

WHEN PEACE WAS AS BRUTAL AS WAR

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In those Days Men Preferred the Adventures of War to the
Oppressions of Peace. But Modern Industry Is Giving Greater
Rewards and a More Interesting Life to the Common Men Who
Used To Enjoy Being Soldiers, and This Is the Foundation of
Our Hope That Wars May End.

AN INTERVIEW WITH IDA M. TARBELL

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In the November American Magazine Ida M. Tarbell begins a new series of business articles entitled "The Golden Rule in Business—How It Pays in Dollars and Cents, Personal Satisfaction and Human Happiness." After two years of study of American industries all over the country Miss Tarbell will report her findings. Judging by her first article she has discovered a tremendous recent development which she will show by specific accounts of factories and businesses of various kinds. The nature of the development which she has discovered is indicated by her own general statement:—"The old creed which declared that humanity has nothing to do with business is out of date. The exploitation of man is no longer the most powerful force in industry. New facts, new ideas, are pointing the way throughout the general business world, pointing to larger wages, to sounder profits and, best of all, to happier and richer lives, both for employer and employee. Business is summoning to its aid great forces which make it pay dividends not only in dollars and cents but in health and human happiness. Nothing can stop these new ideals. Not only the human heart and human intelligence are with them, but human competition is forcing them. It is forcing them more rapidly and completely than agitation or legislation has ever dreamed."

We asked Miss Tarbell whether there was anything in this new development to moderate dull times or to lessen the possibility of war. Miss Tarbell received our interviewer at her farm near Bethel, Conn., where she does most of her writing, and in reply to our questions dictated the following statement. T & Edn.

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The Body of the
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 "You ask me whether there is anything in what I call The
 New Industrial Order which promises to discourage war and to
 make dull times easier. Can industry, founded on the principles
 I am trying to lay down and illustrate, be numbered among the
 anti-war forces?"

"I believe so - with all my heart. All I look at it the most
 important thing for the civilized world today is to discover and
 put into operation the forces which will make a second war like
 the one we are watching today impossible. I think some of these
 forces have been discovered and that they are already in opera-
 tion.

"A great hold of militarism has always been the notion that
 common men were nothing but 'common fodder.' Industry has also
 had that idea. But men are ceasing to be 'cattle' in industry.
 They have fought their way out and there ^{are} increasing numbers of own-
 ers and managers who are recognizing the value of men and saying that
 there is nothing that should not be done to develop their powers.

"It is the recognition of the possibilities in common men
 that is changing things. They are too good to kill. You might just
 as well deliberately burn up a coal mine as let a body of workingmen
 wear themselves out, kill their powers. When we get it firmly into
 our heads that common men are too valuable to go uncultivated, un-
 developed, we will have gone a long way toward discouraging war.
 If they are too valuable for common fodder, then even a Kaiser will
 not allow them to be so used. But the men will see ~~it~~ to it them-
 selves as they come to realize their value. The stand many bodies
 of laborers and of socialists take against war is bound to be strong-
 er as time goes on. It will be stronger after this war. The common
 man won't ^{hesitate} have it when he comes to see that he is getting nothing

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from it and that there is a peaceful way for him to get more out of life. Moreover when he sees that those who direct his work are in sympathy with his ambition, believe in his powers, he is going to be more of a person than ever.

"Yes, the new industrial order is going to do an enormous amount toward putting an end to war. It is going to make life too interesting, too prosperous and too co-operative to stop every now and then and destroy all that has been achieved in a few generations. War has been a way of getting things. Industry is going to get more things for everybody in a more interesting way. It is the co-operative principle that will do the thing.

"Every man who organizes his factory force on scientific principles, trains his men, opens the way for their advancement, considers health, safety and happiness as sound business principles, who fits wages to service and takes into some form of partnership everybody who stays by, who regards business not as 'his' or the stockholder's but as the joint product of everybody who contributes to it - that man is pulling the teeth of war, for he is making peace worth while and the way the world has been run peace has not been worth while for many men. War was more interesting and profitable.

"If industry were to be continued on old lines or as it used to be in our own steel and wool mills and in the mines of the world, there would be little to choose between war and industry. The former had many advantages. It had its thrills and its opportunities for iron crosses and things, and it put one in a noble company and you could wear a uniform and march to a band, and if you were wounded you were given a pension and were a hero, and if you were killed you belonged to a holy company. Nothing of that kind for a coal miner or a cotton spinner or a railroad brakeman. But things

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have changed in industry. It also is training men as war has in the past. When every group of miners, street cleaners and shovellers become a trained body and are handled as so many soldiers are, then out of this body those fit are advanced regularly. When you get the whole body of labor handled like a decent organization, not like a dump heap, you'll have done something to make the life of the common laborer as desirable as that of the common soldier. I count enormously on the general organization of industry to make it more interesting to men than war.

