

*The Ethics of Business.* By Edgar L. Heermance, Harper & Brothers, New York, 1926, pages x, 244.

In his new book, "The Ethics of Business," Edgar L. Heermance has made a very painstaking evaluation of the standard practices among Trade Associations as they reveal themselves in their codes. He seems to have done a real service in pointing out evidence to show the decided trend of business today toward integration, cooperation, with common interest and welfare superseding individual expediency. For example, in the axiom "do not run down a competitor's goods," it is very plain to see that it is in the common interest that an article shall not come into public disfavor. Good will, whether created as a result of fair competition, by a fixed price, accurate representation, or return in case of dissatisfaction, has a decided reflex value. The growth of mutual confidence resulting from this long time point of view is illustrated by the extent of the credit system.

By pointing out that principles of business based upon induction from combined experience are a growing and not a static foundation, the author has emphasized the important truth that growth to be sound must come from within, capable of adapting itself to new sets of conditions. This educational practice of making pertinent facts known throughout the industry generally leads to sound growth on the part of the smaller concerns since they share in the results of research conducted by the leaders and hence higher standards for the industry as a whole are evolved.

The emphasis given in many of the codes to the idea of "a fair profit" is well cited as a force in the direction of controlling and standardizing costs for the public benefit.

The author claims that the ethics that has been developed in the labor movement has never been written down. If this is generally true it would seem an important weakness in the industrial codes. Unless labor policies are clearly expressed and soundly administered no amount of cost records will lead to permanent growth for the industry.

If to some readers the author seems to overemphasize the Trade Association as an instrument in bringing about a more socialized conscience in business relations, we must bear in mind that an evaluation of the standard practices of Trade Associations was the field to which the author limited himself; that does not mean that he is unmindful of the influences of such forces as education and increased democratization throughout industry. The presence of this social conscience and the need for business men to get in the wake of it is the real message of the volume.

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*Organized Labor in America.* By George Gorham Groat. The Macmillan Company, New York, 1926, pages xvii, 527.

Students of labor problems familiar with the earlier edition of Groat's "Organized Labor in America," will welcome the appearance of the second edition, revised and enlarged; and to those less familiar with the first edition or those totally

<sup>3</sup>Bureau of Personnel Administration, New York.

unfamiliar with the history of the labor movement in this country, it will serve as a very happy introduction. Prof. Groat's method has been topical rather than chronological, just the treatment that this very complicated subject matter demands. With so many tangled roots reaching far back into the past, and with some of them wending their ways overseas to European backgrounds of social and racial prejudices and misunderstandings, to have approached the problem by any other route than the topical would have been sheer folly.

There is little or no change in the historical matter since the first edition. After a lapse of ten years, the story has been taken up again, the style remains the same, and in the light of subsequent events, the judgments are more mature. It is remarkable that so much labor history could have been lived in a short ten years, but a comparison of the earlier edition with this clearly shows a crystallization of many labor policies that but a short time ago were in the realm of things hoped for. It must not be lost sight of that political, social and economic history has in this intervening period passed through the same kind of revamping; that labor history has not become aimless and headless is remarkable.

Much of the early history is clouded with cross purposes and false prophets. Too often did self-interest prove the motivating force. It cannot be denied that in the past there was much shifting of policy, and rapid changing of emphasis. Mad promotional campaigns for sheer numbers too often engrossed the leaders, causing them to lose sight of the purposes and ideals of their charge. Often with the aim clearly defined the means have been less clearly understood and the maneuvering has been frequently political rather than politic. Almost with a religious zeal did leaders wield their power and with an utter disregard for consequences did they resort to their major weapons. The early history is characterized by opportunism and expediency.

A better understanding of the new attitude of organized labor as so adequately expressed by Mr. William Green at the last December meeting of the Taylor Society only can be had in light of the developments of the last ten years and Prof. Groat has not been unmindful of this change. The student, the executive, the labor leader, the personnel director, in fact any one whose contacts bring him in touch with labor, will want this new understanding, and Prof. Groat's revision of his earlier book will give in a clear, tolerant and kindly way the proper background for this rational understanding.

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*How to Plan a Convention.* By P. G. B. Morriss. The Drake Publishing Company, Chicago, 1925, page 153.

This is a hand book on convention planning to which executives with experience in planning sales, trade, association and many other types of conventions have contributed. It covers briefly many phases of the subject—programs, finances, transportation, committees, etc.—and is filled with specific illustrative material.

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