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COMMENT

READERS of Mr. Pound's interesting address in this issue should have in mind the author's background. He resides in a Michigan city which has in twenty-five years grown from a country village of some three thousand inhabitants to an industrial community of a hundred thousand, devoted almost exclusively to the manufacture of automobiles. The automobile industry is probably as mechanical and repetitive as any of our great industries. The individual job is highly specialized and standardized. The material passes to and from the work-place with rapidity. In certain processes heavy machinery working on metal creates an environment of noise.

IT is therefore not surprising that Mr. Pound, apparently generalizing from facts observed in that particular industry, should unconsciously over-emphasize, as we believe he has, the autocracy of the "Iron Man" which he believes dominates the individual workers in modern industrial technique. We say *over* emphasize, for, while there is undoubtedly such an autocracy, we believe it is an aspect of indifferent management and remediable, rather than inherent in mechanized, repetitive, specialized and standardized processing. Significant as is the author's contribution to the study of the human problems in industry, we believe that he offers as the premise of part of his reasoning, certain generalizations which are not based on adequate observation and analysis of the facts.

AS we understand it, Mr. Pound's argument in his address and in his book, is essentially as follows: Modern mechanized, repetitive, specialized and standardized processing has brought about a condition in which the workers must apply themselves to tasks which are performed in an environment of noise, speed and nervous tension, and which offer little variety and therefore little opportunity for initiative and self-expression; tasks which may be performed by workers who are not skilled, and of whom the great number places the workers in a disadvantageous bargaining position which results in an "insecurity of the job"; that the lack of interest in the job and the insecurity of tenure create individual discontent and general industrial unrest; that all of this is inherent in modern industry and must be accepted; and that a remedy is a shortening of the hours of labor and an education of the worker for better enjoyment of the hours outside the shop to compensate him for the disagreeable hours in the shop.

WE must confess a great interest in the remedy suggested. We believe an education for the more profitable and enjoyable utilization of leisure time is as important for the workers as for professional men (in the *Atlantic Monthly* some ten years ago appeared an article by President Tucker on education for the proper disposition of the leisure time of the educated man). We believe that our educational methods and educational values need reappraisal. It may be that, as Mr. Pound suggests, our public school education should aim better to prepare the man for life outside of industry, and, as Mr. Feiss suggests, industry itself should take over the responsibility of training men