"You also want to know whether I think the Golden Rule in business will do anything to make dull times easier. Your idea, is I suppose that after all the Golden Rule has not very much to do with the thing that we call prosperity. As you know, for the last two years I have been making observations around the country in places where it seemed to me that, consciously or unconsciously, the Golden Rule was being applied to the making of various kinds of things. I have seen something at work in coal mines, steel mills, cotton factories, in fact, which I call the Golden Rule, whether the men at the top do or not.

"There is no doubt, of course, that work has been slack all over the country in the last year. Everybody has felt the dull times. Now, people who operated under the old system,—that is, without any of the ideas about the relations of men to success in business which are taking hold of manufacturers today — these people, when business was dull, shut down as promptly as possible and waited for full orders. The result was, of course, that great bodies of people were thrown on the community without any means for paying their way. Everybody suffered. I have seen nothing of this kind of thing at all in the industries which I have visited. It certainly was true that in many of the places they were feeling the pinch of dull

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times; but what they were doing was putting their wits to work to circumvent dull times. Those manufacturers who have been intelligent and flexible enough to see the advantages of putting their factories under scientific management are quite intelligent enough to devise means not to lose them men that they have been educating or to allow the machinery which they have built up to lie entirely idle. A great deal of the idleness of plants, I am convinced, is due to the narrowness and lack of facility and invention on the part of the management. They have not been in the habit of setting their wits to work to find things which they might do with the plants that they have. If the orders for the kind of thing that they have been making fall off, it seems not to occur to many manufacturers that it might be possible for them to make other things. I have found in the shops under scientific management more intelligent and aggressive efforts to turn their men and their machinery at new lines during dull times.

"In one place that I visited where orders had begun to fall off, the men were called together and were told exactly how matters stood. The management said: 'Now here is our scheme; we will do our utmost to get work if you will consent to work five hours a day instead of eight.' Nearly all of these men had seen more or less of the old brutal habit of closing down entirely and they were glad enough to co-operate on short hours. The management then suggested that they adjust hours in such a way that the men get the eighteen hours a week, which they were losing, in succession; that is, instead of working five hours a day for six days in a week, they work four days in succession and have three days off. This was working admirably, for many of the men who owned little homes were taking these leisure days for repairs about their places and for work in the garden. Others were regarding it purely as vacation and were

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setting out to enjoy themselves as fully as they could.

"I did not see a community, where the new ideas were in operation, where there were any evictions by landlords because the rent could not be paid. In the Steel Corporation the order went out at the start from headquarters in New York • that nobody should be evicted from company houses during slack work. One of the impressive things + saw was the way in which the situation of working people in dull times had been made more tolerable by the operation of compensation • for accident and by factory nurses and hospitals. A woman in a steel town said to me: 'I don't know what we would have done, now that everybody is on half time, if it had not been that the company is paying John so much a week because of his accident. He got out up last fall and the company doctor and nurses not only take care of him but they give him so much a week. Ten years ago when we had a shut-down, there was nothing of that kind and those of us who had sick or injured husbands came nigh starving to death.'

" Possibly one of the finest effects of the effort to work in harmony with laborers is that everybody from the superintendent to the smallest foreman knows vastly more about the individuals in the force and their conditions than they ever did before. When you have men organized into groups, as they are coming to be in all the factories where the new ideas are in force - where you have nurses and social secretaries and safety experts and doctors as a regular part of the force - everybody knows more or less about everybody else; and there is a keener desire that the dull times should be handled in such a way that the deprivation shall be as little for each one as possible. The fact of the matter is this Golden Rule in business means co-operation in trouble as well as in prosperity. And when you get a big body of men trying to handle trouble co-operatively, you are going

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to reduce its pains to the minimum. You really are going to keep the whole body partially productive; you are going to enable them all to pay their way. That means that all of the enterprises of a town go on, not so prosperously, perhaps, but at least eh they go on. You have a form of prosperity always.

" My feeling is, from what I have seen in the industries which are under our new ideas of scientific management and of human treatment, that if we can once get privilege stripped out of this country, we can have steady prosperity. I don't mean by that w that we will always have boom times. Certainly not. But we will be able to keep our entire population at some kind of work. There is a good deal going on in the educational work in the new factories, which is going to contribute to this. The teaching of thrift not only to the men but to their wives and children is coming to be a part of business management in a great many factories. These savings become a tremendous help in dull times. An industrial community in which practically everybody puts aside his little sum every week cannot be broken up and turned into a breadline when dull times come on."

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