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OBJECTS OF THE SOCIETY

(Extract from the Constitution)

The objects of this Society are, through research, discussion, publication and other appropriate means:

1. To secure an understanding and intelligent direction of the principles governing organized effort for the accomplishment of industrial and other social purposes for the mutual benefit of

- A. The Community
- B. Labor
- C. The Manager
- D. The Employer

2. To secure the gradual elimination of unnecessary effort and of unduly burdensome toil in the accomplishment of the work of the world.

3. To promote the scientific study and teaching of the principles governing organized effort, and of the mechanisms of their adaptation and application under varying and changing conditions.

4. To promote general recognition of the fact that the evaluation and application of these principles and mechanisms are the mutual concern of the community, labor, the manager and the employer.

5. To inspire in labor, manager and employer a constant adherence to the highest ethical conception of their individual and collective social responsibility.

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COMMENT

AN editor's technique is in many respects similar to that of the teacher; both at times strive to draw facts and ideas and conclusions out of students or contributors, as a stimulus to further and independent observation, investigation, thinking, and the determination of the present state of knowledge about the thing discussed. As part of such technique both frequently assume deliberately a neutral attitude, limiting their contributions to a summing up of discussion or to casual observations which stimulate to further investigation and thought, for frequently participants believe discussions closed when they are but opened. So let it be with respect to the symposium on stop-watch time study printed in this issue.

ONE brings from a reading of the symposium the impression that, although the point at issue is apparently limited and definite, in the discussion issue is not clearly joined. The Gilbreths seem to place most of their emphasis on motion study, determination of the one best way based on a study of the best man available, the determination of ideal or ultimately attainable time standards, and the value-to transference of skill and education in its broader aspects of all which the micromotion technique yields. The proponents of the stop watch, on the other hand, seem to concede what is claimed for micromotion technique with regard to the above characteristics (a simple, matter-of-fact concession, however, unaccompanied by any statement of their valuation of what is conceded), and focus their discussion on the determination of standard times and standard rates for current use. The definite point which remains at issue, therefore, seems to be whether the stop-watch technique is so "unscientific" as to be unsuitable for the determination of standard times and standard rates as a basis for current wage contracts.

WE should like to see more data concerning the point at issue. Facts are absent from this discussion; the arguments are essentially *a priori*. *Prima facie* the Gilbreths present a strong argument, in simple form somewhat as follows: *Premises*; the best man available is studied; micromotion technique gives more accurate measurement than stop-watch technique; the film gives and preserves more detail information concerning conditions; a final average can be no more accurate than the most faulty item from which it is derived; *Conclusions*; the unit time resulting from averaging micromotion observations is more accurate than that derived from averaging stop-watch observations; the net operation time computed from these is more accurate; the computed delay and other allowances are more accurate because they have a definite relation to the more accurate net operation time; therefore, the computed final standard time is more accurate. There is in this reasoning that which makes a strong appeal, but it must be admitted also that the proponents of the stop-watch technique present a strong counter *a priori* argument and the burden of proof rests with the Gilbreths—the affirmative in the debate. Therefore the membership of the Taylor Society is justified in asking for evidence,—data in the nature of actual figures of relative average unit times, relative net times, relative standard times and relative costs of securing these.