

The only Scientific Management I recognize does get the consent of the employee individually and collectively, not consent, however, to rob him of his reason and retard his growth, but consent to be helped to a fuller knowledge of how to unfold his latent powers.

MR. RICHARD A. FEISS: This question that Mr. Valentine has brought up is a very vital question. I believe in the principle back of Mr. Valentine's theories but I believe where Mr. Valentine has made his mistake is in trying to apply a theory that will fit certain conditions when those conditions no longer exist.

As I understand Mr. Valentine, his idea is that employees generally, not only in their own plants, but also as represented by unions or other organizations, should have a part in the administration of business, in all its executive activities when applied specifically to any one thing, no matter how small. This he feels is necessary to true democracy.

What true democracy really is he has been unable satisfactorily to define. I believe we will all agree with Mr. Valentine that it involves at least the inherent right of all the people to have in some form a great deal to say with respect to the actual conditions under which they work and live. Two other things I consider necessary to true democracy: A free channel of expression and unhampered opportunity. If the people have these fundamentals, it seems to me that the particular form which an organization takes is of comparatively small importance. It has been my observation that nowhere can a man succeed in putting across a particular method of management or anything else affecting the people in an organization unless he has the people affected absolutely with him.

I gravely doubt the ability of the right of the employees in general to participate in questions requiring expert opinion, scientific determination or purely executive action. Authority in such matters is tied up with responsibility and those who have not the responsibility have no right to the authority. If a man or a group of men or women are fitted to carry on actual executive administration, I say it is a shame to keep them at machines. They ought to be in the managing end of the business. We, and I believe every one else, are in need of this kind of people. The great difficulty is that most people, including managers, are neither fitted nor willing to assume responsibility. There are several sides to administration,—executive, legislative and the analysis and codification of facts and of working rules. On this last side there are a great many things not subject to opinion or arbitration on the part of either employer or employee.

In our plant, we believe we have a great deal of real democracy though perhaps not expressing itself in just the form of which some people might approve. The substance, however, is there. If we have a group of ten men doing the same work, we certainly would consult them on anything affecting them as a group, but we would not consult the rest of the men in the plant or groups on similar work in other plants and in other cities. This is most impracticable and so far-fetched and indirect that it would not be of interest to the men themselves, even though "indirectly affected." Mr. Valentine claims that everybody, directly or indirectly affected, should have a say. But how? Surely this is possible only through representatives and there we come to one of the weaknesses in representative government,—the men themselves do not actually have the

¹Manager, The Cothercraft Shop, Joseph & Feiss Co., Cleveland, Ohio.

say. These things are handled for them by so-called representatives often in self-perpetuating positions and perhaps hundreds of miles away and these representatives are subject to 'imititious motives just as selfish as those of the men on the job doing the work at the machines, or the work of management.

It seems to me that Mr. Valentine's arguments have not been confined to conditions as they exist. Both the unions and the managers have their good sides and their bad sides. I am not going to pretend to say which has more or less because that depends on the kind of men they happen to be. There are better and worse unions and better and worse managers. None of them are perfect. Yet in these discussions between the unions and scientific management, the union has been held up in its ideal form (which to my mind does not and never will exist) and scientific management is criticised from the side of actual practise as it is being worked out in the hands of people who are trying to do their best but are only mortal and make mistakes. If we are going to get anywhere, I should say,—Let us take unions as they are and management as it is, or let us take unions in their ideal form and scientific management in its ideal form. It is absolutely unfair to take unions in their ideal form and management only as it is.

In our plant, we have gone on the basis that democracy and cooperation are almost synonymous and every fellow is working for his interest through the knowledge of his duty to the other man and through the knowledge that his interests are ethically and practically served only by serving all the interests of everybody else. On the other hand, when each man feels that he has his own individual selfish right above all others, it seems to me we approach anarchy and that men like Mr. Valentine very often, unintentionally, I believe, confuse anarchy with democracy.

I can see some reason in Mr. Valentine's statement about Mr. Taylor's works not having been finished. After reading Mr. Taylor's works three or four times, my first impression was something like that of Mr. Valentine, but I found that my comprehension was not big enough to grasp the real meaning back of Mr. Taylor's words. Mr. Taylor's thoughts are so deep that I only began to understand a few paragraphs after I spent three consecutive days with him personally and went over things with him. When Mr. Taylor came to Cleveland he told me the thing that impressed him as he came into the city was the inscription on the court house—"Obedience to the Law is Liberty." That seems to me the opposite of anarchy. The idea is that you and I instead of being subservient to each other's will are subservient to laws that govern both of us and those laws are not expressed through one particular kind of channel but in a multitude of ways. If we recognize human rights, i. e. the rights of another fellow as another fellow,—we are nearer to democracy than by handing over the care of these rights to some representative who may abuse them. The weakness of political democracy is that you and I and thousands of others must hand over the expression of our thoughts to someone else who can never really represent us. No doubt this is the best we can do under conditions so cumbersome. This political form of democracy, however, does not necessarily apply to the shop. To my mind, no shop can be successful where it gets beyond the possibility of personal contact.

