

Reviews

Harvard Business Reports. Compiled by and published for the Graduate School of Business Administration, Harvard University, McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., New York and London, Vol. 7, 1930, pages xii, 590; Vol. 8, 1930, pages xiv, 687; Vol. 9, 1930, pages xi, 363.

These three last volumes in Harvard's notable contributions of case material to business give evidence of steady progression in content and form as the result of increasing experience.

Volume 7 still largely harkens to the past in the fact that it is a miscellaneous group of cases, all of which come under the designation of business but do not deal specifically with a particular function of industry or with a particular industry. Hence the usefulness of the volume tends to be restricted chiefly to Harvard students who have occasion to refer to this volume in connection with assignments. Volume 8, however, takes a decided step forward. Although it does not limit itself to a specific function of business, its 687 pages all deal with business aspects of a single industry, that connected with motion pictures. It thus represents a comprehensive survey of the leading problems which that industry has had to meet. This grouping does not detract from the usefulness of the volume to students of business in general, but serves to give the material a more permanent place in the field, both among those who are in the film industry and those who have reason to study it.

Volume 9 is a still further development which will be welcome to those who have felt that earlier Reports give the appearance of heavy tomes that make the contents seem unnecessarily forbidding. The cases in this volume deal entirely with the marketing of industrial goods, giving a definiteness to the grouping which is helpful to the casual purchasers of books as well as to those with specialized interests. At the same time the book itself has been substantially reduced in size. It contains only 363 pages. It is understood that future numbers in the series will be kept somewhere around this size—a welcome change.

In these volumes one sees more frequent reference citations to previous cases in the Harvard Business Reports in which one aspect or another of a current problem has been discussed. Occasionally material not in case form is cited, but a general treatise on the subject is almost never mentioned. Possibly the reason for this exclusive focus on case material is due to the desire of the Harvard staff to be free to suggest to their students the most recent material at the time the assignment is given. It is also true that the school aims to promote inductive reasoning from reported factual situations. But such reasoning can in many cases be aided through a timely suggestion of an article, or book, or pages in a book, dealing with some aspect of the situation under discussion. A student having the facilities of the Harvard business library and staff may find no difficulty in looking up material in connection with the case, but for the great mass of outsiders, for whom these volumes are likewise intended, there is a distinct drawback

in this lack of references. It is hoped, therefore, that in the future there will be more of a sprinkling of well-selected references to authorities who have contributed notably to the discussion of points arising in a problem. In this way the Harvard case books will be the better integrated with the knowledge of today.

HERMAN FELDMAN¹

Manual on Research and Reports. Issued by the Committee on Research of The Amos Tuck School of Administration and Finance, Dartmouth College, The Williams & Wilkins Company, Baltimore, 1931, pages, 108.

All those individuals or groups, in whatever line of activity, who have to do with the making of reports should own this little book whose hundred pages are packed with the complete story of how to gather and present the material of investigations. The following chapter heads show that every phase of the subject, from analysis of the problem to proof reading, has been dealt with concisely and in a practical manner: Laying the Groundwork, Gathering Information, Recording and Organizing Information, Analyzing and Interpreting the Data, Preparing the Manuscript, Anatomy of a Report, Guarding Against Error.

While the book has been issued under the auspices of the Committee on Research of The Amos Tuck School of Administration and Finance, Dartmouth College, we understand that two of our members, Professors Burleigh and Feldman, played an important part in its preparation.

HELEN A. CARNES²

Material Control and Storeskeeping in Machine Shops and Foundries. By Willis Wissler, The Ohio State University Press, Columbus, Ohio, 1929, pages xii, 284.

This book gives the results of a number of case studies conducted under the auspices of the Bureau of Business Research of the Ohio State University, College of Commerce and Administration.

The purpose of the study, as stated by the author, is "to present a factual record of actual practice" without attempting to evaluate such practice.

The practices of nine companies are set forth in an orderly and workmanlike manner, the text being accompanied by numerous forms and flow charts.

