You have not even sufficient control to remedy the technical situation in the use of coal. You are faced with the question of "why" and "how," or in other words, a change in the technique of administration.

POSTSCRIPT

MR. ARCHBALD: Two things have happened since the first part of December; two things which will have a bearing on the lives of those who work in the mines. One of these is the commission of three, called by the President to investigate and make awards concerning the recent demands of the United Mine Workers. The other is the inspirational appeal which Mr. Herbert Hoover, newly elected president of the American Institute of Mining and Metallurgical Engineers, made to the members of that society, that they apply themselves to the industrial problems of coal mining and that, as engineers, they take a part in civic life.

Concerning the first happening it is too early to report, as the Commission itself has made no report. Concerning the second happening a discussion is possible, because Mr. Hoover's appeal was made at the beginning of a two-day session of the Institute and was followed by a number of papers presented by well-known men.

They were very estimable papers. The titles were "The Fluctuations In Coal—Their Extent and Causes;" "Storage of Bituminous Coal and Its Possibilities of Stabilization;" "Transportation as a Factor in Irregularity of Coal Mine Operation;" "Stabilizing the Market;" "Conservation." But some way, after it was all over, one was reminded of the favorite expression of the old Welsh mine foreman; "Leave it as was it." They presented figures about millions of tons of coal used in this or that way. They acknowledged the intermittency with which mines are worked. They had to acknowledge that, because a fraction of one per cent of our population had put up a hearty kick over it and had thrown a scare into all industry. And the intermittency was shown to be poor business and was due to this and that. The blame for conditions was put in many places by the various authors, but was never taken home. The public was blamed because it would not buy coal in the summer though they paid a higher price in the end. The railroads were blamed, and exonerated in the next breath because operators were to be blamed. And then operators were exonerated because the public was to blame. There was much talk of the possible use of machinery, with the implication that machinery could cure social, human ills.

To one listening in for two days, it seemed as if the discussion went around like a puppy chasing his own tail. One cannot break down in one session a long continued policy, and social subjects have been taboo in the Institute of Mining Engineers. So the members of the Institute talked business and machinery. The things suggested will have their effect on the lives of those working underground, but it will take ten to twenty years to accomplish them. No one cut through to that heart of industrial questions, which should be answered before quitting time; "How is Mike Kowalowski going to earn enough money to maintain his family in decency?"

No young man, fresh from contact with the work of a mine and interested in life, was heard talking. It was a session of older men. There is still hope, however, that some ray of sunshine may break through to those who are now working in the mines. The President's Coal Commission is up against the immediate problem. And Mr. Hoover's appeal may reach through to the young men of the Institute of Mining Engineers; and perhaps in the future—perhaps at the next meeting—?

ALBERT R. SHIPLEY

Industrial Engineering Department, Winchester Repeating Arms Co.

DIED FEBRUARY 15, 1920

Whether in contact with workers or with executives, his personality won him friendships and his command of the technique of scientific management won him professional respect. Called to Watertown Arsenal at the outbreak of war, he there gave himself so generously as to impair a constitution which was none too strong for the task. He, too, died in the service of his country.

THE PRESIDENT'S INDUSTRIAL CONFERENCE OF OCTOBER, 1919[1]

BY

HENRY S. DENNISON[2] AND IDA TARBELL[3]

I.

HENRY S. DENNISON

I AM going to speak a better word for the Industrial Conference than I imagine most of you have in your minds, although its failure was conspicuous. Its chances of success were, nevertheless, very real. They were chances which did not materialize; but in business affairs, as in many of the ordinary affairs of life, we are well used to chances that don't materialize. In order to accomplish anything at all, we must continue to take chances.

I speak specifically, for example, in regard to the practice of group voting. This caused considerable discussion, and in the minds of one or two especially in the Public Group, became a question which was virtually an obsession.

Now the group voting, if the conference had succeeded, offered a very important opportunity; an opportunity for a group officially representing the employers of the country to make a statement of their position which might be so progressive as to help materially in leading us on into better industrial days. And group voting offered a similar opportunity for labor, an especially conservative body of labor, to make an expression of progressive opinion.

If there had been no group formation we should have had simply an aggregate of individual opinions. So, although group voting created difficulties, it also gave an opportunity for considerably more effective service than would have otherwise been possible.

Naturally to the second conference there had to be called a group of men viewing the situation more or less from the outside, and their opinions must be considered more as academic opinions. I hope and have faith that they will so back their opinions with the opinions of both employers and labor that they will come to have the weight of opinions of parties to the controversy.

The primary handicap that we staggered under was the existence of the steel strike. I say "existence of the steel strike" because it is probable that with the steel strike in existence it was actually impossible for labor to keep the question out of the conference. They had to bring it in, and as soon as it was brought in it was perfectly clear that our mission held a sort of family resemblance to Henry Ford's mission on the peace ship; in the midst of a bitter, raging conflict we were asked to express opinions as to what should be done in the future after the conflict was all over. That, of course, made our whole problem difficult because there was too much reference to that conflict in mind—certainly in the minds of all of the Employers' Group and of the Labor Group—and it was difficult to make a statement of principle that we felt might apply in the future without its undue reference to this specific conflict.

That the steel strike resolution was brought onto the floor was the final step in the dissolution. It was next to impossible to keep the conference on its job after that. The members of the Public Group took the one opportunity they saw of postponing consideration of the steel strike resolution until we should take up some other subject. Individually, I don't think we cared much what that subject was, as long as it was one which would postpone consideration of the steel strike and possibly give opportunity to cool off.

The breaks didn't come our way. One circumstance which has not been given much attention, but which appeared to me at the time and since as of considerable influence, was the illness of Mr. Gompers. He never came back from that illness in full strength, and, consequently, didn't have afterwards the vigorous tactical power that is probably his; and it is more than imaginable that he might have saved the situation by holding labor there in spite of the tremendous pressure that was brought to bear upon them by the telegrams from all over the country, if he had retained his full strength.

[1] Addresses at the annual meeting of the Taylor Society, Saturday evening, Dec. 6, 1919.

[2] Dennison Manufacturing Co., Framingham, Mass., Member of the Conference. President of the Taylor Society.

[3] Investigator and author, New York City, Member of the Conference.