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Allerton Hotel
Chicago, Ill.

Dear Miss Tarbell,

I have just finished reading your article in the April Cosmopolitan regarding the Westinghouse organization and enjoyed it very much. It occurred to me that perhaps you personally would be interested in another training course which, as far as I know, is quite unique. Due to economic and other conditions it is no longer in effect but its spirit still carries on. Horace W. Davis, former president of the Agfa Ansco Corp, in Binghamton, N.Y., was the originator and chief exponent of this course. In 1930 and 1931 he took each year about twelve young college men from leading Eastern universities. We spent a year in the factory, going through every process of the film making, actually working as a day laborer, with twelve hour night shifts, etc. This was possible through a system of rotation. Meantime, we spent at least one night a week with one of the executives who initiated us into the more or less technical mysteries of films, lenses, and cameras. Another night, sometimes more, was spent with Mr. Davis on far broader, economic subjects. For example, we studied Psychology, Advertising, various theories of economics, business management and so on through the line. All these theories were vividly illustrated by personal experiences of Mr. Davis and his associates. In all this time little reference was made to the photographic business other than its relation to certain problems which occurred during discussion.

In other words, the basic idea was to mould good citizens, good executives, men who would foresee and plan not just for their selfish purpose but for the betterment of society at large. I can well remember how we dug into this banking situation far enough to realize that without drastic reforms, some sort of collapse was inevitable.

On the more immediately practical side we listened to the other executives, sales managers and advertising men; from them we gained years in actual experience. Unfortunately ill health forced Mr. Davis to give up this work, and needless to say, we all were greatly disappointed. Another angle which I neglected to mention is this: we were required to keep a budget and submit monthly reports for consideration. Perhaps this all sounds a bit tyrannical, and to some extent it was a benevolent despotism. But the sheer personality of the man made up for it all.

I may be wrong, but I believe this broader conception of training is unique in American business. I have scarcely outlined the course, and certainly could not hope to do it full justice in such a few lines. Give us a few years to prove its value.

Sincerely,

Charles C. Hardy