

to the reader for such methods in industrial conferences. Whether the user is thinking in terms of executive group conferences or in terms of employe representation meetings, which necessarily involve a great amount of group activity, the relevance of the author's proposals is equally great.

Few recent books have contained so many fruitful suggestions. And I should say without qualification that every executive who recognizes the urgency of making his group conferences the occasion of creative participation on the part of all members of the gathering will find this the most practical and illuminating manual at his disposal. By all means put this book down for study as one of the best examples of the kind of applied psychology which promises to be the most precious vein now being worked in advanced managerial thinking.

ORDWAY TEAD¹

Economic Institutions. By Willard L. Thorp, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1928, pages 306.

Professor Thorp's contribution to the series which was primarily called "The Worker's Book Shelf" and now bears the name of "The World Today Book Shelf" purports to be new only in its way of attacking the material of economics. The author is an effective disciple of the so-called institutional school of approach of economic analysis. The book is simplified for a popular audience, and the treatment is of a character to adapt the book splendidly for use in foreman and executive training courses. It is to be hoped that the author will some time make the present study the basis for a more exhaustive statement built around substantially the same outline. But as it stands, the book is an effective introduction to a study of what so many business executives are speaking of today as "business economics."

ORDWAY TEAD¹

Patent Law for the Inventor and Executive. By H. A. Toulmin, Jr., Harper & Brothers, New York, 1928, pages xi, 288.

This book is not, and indeed does not purport to be, a comprehensive treatise on patent law. It is a collection of chapters on the various aspects of patent matters with which an executive should be familiar. It does not try to make a patent lawyer out of the reader but rather tells him the occasions when he should consult one and what he is entitled to expect when he does so. This division into separate topics makes the book more valuable as a reference work, but it causes repetitions which are rather annoying when the entire volume is read at one time.

The ground covered in this book is perhaps broader than has previously been attempted. This naturally precludes a detailed treatment of any particular part of the field. It does, however, raise a number of interesting points that are all too often overlooked. For anyone concerned with the management of a manufacturing concern, it gives the best introduction available to a subject which is too often disregarded.

¹Harper & Brothers and Columbia University.

One of the most valuable features of the book is the stress laid on the fact that patents can be a liability as well as an asset. This is due to the fact that the manufacturer of a patented article may be infringing an older and broader patent.

The chapter on keeping patent records is of great value and is illustrated by a series of twelve forms which are of wide scope and will be found sufficient for almost any type of business. The chapter on the stimulation of invention by employes gives the experience of a number of corporations, both large and small, with various types of suggestion systems, rewards, bonuses and other incentives to invention. The chapter on the relation of patents to income tax returns and that on the valuation of patents are also especially noteworthy.

Throughout the book Colonel Toulmin displays a keen insight into the relations which must exist between the patent lawyer and the executive. His knowledge of patent law is exemplified on page 229, where, in discussing a recent case, he questions the acceptance by other courts of a part of the decision. Since that chapter was written this very holding has been reversed by an appellate tribunal.

An attempt to make the book interesting has resulted in the inclusion of some needless matter, such as the first two pages and the last chapter, and the effort to secure simplification has led to a few inexact statements. On the other hand the book is logically arranged, the facts lucidly presented and the ground covered as thoroughly as is possible in a work of this size. Most of the chapters conclude with a valuable summary of their contents which permits of a rapid but thorough review. There is an adequate index but no bibliography.

W. J. WILKIS²

The New England Economic Situation. By a Group of Ten Contributors, A. W. Shaw Company, Chicago, 1927, pages x, 260.

New England has been recently fortunate in at least this respect: its economic problems have been engaging the serious attention of expert observers.

The present series of studies, comprised in a compact volume, represents ten undergraduate contributions in the Harvard courses in economics. But their quality is not to be inferred from the "undergraduate" description above. These studies are altogether competent and instructive. As regards the attitude of the writers, it may be said in genuine praise, that there is no trace of a "post-mortem" approach. Not that New England is unable to withstand it. Her old hide is tough and reasonably whole, considering—

How try to review ten distinct studies without making this brief statement a catalog? Though each is distinctive, together they give a historic sweep of New England's economic growth, beginning with the end of the 18th century and later paralleled, and perhaps overshadowed, by the growth of the giant West, the nourishment for which was, to a striking degree, New England money, skill and pioneering.