Democracy, whether it exists or not, is more or less comparative, but nevertheless, it is not a question of form. The real fault that I have to find with Mr. Valentine is that he does not go far enough in his ideas of the possibility of actual democracy in industry. When I was

first given the responsibility of management it was not uncommon for committees to come in and see me. Now, our people feel that they are so close to participation in the administration of our business when it directly affects them that they won't permit any committee to represent them. They would not permit any foreman to represent them. They are on the job themselves and they come to us personally. The more informal it is the more democratic to my mind. I feel that the proper administration of my position is secured, not so much through what I have learned from my people as because the expression of public opinion is so informal, so natural and so direct that our people won't permit us to do anything wrong.

This seems to me to be democracy in fact expressed in one of many possible forms. My point is that democracy is not a question of form, but a question of fact.

MR. SANFORD E. THOMPSON: It is the tendency of the age for the people to take greater and more intimate share in government. However we may feel on the subject, this same tendency in industry must be faced, and Mr. Valentine is to be thanked for bringing the subject before our society. I know Mr. Valentine more intimately than many of you and I appreciate his practical accomplishments in connection with both employees and employers. I believe that we all should consider seriously certain of his general principles and that the presentation of this paper will lead to further reading and study on this vital side of the management question. At the same time a careful consideration of the views brought out in this discussion should assist Mr. Valentine in his treatment of industrial problems.

I would accept two general propositions: first, no management is truly scientific unless the human mechanism in the establishment is working smoothly and without appreciable friction. This means that the workers as a whole must be satisfied with their condition of work and wages, and further that they must be really interested in their work. Second, continuous right of consent of every individual should be conceded by the management both as regards methods and machinery. The closing paragraph of the paper becomes even more vital and infinitely broader if we omit seven little words and make it read, "applied scientific management, then, which does not relate its science to the desires and to the thoughts of all connected with a concern in all their relations. . . . is not true to the Taylor principle." This principle cannot be emphasized too strongly.

As I read the paper, Mr. Valentine starts in with the assumption that scientific management, and in fact all management, is to be judged by the standard as to whether it involves not merely individual but organized consent. It is here that we disagree. At the same time I see no objection to organized consent, and in certain cases, even with scientific management methods, organized consent may be essential. The range, however, may be all the way from a plant where the best results are obtained simply by personal contact, with no organization whatever, up to the plant where definite organizations are inevitable among the employees. The methods must be adapted to suit the conditions.

The extent to which the "consent" should go, to use Mr. Valentine's term, depends in my opinion first, upon the type of the plant, i. e., its size, character of industry, relation to the public, relation to organized labor, etc.; second, upon the character of the consent to be expected and when and how it is to be exercised. The fundamental limitations to interfactory decisions

²Consulting Engineer, Newton Highlands, Mass.

or detail problems lie in the basic principles of scientific management. First, the organization must be functional; and second, decisions must be based on fact, not on opinion. Functional organization requires not only that each foreman must have a distinct well-thought out duty to do, but that every man and woman in the plant must have a specific duty. The production man then supervises the production and his authority in this one field is greater than that of the superintendent; the rate fixer and not the superintendent nor the worker determines the standard job. Every feature of scientific management must be decided not by opinion, but by a complete study of each individual operation. Just as soon as opinion is substituted for fact we have not scientific management. However, before any method is put in operation it must be discussed with the individuals affected; one must get points from them and find out whether the methods or arrangements are satisfactory to them. I fail to see how the advice or consent of other departments of a plant can be of use or value. I cannot see how a girl making paper boxes in a plant has reason or right to pass on any phase of the operation of punching holes in paper. After a certain operation is under way, you may have your group consent, or if you want, you can go further and have your factory consent. I recognize the right of every man and woman in the establishment to discuss methods and to object to conditions. I recognize the right to organize,—to organize and to fight. I believe that every man who introduces a new method of work in a shop should obtain the consent of the operative with whom he starts and of the other operatives who are started subsequently. If he does not do this the operatives have a perfect right to object and to resist. The operatives further should have perfect freedom in expressing objections at any time. I can conceive further that a judicial body consisting of representatives of the management and of the employees might pass upon certain matters in dispute after having the facts definitely presented.

We may say, then, that we should have always, first, individual consent; also, second, we should have group consent. I mean by this the consent of the group doing each particular piece of work. In certain fundamentals we should have factory consent, either in the line of Mr. Feiss's argument or in other shapes and more clearly defined. Inter-factory consent may be necessary in unscientifically managed plants. If a shop is not scientifically organized; that is, if tasks and rates are set by averages and not by exact study; if standards are superficial; if wages and rates are not gauged by the conditions in a particular establishment, but are superficially assumed to be the same in all establishments; then there may be just reason for submitting questions and obtaining decisions from interfactory sources. This is just where scientific management differentiates itself from unscientific management. If the management is scientific, it fits its conclusions to the individual shop. Unless and until the other shops are similarly standardized, and then, unless all matters treated are strictly on the same plane in the different shops, inter-factory action must tend to make for friction instead of for cooperation. Let us hope that the continued development, both among the men whose function it is to manage and among the men whose function it is to execute, of the ethical spirit and principles, the spirit of fairness, the spirit of justice, of real friendship, and the extension of the personal relation may still further simplify and avoid complications of too extensive organization, while at this same time developing the character and the capacity of the individual.