

council and would assume the dignity of a cabinet, with powers of debate in the council. The board system should prevail. There should be "longer tenure of the heads of the departments upon a basis of especial fitness and training," and the practical interest of the citizens should be enlisted by the establishment of unpaid municipal offices.

W. H. ALLEN.

Philadelphia.

Economics. By EDWARD THOMAS DEVINE, Ph. D. Pp. viii, 404. Price, \$1.00. New York and London: The Macmillan Company, 1898.

To be acceptable at the present time a text-book must be not only accurate but interesting. It is this requirement quite as much as the undeveloped state of the science that has retarded the introduction of economics into the curricula of secondary schools. How to make economics interesting to a degree at all commensurate with its importance is also the problem of the day in colleges and universities. In the book under review Dr. Devine has attempted, with no little success, to solve this problem by excluding from his treatment the greater portion of the material usually presented in text-books on economics and by putting in its place the results of the most recent discussion bearing upon the causes of social well-being and progress. Of the seventeen chapters into which the work is divided, only one, the "Restatement of Familiar Principles" (XV), borrows largely from the older authors. All the others derive their material from the original writings of such men as Clark, Gide, Marshall, and, above all, Patten.

The central thought in the book is that the causes of economic institutions and of economic progress are to be sought in man himself. Man is, in a sense, the product of his environment, but it is equally true that the effective environment at any one time is the product of man. Upon his intelligence and conscious choices depends the use that he makes of the forces with which the universe is charged. Increase in knowledge and self-control increases his mastery over nature, and upon this social well-being depends. In enlarging upon this thought, the author makes consumption prominent as the directing motive of economic activity. A "wiser choice of commodities" and "a more intelligent use of them" are mentioned as two of the three important ways in which general prosperity may be promoted.

As was inevitable, the order in which Dr. Devine presents this new material suggests criticisms. To begin with chapters on "The Economic Man," "The Economic Environment" and "The Social Conditions of an Economic Society," seems to the reviewer to accord better with the principles of logic than with those of pedagogy. It is believed that the first half of Chapter XIII, "The Organization of Industry," would have served as a more fitting introduction. Furthermore, the chapter restating "Familiar Principles" seems too long delayed, while that on "Social Prosperity" seems introduced prematurely. A more general criticism refers to the plan that is adopted in three important chapters (VI, XIV and XV) of presenting ideas as a series of disconnected propositions. The precision which this gives to the treatment is secured at the expense of realism. Economics deals with organic phenomena. The forces which it discusses are inter-dependent, and the effects which result from them are continuous. The important truths are obscured the moment the subject is presented in a series of theorems, with the consequence that narrow dogmatism is inculcated in place of broad comprehension. This danger is illustrated by two of the propositions which are "restated" in Chapter XV, one declaring that "profits tend toward a minimum," and the other that "population tends to increase faster than the means of subsistence." Neither one of these seems in harmony with the author's point of view in other parts of the book. Perhaps the least satisfactory chapter is that on the "Standard of Living" (VIII), which starts out with the declaration that this determines not only wages but some other forms of personal income, and concludes in ten short pages without giving the reader a very clear understanding of what the "standard of life" really is.

Overlooking these points, which are after all of minor importance, Dr. Devine's book attains admirably its purpose of presenting in a clear and interesting form the very latest results of economic analysis. In his use of terms, in his definitions and in his choice of the distinctions that deserve to be emphasized, he shows himself entirely free from any academic bias. This gives his book a freshness in pleasing contrast with the dry-as-dust quality of many recent works on economics. The book may be recommended not only to teachers who wish something more than a skeleton of the science to present to their classes, but also to general readers who are interested in any phase of the social problem.

HENRY R. SEAGER.