Perhaps the most striking thing brought out by these studies is the fact that while the terminology of scientific management has come to be widely used, the mechanism and technique, except in certain details in two of the nine concerns, fall far short of that of scientific management. The same may be said with respect to the type of organization described. It is

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interesting to note, however, that while none of these concerns appears to have progressed to the scientific management stage, none of them would be classed as unsystematized. All of them fall within the limits of systematized management. If this may be taken as a typical cross sectional picture of a large part of American industry, as the reviewer believes to be the case, much benefit may still accrue to producer and consumer from a better understanding of the principles of scientific management and particularly of the mechanisms and technique through which they have been successfully applied.

Industrial history shows that management will take the trouble to improve itself only as economic pressure forces it to do so. While this is to be regretted, it is encouraging to know that the greater effectiveness of scientific management will still be available to our industries when halfway measures cease to show profits.

KING HATHAWAY³

Practical Office Supervision. By Glenn L. Gardiner, McGraw-Hill Book Co., New York, 1929, pages 295.

Mr. Gardiner has a happy faculty of giving concreteness and vividness to his discussions of management problems. And in this study of office management it has stood him in good stead and resulted in a book of unique distinction in the field of office management. The emphasis is not merely on the human aspects of management but upon actual situations which are analyzed and prescribed for. The psychological approach is uppermost and the author's psychology is up to date and thoroughly illuminating both in dissection and in prescription of better methods. The range of topics covered is complete and the attitude progressive. Altogether this is head and shoulders above any other book dealing with people rather than paper work in offices, which has yet appeared. A splendid gift book and conference discussion text for all who direct office workers!

ORDWAY TEAD⁴

Organized Training in Business. By James H. Greene, Harper & Brothers, New York, 1928, pp. xiv, 335.

In a field in which there are none too many thorough and comprehensive texts, *Organized Training in Business* should serve as a valuable manual of procedure. It not only argues the advantages of training but tells how it is to be done. Starting with "types of training," Mr. Greene discusses the planning of a program, the building of a teaching organization, the selection of those to be trained and laying out and administering a course for them, measuring the results and selling the program. Suggestive examples of instructions and procedures enhance the practical usefulness of the text.

The point of view is sound. Training is not telling. Skill

³Manning, Maxwell & Moore, Inc., New York.

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must be acquired by doing, accompanied by the criticism which enables the learner to discover and remedy his faults. Teaching others, the foremen and coaches and other members of the line organization, how to train their men is no small part of the work of the department.

The emphasis is consistently on procedure and practice rather than on theory. The book is written from the point of view of the department head who must sell his program, to management and make the best of available resources, rather than that of the general executive free to plan comprehensively without such restrictions. But that is just the condition which confronts many of those responsible for training programs. Both industrial and mercantile training problems are discussed.

The book is the best practical guide to industrial training procedure which has come to my attention, and contains a great deal for those indirectly interested in the subject, as executives, educators, students of personnel problems, as well as for the training department heads for whom it is specifically written.

H. P. DUTTON⁵

Industrial Structure of New England. Part I of the Commercial Survey of New England. By Charles E. Artman, Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce, U. S. Department of Commerce, Washington, D. C., 1930, pages xii, 591.

Commercial Structure of New England. Part II of the Commercial Survey of New England. By Edward F. Gerish, Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce, U. S. Department of Commerce, Washington, D. C., 1929, pages x, 323.

In these two volumes the Department of Commerce has presented a vast amount of material which should prove of considerable value to organizations doing business in New England. These surveys will enable research and statistical departments to secure data which formerly involved the expenditure of large sums of money. But perhaps the greatest value should be derived by the small business which has heretofore been unable to use such data because of the prohibitive cost of gathering it.

P. E. HENDERSON⁶

A Theory of the Labor Movement. By Selig Perlman, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1928, pages xii, 321.

The Labor Problem. By J. A. Estey, McGraw-Hill Book Company, New York, 1928, pages x, 378.

Theories of the how, what and why of the labor movement offer a fruitful source of speculation and Professor Perlman here offers his interpretation. Theories are necessarily abstract

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