

as the grouped workers will be to assume some part in it.

I have very little hesitation in suggesting that workers' organizations as they are likely to be, or may easily be, constituted in the not-far-distant future, may be given a very distinct function in the matter of inspection and review. Taylor held that the function of inspection to be worth its salt must be quite detached in an organization way from the subject inspected. For instance the checks on bank balances and store room stocks were made by stenographers and others in no way associated with the accounting or stores departments. Even if at the start only suggestions¹⁰ were to be invited, what a wealth of material to draw from would be afforded a union or federation of unions organized to make available operating policies and details in ten thousand plants manufacturing everything from ice cream and toothpicks to locomotives and office buildings.

Of course the affording of an opportunity to make suggestions in itself hardly constitutes a functional relationship. But a suggestion system may be administered so as to constitute at least a wise preliminary. The making of suggestions in the absence of adequate guarantees may represent a distinct loss—both pecuniary and in status—to the individual and to the group participating. Again, it is

¹⁰Encouragement in the making of suggestions has been an essential feature of so-called "union-management co-operation" technique. Otto S. Beyer, Jr., engineering representative of the Shopcraft (railroad) Unions affiliated with the International Machinists Union, investigated this system first at the Rock Island Arsenal during the war and later has made it basic to operations on the B. & O. Railroad, Canadian National Railways and elsewhere.

FOR every employe who is "steady in his work" there shall be steady work. The right to regularity in employment is co-equal with the right to regularity in the payment of rent, in the payment of interest on bonds, in the delivery to customers of the high quality of product contracted for. No business is successfully conducted which does not perform fully the obligations incident to each of these

likely that education and training—on the job—may become a larger and larger factor in industrial progress. Not much imagination is required to see the grouped workers an important and integral factor in this development. It is my observation that time study, as practised in most plants, would be on a much sounder basis if it were open to the review of the group. When the group comes to sense the possibility of job analysis and time study industry may be in for a new adventure.¹¹ Discipline as administered by an individual—even if he be an employer—is not of the same order as that administered by the group.

Just what all this implies in the way of improvement—or at least change—in the leadership and attitude of the normal standard union of course is another story. But I rather expect that the adoption of the suggested techniques will have quite as marked an effect on the trade unions as on the employer group.

In our effort to peer some distance into the future we are well advised not to go too hard after details. If we have the goal clearly in mind—in this case the maintenance of the organization of the workers in an era of close co-operation as between management and men—and if we know the first steps, good-will should do the rest. It is my hope that to those who are not wholly satisfied with our present industrial organization this paper may be suggestive as to possible lines of a healthy evolution.

¹¹Cooke, Morris L., "Morale as a Factor in Time Study Technique," *Bulletin of the Taylor Society*, Vol. XII, No. 2, April, 1927.

rights. Each of these obligations is equally a fixed charge. No dividend should be paid unless each of these fixed charges has been met. The reserve to insure regularity of employment is as imperative as the reserve for depreciation; and it is equally a part of the fixed charges to make the annual contribution to that reserve. No business is socially solvent which cannot do so. (Anonymous)

Workers' Participation in Management¹

How Scientific Management Can Promote a New Functional Status for Workers

By GEOFFREY C. BROWN

Consulting Engineer, East Orange, N. J.

FEW modern industrial developments, I think, have greater significance than the recent progress that our trade unions have been making toward a new citizenship in American industry. Features like the Baltimore and Ohio plan, or the co-operative activities of the Full Fashioned Hosiery Workers, or the Printing Pressmen's Engineering Service—to mention just a few—are not isolated or sporadic developments but are, rather, high points in a tide of progress that is carrying forward the entire labor movement. Organized labor, year by year, is evincing increasing readiness to assume, jointly with management, definite responsibility for the effective conduct of industry; and organized labor is doing so entirely from an awakened realization that by such activity, labor is serving its own best ends.

One phase of this development is manifest in a lively curiosity that the unions are beginning to show as to the sort of management actually prevailing throughout industry. It is not uncommon, nowadays, for a member of our employer or managerial group accustomed to conventional lamentation over labor's old sabotage, and the lump of labor "fallacy," to be brought up in disconcerting fashion with, "How about the Hoover Waste Report—management responsible for over 50 per cent of total waste, labor for less than 25 per cent? There is some real output restriction for you to weep over." The conversation then seeks a less difficult ground such as prohibition or the weather.

A few weeks ago the New Bedford strike came to an end. For many months the organized workers in the textile mills of this New England city, had stood out against a 10 per cent wage reduction declared by the mill operators. The employers supported the reduction by a statement that economic conditions peculiar to the industry and entirely beyond their control—Southern competition,

¹Paper presented before a meeting of the Taylor Society, New York, December 6, 1928.

etc.—rendered such action necessary. The reply of the union is of great interest because it sounds a note which we are destined, I am sure, to hear with increasing insistence in days to come. The New Bedford Local hotly charged the employers with wasteful management of the mills. The employers countered by reiterating their original statement. The strike which involved fifty-seven mills and twenty-seven thousand workers, lasting over a period of six months, was compromised finally, on the basis of a 5 per cent wage reduction.

I am not concerned at this time with the exact merits of these counter statements in the New Bedford contest. It is common knowledge that economic conditions in the Northern textile area are, colloquially, "not so good." I am much interested, however, in the fact that such an interchange took place. Confronted by this new concern of labor, which is amply supported by additional evidence from other industries, it seems inevitable that effective management of industry soon will be recognized by the unions as a major economic objective, taking its place as such, with the traditional objectives of better wages, hours and conditions of work.

Workers have a tremendous stake in the quality of management. To them it means survival, personal development and the tenor of their daily lives. I believe that I echo the experience of most management engineers when I say that in the course of my work I have gone into a considerable number of plants, each struggling along under some form of mismanagement, and that with a few notable exceptions I have found the same state of affairs: low wages, low production, general disorder, inadequate equipment, rule of thumb methods, absence of necessary records, an unpleasant working atmosphere, uncomfortable and unsanitary work places, high labor turnover. A fair proportion of these plants was on the verge of bankruptcy when, as a desperate measure, an outside engineer was called in, and