

not alone in the provision of proper physical conditions but in the establishment of fair and just methods and relations, independent of the prejudices and personalities of supervisors.)

Prof. Dr. Ing. A. Friedrich, of the Technical High School, Karlsruhe, Germany, under the colorless title of "Vocational Selection" made a most valuable contribution to the question of the philosophy of work and its relations to a man's life and his creative instincts.

Dr. Friedrich's speech illustrates the sincere effort at the Congress to formulate and understand the ideals and principles upon which industrial welfare should be based as well as practical methods of promoting them. Differing as many of the representatives of these various countries do on many other questions, they showed an encouraging agreement in their conception of the ideals of human welfare in industry.

The Congress was organized into a permanent International Association for the Study and Improvement of Relations and Conditions in Industry. It is composed of individual members, with the administration in the hands of a council composed of two representatives from each country. Headquarters will be located in Zurich, Switzerland, but temporarily, the secretary, Brenda Voysey, is located in the Leerdam Glassworks, Leerdam, Holland. Miss K. Hesselgren, Chief Woman Factory Inspector of Sweden and a member of the Upper Parliament, was elected president. The next Congress is planned for 1928.

The Training of Salesmen

By C. E. Shaw and J. S. Keir (658.807)

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At the request of the Editor of the Bulletin the reviewers present general observations on the problem of the training of salesmen in terms of Dennison experience, suggested by the recent volume by Kenagy and Yoakum.¹

HUMPTY DUMPTY, whose proclivity for sitting on a wall has been a by-word for generations of childhood, is in somewhat the same position that a reviewer of "Selection and Training of Salesmen" finds himself.

The book is by competent authority, shows high professional craftsmanship and, considering its com-

¹"The Selection and Training of Salesmen," by H. G. Kenagy and C. S. Yoakum. The McGraw-Hill Book Company, New York, 1925, pp. xviii, 380.

pleteness, is comprehensive in scope. Its successive chapters consider the sales organization; field organization and research; management of a branch sales agency; specifications for sales occupations; technique and use of sales specifications; time study as a part of job analysis; determining sales efficiency; recruiting salesmen; interviewing and auxiliary records; measures of successful selection; mental alertness tests for salesmen; personality and aptitude tests; training salesmen; supervision; conventions. As a compact, up-to-date general treatise on the problem of sales organization and control and as a starting point for further study of the problems, it offers little to adverse criticism.

However, for the sales manager who is seeking definite ideas relative to the ever present puzzle of salesmen training, the book has not succeeded in offering anything significant in the way of concrete suggestion. Formal methods of education such as salesmen classes and conventions are adequately surveyed, but the vital question of training in the field is mentioned on only two pages and then very briefly.

A distinction may be drawn between the theoretical aspects of learning and the "doing" aspects of it. A beginner at playing the piano practices over and over again until certain habit patterns are formed, that is, until the "doing" aspect becomes practically mechanical. The theoretical and book phases continue the while but take on greater significance only as the mechanical habit patterns become set. The fitting of individuals for salesmanship also contains the elements of "doing" and of learning from the book. Only for the sake of convenience and entirely arbitrarily these two aspects may be termed "training" and "education" respectively.

It has been the experience of the Dennison Manufacturing Company that the materials and methods employed for the educational aspect of the work are far in advance of those available for the training aspect. There are three major sources from which this educational material flows:

1. Written material in the form of the catalogue, price book, salesmen's manual, sales letters, etc.
2. Formal salesmen's classes, in the arrangement for which greater and greater care has been taken to present a well rounded, adequate program.
3. Visits of merchandise managers and general sales managers to the districts.

From these sources it is largely true that an alert individual may acquire a sufficient knowledge of mer-

chandise, sales policies and selling technique to form the basis of successful salesmanship. The rub comes in the successful actual use of the knowledge thus acquired. This application of knowledge leads us to a consideration of the training aspect of the problem.

It has been the Dennison policy to cover the training element through the medium of a definite program supplied the district manager supplemented by four different agencies. These agencies are as follows:

1. Visits of merchandise managers and general sales managers to the districts and the work of these executives with individual salesmen.
2. District managers working in the field with their respective sales forces.
3. The occasional assigning of a very successful salesman who has a capacity for teaching, to the task of visiting districts as needed for field work with the salesmen in the districts visited.
4. Holding formal salesmen's classes in selected districts instead of at the home office at Framingham, so that laboratory exercises, so to speak, may accompany the classroom instruction.

The elements in both the training and educational aspects of fitting individuals for salesmanship have proved to be essentially sound. But it must be admitted that the net results are a disappointment. It is obvious, therefore, that somewhere the mechanism does not function. Closer study discloses the fact that the fault is not so much in the mechanism itself (though of course there are all sorts of improvements that may be made in it) as in the way it is operated.

It has been generally assumed that the fitting of individuals for salesmanship is the responsibility of each district manager. To this end the district managers have been supplied with increasingly better tools in the form of better organized educational material and better programs for its use. Some of the district managers have made use of this equipment to the satisfaction both of the salesmen and the manager involved. We mean no criticism to any district manager, but it has been found that too often, however, not only is the equipment not used, but that the old haphazard and expensive method is employed of throwing the incipient salesman overboard in deep water to swim or drown. Since sufficient data are not available to prove whether the equipment provided is adequate or inadequate, the conclusion is forced home that the basic assumption in the premises of the district manager's responsibility is in error. The conviction is growing that it is the responsibility

of the district manager to see to it that his men are adequately fitted for their job; but it does not necessarily follow that the actual fitting is a required activity of the district manager.

Closely allied to this conviction is the further thought that the fitting for salesmanship cannot be carried on sporadically, and particularly the training aspect cannot be covered except through the medium of a carefully followed out program.

To meet these contingencies two proposals have been considered. The first of these proposals is to have experienced salesmen work with such men in the field as the district manager designates as needing coaching. But this plan has the disadvantage that the experienced salesmen who are of sufficient calibre to assume such a task are too valuable to be spared from actual selling.

The second proposal is that in addition to educational materials and programs there shall be provided a service of training upon which any district manager may call as circumstances dictate.

The study of the problem to date has largely proceeded on the trial and error basis—and certainly much has been learned from these experiences, if only on the negative side of finding out what not to do. But it is probable that at this stage a more scientific approach will yield more fruitful results. To this end it is planned to make a microscopic study of a true cross section of the sales organization; to isolate the germ of fitting for salesmanship if possible; and to subject the animal to the tests of merchandising, selling, and training. It is hoped that this laboratory test will afford the information out of which suitable materials for an adequate structure of fitting for salesmanship may be evolved.

President Brown Addresses New Sections

PRESIDENT Brown spoke at the organization meeting of the Western Pennsylvania Section, in Pittsburgh, September 17, which was attended by 35 members and guests. The meeting was called by Gustav E. Schulz of the Jones & Laughlin Steel Corporation and Alfred G. Ashcroft of the Pittsburgh Diagnostic and Consultation Clinic.

During the month of October he plans to attend meetings in Hamilton, N. Y., where a new student branch has been organized at Colgate College (October 9), Newark (October 13), Philadelphia (October 14) and Springfield, Mass. (October 15).