

knowledge of the field as a whole, however, is largely fortuitous and their own intense activities and heavy responsibilities prevent the utilization of this knowledge most freely for the general welfare. How often do these few—the walking encyclopedias of the movement—meet the whole body of our membership?

How is our interchange of information now achieved? Aside from the limited number of definite papers and their discussions at our meetings, it is mostly casual and haphazard. Part of our number get together at our four or five meetings a year. Sitting informally at luncheon, wherever convenient, one will make a chance remark upon which a neighbor may seize, ask more, and get a real bit of help. Or another may come a long distance planning to ask someone qualified a particular question and find that person not present. Is not such means for the spread of experience and judgment altogether too accidental? Are we not continually violating Mr. Taylor's second ideal of good management i.e., such standardized conditions that the task can be performed with certainty? Does not this mean an unnecessarily high labor cost for our own production? Should we not so standardize our own inter-relations that our individual and collective progress in the science of management may be achieved with maximum certainty in minimum time?

We apply good principles of organization and management to others,—why not to ourselves? In our activities we have no excuse for falling into the old error of haphazard effort which can bring only haphazard results. We criticize the lack of co-ordination in those industrial activities which we undertake to organize. We establish planning departments to be the clearing houses of information for the various productive and experimental activities of these plants. Should we not develop and make effective a similar mechanism for co-ordinating our own individual efforts? For the sake of both present and future progress we need such a clearing house for our activities, investigations and achievements, where authoritative information may be sought and found.

Naturally any such co-ordination of independent professional work involves co-operation. The co-operative spirit in our Society is patent. No one who knows the movement can, for a moment, question the sincerity of this spirit throughout our membership. The instances of free and hearty cooperation, often at very considerable sacrifice, are such every-day occurrences as to arouse only the warmest admiration. What is needed, however, is some channel by which this fine spirit of co-operation may find most effective expression for the widest influence of good, and that,

<sup>1</sup> cf. "Shop Management" p. 64 (Harper edition).

too, at less personal sacrifice with its consequent loss of momentum.

Most of the giving in the past has been, perhaps naturally, by those who had most to give. This has made the burden on them unduly great. I believe there is not a member of any grade who is not glad to give the best that he is and has for the general good, nor is there a member of any grade who has not something worth giving. The fact that so few in the past have done it is, I believe, because there is no clear channel for such giving. This channel the Society should provide.

As a beginning in this direction the four following lines of action are suggested.

1. The Society should expect from each member of each active grade (owners as well as organizers) as least once in two years the presentation of some paper. This may be nothing more than a report of progress or of experience, or the description of a problem which is being worked on. It is my belief that the practical help coming to each author from the suggestions and criticisms of his paper would prove such an incentive for further presentations that soon the problem of the Society would be not where to get such reports, but how satisfactorily to handle the number pouring in. Bringing our problems into the light of publicity and discussion will be a stimulus and help difficult to overestimate. To provide time for these discussions our meetings might be lengthened to cover two whole days and part of one day be devoted to round-table discussions on different topics.

2. The development of one part of the work of the secretary's office into a purely mechanical clearing house of information covering all the problems being worked upon by all the members. Each member would report on a list of all the problems on which he is engaged and, if possible, give some brief note as to the degree of solution. Such lists would be tabulated and published to the membership for their information. Individual members could then correspond with each other to ask particular questions, and get mutual benefit from the mutual discussion. Finally, when sufficient results had been achieved by anyone, these could be given out through the Society for the general use of members.

3. The establishment of committees or individuals to whom could be referred for authoritative reply or advice any question by any member. Most of such questions with their answers could advantageously be published in the BULLETIN.

4. The preparation and publication by the Society of a series of descriptions of standard practice and methods as concrete illustrations of sound principles. The accumulation of these individual publications together with the answers to questions suggested in

(3) would make an increasingly valuable work of reference. Mr. Mitchell's research in time study is an important effort in this line, much more elaborate than is considered in this particular suggestion. There are many well-established practices, however, which could be written up with comparative promptness and ease by many of our members, such as requisitioning, purchasing, balance of stores keeping, receiving, and stowing.

The writer wishes not to propose any too definite plan but rather to arouse the members to thought along this line and so make possible the formulation of a well conceived plan which will embody the best suggestions of all. Development, to be effective and permanent, may have to be slow. Nevertheless, the ideal should be clearly conceived and some definite steps towards its achievement agreed upon.