Review

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recently published British works on the same and kindred subjects, combined with the fact that he apparently addresses himself exclusively to American conditions whenever he is at all practical, naturally imposes considerable limitations on the utility of his work in this country. At the same time, it may be stated that a distinct demand is growing up here for a text-book, written in plain non-technical language, on some such lines as the one before us. We can only regret that, owing to the defects to which we have drawn attention, it seems both unlikely and undesirable that Dr. Brisco's *Economics of Business* should be held to meet that demand.

**Lawrence R. Dicksee**


*Admission to American Trade Unions.* By F. E. Wolfe, Ph.D. 1912. Pp. 181. (Johns Hopkins University Studies in Historical and Political Science.)


These detailed studies contain a mass of information with regard to the methods and objects of American trade unions. Dr. Glockee has had the most interesting subject to deal with, and he gives a vivid impression of the problems of trade union government. We recognise many features which are familiar in this country. For instance, in America, as here, there is unending conflict between the experienced officials on the one hand, and on the other the stalwarts who uphold the "down tools policy" and the literal application of extreme democratic principles in every department of trade union administration. The problem also as to whether the executive board of the union shall consist of the permanent officials, or of members working at their trade, in different towns, who act as a check on the officials, or whether, as a third alternative, the "governing branch" plan shall be adopted, has exercised hundreds of American trade union administrators, in much the same way as in this country. But, on the other hand, there are some striking differences between the constitutional development of English and American unions. Decentralisation is much more prevalent in America. (It is, for
instance, noteworthy that the term "local union" is constantly occurring, where, under English conditions, we should speak of a branch). It is difficult to decide from Dr. Glocker's study whether the lack of centralisation is due to the large geographical area over which many American unions extend, or to the fact that trade unionism is really still in a more primitive condition in America than in England. Dr. Glocker himself contrasts the history of the use of the referendum in American and in English trade unionism. In America trade unionists are in the forefront of the widespread movement for the increased application of the referendum to State and municipal politics. The sources of the trade union constitution, and the relations between Canadian and American trade unionism, are among the many other interesting points with which Dr. Glocker deals.

Boys and women are a source of many burning problems in connection with the right of admission to trade unions in America as in England. It is well known that workmen in America pass much more easily from one class of work to another. It is, therefore, only natural to find that where a more or less formal apprenticeship is insisted on by American unions, it is often only required to be of three or four years' duration, as against the five or seven which are to be found in the rules of so many English unions. It is interesting to find that one or two unions, such as the electricians', have developed quite elaborate systems of testing the competency of workmen who apply for admission; while others, such as those of the marine engineers, plumber, and barbers, recognise and support the system of government certificates of efficiency, which are established in these trades. Questions as to the admission of negroes and of alien immigrants are constantly causing controversies in the unions. It appears to be common for local unions to refuse to admit negroes, while the central authorities strive hard to uphold their equal rights. Dr. Wolfe concludes that the monopolistic "closed union" is a rare phenomenon.

The details of problems connected with the form of standard rates, and particularly piece rates, are very largely the outcome of almost inevitable circumstances connected with the nature of various trades. Dr. McCabe does not give us a very clear impression of the extent to which standard rates really are observed in the various trades. It is true that it is exceedingly difficult to do this; but unless we know it the paper decisions and demands of unions may often give a false impression of the true prevailing conditions. The study of the area of the standard rate is perhaps
the most useful part of Dr. McCabe's book. He notes that the area of piece rates tends to be much larger than that of time rates. The statistics relating to the attitude of the unions towards piece and time rates are also particularly valuable, and may be usefully compared with the similar statistics compiled by Mr. and Mrs. Webb.

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The development of international labour legislation, and the activity of central governments in every country as "gadflies" stirring local authorities or subordinate legislatures to higher standards of efficiency, render the study of the statistical methods of measuring social progress of directly practical importance. Anyone who has made even the slightest attempt to compare the details of factory legislation in different countries must realise the extraordinary difficulty of forming comparisons of the real effectiveness and not merely of paper requirements. The same problem exists in connection with the administration of the Employment of Children Act in our own country, or in connection with the labour laws of the American States, which constitute such a formidable volume in the editions issued by the American Bureau of Labor. Dr. Ogburn has certainly succeeded in rendering the labour legislation of the United States as a whole more intelligible to the student. His tabular statements make it possible to form some estimate of the rise in the standard of regulation throughout the country; and his methods are worthy of study by anyone who is endeavouring to record the action of a large number of local authorities or different governments in dealing with a given problem.

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The Naval Mutinies of 1797. By Conrad Gill, M.A. (Manchester University Press. Price 10s. 6d. 1913.)

Apart from its historical value, this book has some special interest for economists in the curious similarity of the 1797 mutinies to modern industrial strikes.

There were numerous causes through which a spirit of rebellion was fostered in the Navy and brought to a head at the close of