

have themselves been ignorant of the causes, the poor benighted layman was entitled to some excuse for his dosing. The doctors' fumbling attentions in rheumatism and its allied ills have been enlightened by knowledge of systemic infections only within recent years.

In the industrial field, faith in the power of magic or well advertised cure-alls to cure the ills of the industrial body is undiminished. The manufacturer whose business is failing or whose employees are discontented turns with eagerness to the several specifics now flooding the market. If profits are dwindling, what better remedy can be had than a "system". It matters not that the manufacturer may himself be responsible for the failure, that his dogged adherence to tradition and convention is the cause of his difficulties; he is sure that if only he can get a "system" all will go well and no disturbance to his habitual activities will be necessary. Or, perhaps, he will invite criticism and a reorganization of his procedure, and then flatly refuse to adopt any changes which involve his personal activities. Business dyspepsia and continued unwise eating are common among our business folk.

It is in the field of industrial relations, however, that we find the best illustrations of the patent medicine habit of mind. The business men, who are now beset by labor troubles and can not imagine what has got into the minds of the workers, are turning to patent medicines to cure these ills. If the workers are complaining, give them a dose of industrial democracy, guaranteed to cure all industrial ills. In the minds of the business men, industrial democracy is anything which will quiet the workers without jeopardizing the control of the business. Thus, we have fifty-seven varieties of employees' representation and shop committees being installed in American industries, each of which, it is fondly hoped, will endear the management to the employees. The appeal of these schemes lies in the ease with which they can be adapted without affecting the existing organization and operation of the plant.

Along with these representative plans are found the personnel department. Again we have the patent medicine habit of mind, believing that by appointing a personnel director or employment manager the employees can be quieted without changing the vicious character of supervision and administration which is the cause of the employees' discontent. Profit-sharing, as a cure-all for industrial ills, has been advocated by some of our leading citizens and many industrial physicians, as though the remedy for a fever were to raise the

patient's temperature! One is reminded of the Chinese doctor who treats eye troubles by punching a hole through the cornea.

The control of industry by business men, to whom the profit-making ideal is paramount, has subordinated the service or production ideal, with what results all can see. In their minds, the control of an industry means financial control for profit-making. This necessarily is incompatible with labor control, partial or complete, over any essential elements of the business, since labor seeks a larger income, continuous employment, and continuous production, all of which conflict with price maintenance and profit-making through restricted output. Hence, it is not difficult to understand the desire for a patent medicine which will eliminate these unruly labor aspirations and yet permit the present method of control to continue unchanged.

Here again the business men are not wholly to blame, for there are any number of industrial physicians who are ignorant of the systemic infection in industry and a growing number of industrial patent medicine vendors to cater to this demand. The newspapers, magazines, trade papers, and even some of the journals of a professional character carry their advertisements of industrial nostrums. "Install our system of shop committees," they say in effect, "and sleep soundly once more." "Take large doses of our industrial relations and see how your labor troubles vanish. Testimonials sent upon request." Or, frequently, they print letters from "satisfied" users commending their specific.

The aspirants for positions of employment managers or personnel directors are the most amusing of these versatile peddlers of panaceas. In a usually rather careful journal, devoted to management and engineering, there recently appeared the following personal cards:

**WANTED: POSITION AS EMPLOYMENT MANAGER AND SUPERVISOR OF LABOR**, with an organization that desires exceptional ability and employs from an eight to a fifty-thousand force. I have a clever employment system and an after-the-war plan which develops mutual interest for the employer and employee. Will submit unusual results and recommendation from my present employer, besides other reference to any concern interested.

**EMPLOYMENT MANAGER.** An executive, of high moral standing capable of organizing and installing an employment department, that will bring into industry justice and opportunity, be a mediator between labor and capital, a safety valve for dissatisfaction, a clearing house for discontent and a shock absorber for trouble, is open to offers from a progressive company. During the war we maintained a steady working force in one of the larg-

est powder plants in the country and decreased the Labor Turnover by 250 per cent. I am 35 years old, full of enthusiasm, have full knowledge of all the most recent methods of handling help, and have been exceptionally successful in this work.

**EMPLOYMENT MANAGER:** A college graduate, who has specialized in sociology, psychology, economics, and preventive hygiene, also has taken courses abroad in sociology, with eight years human engineering experience, combined with a knowledge of character analysis, psycho-analysis, placement psychology, safety, sanitary engineering, general welfare and industrial democracy, desires a position.

Yet, despite these personally extravagant claims, are they more misleading than many of the display advertisements and pamphlets issued by some of the established organizations? In their statements occur such phrases as: "Because employers have neglected the thoughts of workers, is the reason for the present-day unrest." "Appoint a day for our representative to call on you; the knowledge we will be able to impart will prove most refreshing." While "shop committee" and "industrial democracy" are sprinkled throughout, as "herbs" and "roots" figure in the advertisements of pain-killers.

There is no Pure Food and Drug Act to govern these men nor is there any law to prevent the business men from taking their nostrums. The real pity of it all is that sincere efforts to improve industrial relations by serious students of the problem are sure to be compromised by the inevitable failures of these ready-to-take remedies and the resulting skepticism of the employers.

Industrial democracy, if it means anything, must imply an aspiration, as does political democracy, and who is there to prescribe the system or scheme for achieving either aspiration? Viewed historically, it appears to be a desire, a longing for some new and better relationship in industry than the old master-servant relation. Considered as a social movement, the aspiration toward industrial democracy appears as only one more manifestation of the constantly recurring phenomenon, when the desires of the people no longer can find satisfaction in existing institutions and they turn with a feeling of profound frustration to

new forms, new ideals, more consonant with the developing life of society and more effective for its aims. In that process the employment manager or personnel director can be but a temporary intermediary, one who can perhaps lessen the rigor of the conflict between employer and employees and keep the organization going, while management acquires the new technique of supervision and leadership and labor learns the art politic as a substitute for the art coercive.

The appeal of these soi-disant pacifiers of labor is to our profound ignorance in the matter of human behavior. We do not know, as yet, why people act as they do, although the work of the psychologists today is pointing toward a new orientation in this field. For so long we have believed in the power of wages to stimulate effort that the patent fact of money's impotence has escaped attention. Should the efforts of psychology result in a workable theory of human behavior, as they now promise, all of these widely advertised remedies and "professional" methods will be relegated to the scrap heap. Sound industrial relations are to be sought through the work of the technicians and of the psychologists and when the answer is found it will probably astonish by its simplicity. As Lord Dunsony remarks, "men are very clever, but the gods are wonderfully simple."

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#### MEMBERSHIP STATISTICS

Members of the Taylor Society will be interested in the growth of the Society since the reorganization early in 1919:

	Jan. 1, 1919	Jan. 1, 1920	Apr. 1, 1920
Seniors .....	45	114	168
Associates .....	69	77	91
Juniors .....	12	35	47
Honorary .....	1	1	1
Total .....	127	227	307
Sustaining .....	9	16	24
Total .....	136	243	331

<sup>1</sup>New York Telephone Co., New York.