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INDUSTRIAL MANAGEMENT
THE ENGINEERING MAGAZINE
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AND LIEBER'S CODES USED

JOHN R. DUNLAP
EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR

New York, October 24, 1919.

My dear Miss Tarbell:

On Thursday last Mr. Phillips afforded both my son and myself two hours of such suggestive, constructive and inspirational fellowship in the consideration of practical publishing problems, that I am very much in hopes that this initial conference may somehow lead to a permanent alliance and association, certainly in the publication of your proposed Handbook, and possibly in his asting in some advisory capacity in the future great development of my most promising Magazine property.

Mr. Phillips expressed himself as so favorably impressed with the idea of your Handbook that he at once advised against your suggestion that I have a conference with Mr. Brett. Because Mr. Brett is himself a publisher, with his own interests to serve, Mr. Phillips seems to think that he might be inclined to advise against the really fundamental and lasting work which I have proposed for you. In the light of previous costly experience in submitting valuable suggestions to rival publishers, I am entirely sure that Mr. Phillips is right in this matter. Certainly I shall not even suggest the idea to Mr. Brett or any other publisher, technical or general, until you have made up your mind definitely as to just what you wish to do in the matter.

As a first step in enabling you to come to an intelligent decision as to whether or not you desire to undertake the work, I suggest that while you are in Washington you go to the great Congressional Library and there consult every industrial and technical Handbook which they have on file. I enclose herewith a list of all the high grade technical Handbooks which have won their way, and many of which have sold in ten, twenty, thirty, fifty and even hundreds of thousands of copies, as the result of successive editions year after year.

If you will examine the Table of Contents of each of these volumes, you can very quickly make up your mind as to what you think should be embodied in your proposed Handbook; and as your next step, if you will prepare a Table of Contents and indicate to me the material which you already have available, which you think could be readily secured, I can then submit this plan to all our foremost Industrial Engineers, many of whom you know, and thus within a few weeks from now, in close co-operation with Mr. Phillips, we ought to be able to map out the plan of work which you can begin at once to direct. This I say because it will be a simple matter to employ assistants to compile the data which you have no time to

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compile; and I have such absolute faith in the enterprise that I shall gladly provide the capital needed to put such assistants at work.

By a later mail I shall likely write you further upon the subject, because I must now stop to attend a meeting of the technical publishers at the Biltmore to see what steps can be taken to overcome the printers' strike and get out our publications which have already been delayed nearly four weeks.

With very kind regards,

Sincerely yours,

John R. Dunlap

Miss Ida M. Tarbell,
Hotel Powhattan,
Washington, D.C.

This P.S. is what I had in mind to add, viz:

P.S.---As an indication of the possibilities of the sales for your Handbook, I have the information directly from the officers of MACHINERY that during the three calendar years 1914, 1915, and 1916, they actually sold over 50,000 copies of their Handbook at $5.00 per copy---many of them being sold in combination offers for one or two years' subscription with MACHINERY, which is published monthly. Since January, 1917, when I got this information from Mr. Butters, who actually sold that many copies of the Handbook, they have been pushing the sale continuously, and I understand with remarkable success.

Now, if you write, edit and compile the right kind of a Handbook I am entirely sure that it can be sold at $5.00 per copy, and the number of copies that can be actually sold will depend (1) upon the number of establishments employing women workers, and (2) the intelligence and aggressiveness with which the publication is published.

J.R.D.

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