
E d i t o r i a l

Technocracy vs. Technology*

TECHNOCRACY is a beautiful word, though not so blessed as Mesopotamia. It has crowded Prohibition and Debt Payments off the front page and given us something different, if not new, to talk about. It has failed to tell us how to do anything else. Those who are interested to learn how destitute of authority its fulminations are, and how little confidence can be placed in its statistics, are referred to the articles dealing with Technocracy in the *Iron Age* for December 22, and in *Time* for December 26.

Technocracy holds the machine responsible for unemployment, but, though China is certainly not under the domination of the machine, a recent letter from Peiping says, "In China the depression is always with us; to find a large part of the population out of work is but a normal condition." Obviously, then, we must look beyond the machine if we are to find the causes of general unemployment and its remedy. Technocracy, in its embodiment in Mr. Howard Scott, looks so much further that it has found something even more sinister than the machine. It tells us, "Our old system is done for, and the nation has got to swallow the fact that the price system is completely played out."

What we are to substitute for the price system Technocracy does not say, and before we begin to swallow we may well recall that the price system has been in use some thousands of years, during which time some billions of people have been unable to find a more practical or convenient system for the transaction of their business.

In happy contrast to the gloomy futilities of Technocracy stand the solid achievements of that very different thing, Technology. In a little more than one hundred years Technology has increased, immeasurably, the wealth of the world. It has raised the standard of living of multitudes, provided countless conveniences and amenities, and vastly broadened our mental horizon. It has shortened the working day, provided innumerable new industries and thereby created millions of new jobs. Those who talk with such assurance of technological unemployment should first picture, if they can, the catastrophic extent of unemployment with which we would be faced were we suddenly deprived of the contributions of Technology.

It would mean the immediate discharge of all those directly or indirectly employed by our railroads or in steam navigation. There would be no automobiles and motor trucks to build and operate and service; little demand for new and better roads and none for gasoline. There would be no jobs for the millions now employed by the telephone, the telegraph, the radio, and the moving pictures. The production of steel would shrink to trivial proportions, and the great electrical industries with their widespread systems of distribution would no longer be employers. Chemical plants and textile mills would disappear, and a host of miscellaneous industrial activities based on Technology and the machine.

Technocracy is destructive; Technology is creative. Let us not confuse them.

ARTHUR D. LITTLE.

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Modernization

Have you read of the Renovize Philadelphia Campaign? This campaign conducted by the business houses of Philadelphia resulted in \$15,000,000 being pledged to restoring, repairing, reconditioning, and remodeling property. This is not a charity proposition, promulgated simply to give work to the unemployed. Philadelphia's leading business and professional men organized this campaign with the idea that business given to the local contractors will give work to unemployed labor, beautify the city, modernize property, and save the property owners considerable sums. Everyone is benefited, as can be seen from this brief outline.

As a chemist and plant superintendent, does this interest you? It does. How? It interests you because your company can benefit by taking advantage of the prices of today's labor to renovate and modernize your plant. When you analyze the productivity of worn-out equipment and the cost per unit producing with old equipment, there is every reason that you should take advantage of present conditions and modernize your plant, so that your productivity and cost per unit will meet competitive conditions.

There are in the columns of your journal new methods, new equipment, new materials that will bear investigation. Have you taken advantage of these suggestions and inquired into the value of these articles to your business?

In a short space of time, new equipments and methods replaced less efficient ones. You may have a very modern building, and your equipment may not be old or wornout, but it may be almost obsolete from the standpoint of present developments.

Those who modernize today may replace the present leaders in industry.

An Apology

In the October issue of OIL AND SOAP, page 228, appeared an article by George S. Jamieson and Robert S. McKinney, on the "Comparative Study of Methods for Determining Free Fatty Acids in Cottonseed." Through a mistake this article was repeated in January, 1933, page 9, as, "Report of Seed Analysis Committee," by C. H. Cox, Chairman. A correct report by Mr. Cox will appear in the March issue.

We wish to apologize to Messrs Jamieson, McKinney and Cox for this error. Precautions have been taken which will prevent an error of this character in the future.

Notice of Application—(Second Publication)

Neil F. Amsler, chemist, Brenham Laboratories, Brenham, Texas, has applied for a Referee Chemist Certificate of the American Oil Chemists' Society.