

judgment of the whole situation at the moment, assisted but not directed by any preconceived theories. If I am wrong in that view, I am, I think, in the distinguished company of three outstanding American specialists, Wesley Mitchell, Irving Fisher and Carl Snyder.

I suggest you might advantageously open your valuable columns to an exhaustive consideration of existing forecasting theory in the light of present conditions. The result might be of vital concern to American business men, and, in turn, to the whole business world.

I am,

Yours faithfully,

WILLIAM WALLACE

New Earswick, York.

### Reviews

*Research in the Humanistic Sciences.* By Frederic A. Ogg, The Century Company, New York, 1928, pages 454.

This is the report of a survey conducted for the American Council of Learned Societies, which, since its establishment in 1919, has had as its major object the encouragement of productive scholarship. In order to secure a better perspective as to the circumstances and conditions that tend to foster research or to impede it, the Council undertook a survey of the existing state of research in the humanistic and social sciences, with a view to finding out what research organizations and facilities exist, what projects are in progress or in prospect, and what steps are necessary to improve the character of the studies undertaken. With the aid of the Carnegie Corporation, over a year was devoted to this survey by Professor Ogg; and this splendid volume treating the whole subject is the result.

The report is of value in several respects. First, as the most complete statement available of the various agencies engaged in research, such as universities, learned societies, councils, institutes, bureaus, associations, governmental departments, private organizations, foundations and endowments, including the history and present activities of each and informative comment. As a source book on such subjects, the work will not need to be done again for many years.

In the second place, it considers comprehensively the problems of research in present day society, and with its well chosen bibliography and excellent discussion of various aspects, it is an indispensable reference book in this field.

Third, there is some very keen analysis of fundamental issues, such as the relative advantages and disadvantages of conducting research as an adjunct of the colleges, universities and learned societies, as against definitely organized institutes or bureaus. In making such a comparison between the university and the isolated institute, Professor Ogg points out the danger of drawing off productive scholars from the universities to the research or-

ganizations, as well as money which might have been given to the university for such purposes. On the other hand, he shows that in many instances institutes have engaged for such research scholars who are merely on leave from university faculties.

There is one vital point which Professor Ogg does not touch upon—the rather mooted question as to whether the subjects of social science, involving, more than any other field, matters of class attitude and group opinion, would not in many cases fare better when conducted by scholars working in the more liberal and impartial atmosphere of a university, as compared with the staff man of a more directly endowed institute with a board responsible for and passing upon the findings. That is a phase which will command increasing attention as research institutes multiply.

HERMAN FELDMAN<sup>1</sup>

*What the Employer Thinks.* By J. David Houser, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1927, pages viii, 225.

*Problems of the Executive.* By Harold Whitehead, Thomas Y. Crowell Co., New York, 1927, pages ix, 309.

Mr. Houser has a number of valuable and wise things to say, not so much on what the employer is thinking as on what he should be thinking. The underlying emphasis of the author's attitude is sound, liberal and forward looking; and his notion of the importance of good executives being self-conscious about their thinking is right and timely. Also his interesting device for measuring the success of management activities in relation to employees has apparently proved of value in concrete cases. The fact that it tries to objectify subjective items may lessen its value, but it does not destroy it. More efforts in the same direction are greatly needed. The most serious qualification regarding the value of his book is what seems to the reviewer to be a somewhat chaotic method of presentation. The organization of the material seems slightly confused. The patient reader will find real gems of insight, but the main drift of the writer's thought is a little hard to follow.

However, the study is noteworthy as an attempt to start toward formulating a philosophy for executives regarding their problems.

Mr. Whitehead essays a much simpler task in presenting for younger students some of the outstanding problems which they will confront in executive work. He does this in a readable and not too profound fashion which should give his book popularity among those approaching the problem of executive responsibility for the first time.

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