Once more, this book purposes neither to bury, nor to praise

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New England. It deals with facts rather than with opinions, and the facts such as the final chapter presents, under the title "An Inquiry into the Causes of the Decline of the Automobile Industry in New England," are of a kind to stir reflection and self-examination. Not only in New England, let it be noted, but everywhere. For any section of the country must face, and does face, the phenomenon of what we now call migration of industry.

New England is growing in many directions. Her foreign trade is growing and should continue to grow. New investments in plants and equipment keep mounting. Many sided competition, however, due to the growth of the other sections of the United States, changes in buying habits, popular interest in style, diffusion of purchasing power, emigration of New England organizing ability as well as of capital—these and many other factors have given this old section plenty to worry about—and New England is never more hopeful than when she worries. It is only in moods of self-complacency which now and then afflict this or that group, this or that industry, that danger is indicated. "New England—There She Stands" is a paralyzing suggestion. Her friends want to see her move, not stand. The present writers try to indicate the course of its movement, though they properly intimate that the ultimate direction is not yet given them or any one else to see. Enough is observable, however, to explain why the booming centers of new industry elsewhere are wise enough to ban commiseration and keep their eyes open for the stiff competition which New England can give, is giving and will long keep giving.

MEYER BLOOMFIELD³

Safety and Production. A Report by the American Engineering Council, Harper & Brothers, New York, 1928, pages 414.

The descriptive subtitle of this book is "An Engineering and Statistical Study of the Comparative Relationships Between Industrial Safety and Production." This study was undertaken on the proposal of the National Bureau of Casualty and Surety Underwriters, who have for some years been concerned with the increasing cost of accidents. Apparently the committee set out to prove that "the safe factory is in general an efficient factory and the efficient factory in turn the safe factory." Had they proved this, their object would presumably have been to advocate an indirect attack on the accident problem by advocating general industrial efficiency. The statistical study made is rather elaborate but nevertheless does not prove the relationship.

The report is divided into three parts. Part I contains a statement of the problem, digest, and findings; Part II consideration of levels of performance in production and safety; and Part III a series of charts of individual factories and industrial groups.

Some consideration of the statistical work contained in Parts I and II seems necessary in discussing the book, partly to indicate the very considerable difficulties involved in the

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statistical analyses and partly to suggest that the committee did not altogether succeed in overcoming all of them. (1) On page 30 it is stated that the coefficient of correlation between safety and production is .835. This measures the relationship between the number of employes in factories in which changes in production and accident rate are being effected. The "impressive" relationship indicated by this coefficient appears to be possibly exaggerated when the basic figures are studied. The table on page 25 shows an increase in production in companies employing 98 per cent of the total men considered (over one million). But at the same time only in the companies employing 53.3 per cent of the men did the accident frequency show a decrease. Now one may assume that if in the design and organization of plants for increased production safety is disregarded, on a chance basis, in 50 per cent there should be increased safety and in the other 50 per cent decreased safety. Any safety work will tend to upset this balance. It has apparently been upset in a favorable direction to the extent of 3.3 per cent. The fact, however, that 46.7 per cent of the million employes considered are still subject to conditions of increased accident frequency is rather serious. However, insofar as the same table shows that 89.8 per cent work under conditions of reduced accident severity one may fairly conclude that safety work during recent years has produced creditable results. (2) On the whole this table (page 25) drawn from a consideration of a million men shows a small decrease in frequency and a large decrease in severity. But on page 22 are given results drawn from a consideration of 250,000 men indicating a large decrease in frequency and an increase in severity. It is, of course, possible to imagine reasons for these conflicting results, but the committee might have assisted the reader in coming to a definite conclusion by stating them. (3) On pages 60-75 are given a number of small tables showing the relationship between the annual changes (increases or decreases) in production and safety of different groups of industries. On working out the coefficients of association of safety and production from these tables, it is found that most of the coefficients are negative but all are too small to be significant. That is to say that the annual changes in production are in no way related to accident frequency. The scattered diagrams on pages 72 and 74 bear this out. The above discussion of three selected points in statistical procedure is not directed toward minor analyses but touches on matters rather fundamental to the findings of the committee.

Of the report as a whole it may be fairly stated (1) that it indicates that a very well planned investigation was undertaken, and much invaluable data obtained, but (2) that the Committee did not devote sufficient attention to the analysis and interpretation of this data. The result, therefore, is a report which presents much material out of which a reader, if he has the time and inclination, may draw interesting conclusions. One is rather surprised, however, that the Committee did not see fit to carry its study to the point where definite and clearly expressed findings would convince.

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