with universal opposition. The very intensity of devotion required under these circumstances might easily have led the sympathetic biographer to have taken the view of the ardent disciples, who were probably largely instrumental in giving the world this book. Mr. Copley has fortunately kept himself free of this fault, and has presented frailties and shortcomings in a way that has added greatly to the strength and poignancy of the picture as a whole.

It is to be regretted that the biography is forbidding by virtue of its length. And it might well be argued that a greater educational service would have been rendered by cutting it down to a book of nearer 600 than 900 pages. But the serious student of management history will find the text sufficiently absorbing to offset this drawback. Certainly no one can hope to understand the intellectual situation in the modern profession of management without having the background which this book so splendidly gives.

OUR thinking on industrial subjects would be enormously enriched and might be correspondingly improved by the addition to our literature of a large number of competently prepared biographies of leaders and of craftsmen in the industrial world. The need for such a type of biography has been particularly great in the case of Frederick W. Taylor. This is true not only because he has contributed more than any other to the professionalizing of industrial management, but because the bluntness and brevity of his speech and of his writings and their concentration on specific problems of shop management left little space for the personal factors and historical setting so essential to a true interpretation of Mr. Taylor's work and contribution. Mr. Taylor has needed a Boswell—in Copley he has found him.

In the preparation of this interpretative biography, Copley has built upon his intimate acquaintance with Fred Taylor's work by an exhaustive examination of the literature of management and of Taylor's writings and correspondence in particular. Material has been carefully assembled by interview and letter from a long list of persons who had worked with

In certain quarters the name of Taylor is unfortunately still synonymous with the exploitation of manual workers in terms of speeding up, wage rate cutting, monotonizing of jobs, and the like. But the honest reader of this biography becomes convinced that, if the cause of industry conducted as a public service for the benefit of all the workers and the consumers no less than the owners, ever had a vigorous champion, it was Frederick W. Taylor. He was not given to indulging in rhetoric on this point, but *obiter dicta* throughout his life clearly indicate that he not only had no patience with exploitation, but was definitely interested in a well-distributed prosperity which he rightly conceived to be based on an abundant productivity. Mr. Copley succeeds brilliantly in making the reader feel that Taylor modestly but forcefully added to the sum of our understanding regarding managerial science in dimensions that will cause future generations to rise up and call him blessed.

Taylor or who had had an opportunity to know of Taylor and his work or of the setting in which his life was lived and his work done. By this careful collection of material a great service has been performed for all students of industry and for students of scientific management in particular. Both Mr. Taylor and his work will be better understood, better appreciated, and more widely known on account of Mr. Copley's work.

One of the fine things one gets from the book is the picture of Fred Taylor, the man. Existing writings could leave readers who were unacquainted with Mr. Taylor personally with the impression that he may have been either a divine paragon or a driving boss with a relentless will. It remained for Copley to make Taylor human to strangers, to bring out his humor, his kindness and sympathy, his spirit of human service, as well as his inexorable scientific spirit, his iron will and his Puritanic sense of duty that led his acquaintances to say "to tell Fred Taylor anything was impossible was just about the one best way to stimulate him to go after it." (Joseph H. Willis, in *American Economic Review*, September, 1924.)