

Book Selection

A Handbook of Management.

THOMAS KEMPNER (Editor).

Weidenfeld & Nicolson, London, 1971. xxvi + 416 pp. £7·00.

This is not the sort of book that anyone—not even a reviewer—will read from cover to cover. It is an encyclopaedic work of reference covering the whole field of management for an intended readership of managers, students and laymen. It has a quality of fascination that makes it a good encyclopaedia. The reader will almost certainly find what he is looking for, and a great deal more besides which will make it difficult to put the book down again. The work comprises about six or seven hundred entries—the jacket claims over one thousand, but this is surely an exaggeration—on topics ranging from Absenteeism to Zipf's Law. Each main entry averages about three hundred words. On the whole, they are well written and informative, and are accompanied by references to the leading books on each topic. The cross-referencing in the text is good and there is a useful synoptic index.

Viewed from an O.R. standpoint, the book must be judged on two criteria:

- (1) How well does it lead the O.R. scientist into unfamiliar areas of management?
- (2) How effectively does it present O.R. as a specialized topic to the world of management?

On the first count it succeeds admirably but on the second count the O.R. scientist may find cause for dissatisfaction in the number and choice of books that are referenced. For example, it seems inadequate to refer only to one book, *A Manager's Guide*, in the section dealing with O.R., and it is questionable whether that can also be regarded as the leading book on queueing.

If one searches long enough it is possible to find important omissions. If the intention was to clarify the jargon-obsessed world of management it was a pity not to make a distinction between an "accounting variance" and a "statistical variance".

Notwithstanding these criticisms, the editor and his team are to be congratulated on attempting such a major task and succeeding so well at their first attempt. This should become an important work of reference in the field of management. One hopes that the book will be well received and that the authors will be encouraged to do further work on their respective subject areas in future editions.

S. J. MORRISON

The Techniques of Production Management.

RAY WILD.

Holt, Rinehart & Winston, London, 1971. 520 pp. £4·70.

It was with great trepidation that I began to read this book because of the length. This feeling, however, was quickly dispelled since it is written in a pleasant and easy style. If other books in the Holt U.K. Management Books,