

Economics of Business Cycles. By A. B. Adams, McGraw-Hill Book Company, New York, 1925, pages xvi, 268.

There is great need of a thorough and authoritative yet readable text on business cycles. None realizes this better than does the thoughtful business man seeking to orient himself in the economics of this intricate subject, or the teacher trying to teach the subject to college classes. Although Professor Adams had in mind practical as well as academic readers, both groups are likely to be disappointed. Not the least of the reasons for this is the fact that the author further complicated his problem by using the book largely as a vehicle for his own doctrines, on causation and control—to which he admits giving "the major part of the book." He should have written two books, one a text, the other a treatise. None but the most skillful of authors can write successfully with two missions so divergent as these two in his mind. "Divided, they stand; united, they fall!"

The best part of the book is that in which the nature and course of an ordinary business cycle are traced (chapters III-IX inclusive). Little that is original appears here; the merit lies chiefly in lucid exposition of the well-known concomitants characterizing the several phases of the cycle. The author's text is far better than his charted statistical evidence, which is meager throughout, and at many points uncritically used. More often than not, secondary sources are cited instead of the primary. Without thorough knowledge and appraisal of the source and essential nature of the index numbers employed, can sound conclusions be drawn except in the roughest and most qualitative form?

This section is marred in its interpretative discussion by loose handling of the terms *value* and *demand*, inadequate distinction between *wealth* and *income*, and failure to take properly into account the velocities of circulation for money, for credit, and for goods in the attempts to equate the exchanges. A glaring statistical fallacy is the use of *wholesale* prices as a deflator for money incomes of employees, to arrive at the result that "wage-earners, as a class received larger purchasing power during the depression than in prosperity."

Despite shortcomings like these, the fact remains that much of the purely descriptive, as distinguished from the more interpretative, portions of the text in these seven chapters is tolerably usable for students; however, it seems altogether too trite to interest greatly the tired business man.

Chapter X is largely a review and incidentally a critique of the business cycle theories held by Hansen, Mitchell, Carver, Foster and Catchings, Hobson, Robertson and Schumpeter. Its chief aim is apparently to pave the way for the final treatment of control in Chapter XI. Rejecting certain remedies (paper inflation, price-fixing, taxation of profits, sliding scale of wages, etc.), as either worthless or inadequate, the author concludes that "by the exercise of effective control over expansion of commercial credit by the Federal Reserve Board and the proposed exercise of effective control over security issues by the Federal Trade Commission, the purchasing power of the dollar could be so stabilized that fluctuation of prices could be held within very narrow limits." That these two devices form at once a necessary

and sufficient condition to stabilization even of price is not evident from the reasoning presented in the book.

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Books Received

Actual Business English and Correspondence. By P. H. Deffendall, The Macmillan Co., New York, pages x, 224, x, 268.

In these two books bound in one volume, the principal of the Blair School in St. Louis has assembled many useful illustrations, from business usage, of the principles of syntax together with instructions for writing letters to meet various business situations, with well chosen samples used by progressive business houses. The book should be valuable in training stenographers and correspondents and for general reference use in the office.

The Author's Book: On the Preparation of Manuscripts, on the Reading of Proof, and on Dealing with Publishers. The Macmillan Company, 1925, pages 74.

This little book contains much interesting information on printing and useful suggestions re abbreviation, capitalization, corresponding—the little things of style which can be such big problems in preparing manuscripts for the printer. The printing of the volume is itself worth study. One wishes, however, that the twenty-four pages of Macmillan Company copy did not obtrude at the beginning of the book.

Das Wirtschaftliche America. By Dr. Ing. Carl Kottgen. VDI, Verlag, Berlin, 1925, pages viii, 184.

A brief report concerning the industrial power of the United States, "the most powerful industrial nation in the world," covering such points as statistical statement of resources, labor conditions and transportation with brief references to such examples of mass production as represented in the Ford Works.

Manual of Organon, the Philosophy and Science of Organizing, the Art of Management. By C. W. Gremple, Organon Lyceum, 191 Bleeker Street, New York, 1925, pages vii, 32.

A highly condensed statement in the terminology of logic and in syllogistic form of "basic principles" of management, issued as an invitation for criticism which will help in elaboration of the statement. For instance: How to do; completely imagine the effect desired; by means of the axiom "like conditions plus like causes necessitate like effects" determine conditions and causes and unite them.

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