CHAPTER XIV

THE GOLDEN RULE IN INDUSTRY

I was done with the tariff but it was out of the tariff that my next serial came - born partly of a guilty conscience! In attempting to prove that in certain highly protected industries only a small part of a duty laid in the interest of labor went to labor I had taken satisfaction in picturing the worst conditions I could find, badly ventiliated and dangerous factories, unsanitary homes, underfed children. But in looking for this material I found in both protected and unprotected industries and important efforts making to improve conditions, raise wages, shorten hours, humanize relations.

My conscience began to trouble me. Was it not as much my business as a reporter to present this side of the picture as I considered it my business to present the other? If there were leaders in practically every industry who regarded it as sound economics as well as sound ethics to improve the lot of the worker ought not the public to be familiarized with this belief?

At that moment, and indeed for a good many years, the public had heard little except of the atrocities of industrial life. By emphasizing the reformers they had hoped to hasten ~~the reform~~

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changes they sought. The public was coming to believe that the inevitable result of corporate industrial management was exploitation, neglect, bullying, crushing of labor, that the only hope was in destroying the system.

But if the practice was not universal, if there was a steady, if slow, progress ~~making~~ ought not the public to recognize it? Was it not the duty of those who were called muckrakers to rake up the good earth as well as the noxious? Was there not as much driving force in a good example as in an evil one?

The office was not unfriendly to the idea. As a matter of fact The American Magazine had little genuine muckraking spirit ~~of the John Bunyan kind~~ It did have a large and fighting interest in fair play, it sought to present things as they were, not as somebody thought they ought to be. We were journalists, not propogandists and as journalists we sought new angles on old subjects. The idea that there was something fundamentally sound and good in industrial relations, that in many spots had gone far beyond what either labor or reformers were demanding came to the office as a new attack on the old problem. Mr. Phillips always keenly aware of the new and significant had his eye on the movement, I found, and was willing to commission me to go out and see what I could find.

This was in 1912 and for the next four years I spent the bulk of my time in factories and industrial towns. The work took me from Maine to Alabama, from New York to Kansas.

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I found my material in all sorts of industries - iron and steel in and around Pittsburgh, Chicago, Duluth - mines in West Virginia, Illinois and Wisconsin - paper boxes and books and newspapers everywhere - candy in Philadelphia - beer and tanneries and woodworking in Wisconsin - shirts and collars and shoes in New York and Massachusetts. I watched numberless things in the making - turbine and optical lens, jewelry and mesh bags, kodaks and pocket knives, plaited cutlery and solid silver tea services, Minton table ware and American Baleek, cans and iron ware, linen table cloths and sails for a cup defender, furniture I suspect was to be sold in Europe for antiques and bric-a-brac I knew was to be sold in America as Chinese importations, railroad rails and wire for a thousand purposes, hookless fasteners and mechanical toys. I seemed never to tire of seeing ~~these~~ things made. But do not ask me now now how they were made!

I never counted the number of factories I visited but looking at the volume in which I finally gathered my findings I find there are some fifty five major concerns mentioned. But these were those which in my judgment best illustrated the particular point I was trying to make. There were many more.

My visits had to be arranged beforehand. I took pains to make sure of my credentials but I soon discovered that my past work served me well. The heads of the industries and many workmen were magazine readers, liked to talk about writers and asked all sorts of curious questions about men and women they had become acquainted with in McClure's and The American -

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Kipling - Baker - Steffins - Will White - Edna Ferber, just coming on at that time. There was often considerable asperity at the top when I presented my letters of introduction. They set me down as an enemy of business but again and again this asperity was softened by a man's love of Abraham Lincoln. He had a habit of reading everything about Lincoln that he could put his hands on, collected books, brought out my "Life" to be autographed. That is, while I was persona non grata for one piece of work another piece softened suspicion and opened doors to me.

My first move in a factory was studying the processes of the particular industry. Machines were not devils to me as they were to some of my reforming friends, particularly that splendid old warrior Frances Kelly, then in the thick of her fight for "Ethical Gains through Legislation." To me machines were creative beings. That is, I started out free of the inhibition that hate of a machine puts on many observers. I think because of this I was better able to judge the character of a factory, to see its weak as well as good points. I was able to understand what the enemy of the machine rarely admits that men and women who have arrived at the dignity of steady workers, not only respect, but frequently take great pride in their machines.

Again, I gave myself time around these factories. The observer who once in his life goes down for a half a day into a mine or spends two or three hours walking through a steel mill, naturally revolts against the darkness, the clatter, the smoke, the

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danger. As a rule he misses the points of real hardship; he also misses the satisfactions. As my pilgrimage lengthened the more convinced I became that there is no trade which has not its devotees.

"Once a miner always a miner." "Once a sailor always a sailor." One might go through the whole category.

"Why," I now and then asked miners, "do you stay by the mine?"

"I was brought up to it". "I like it". "Nobody bothers you when you are working with a pick." "Nice and quiet in the mines."

"But the danger\"

"No worse than railroading." "My brother got killed by a horse last week."

In the end I came to the conclusion that there was probably no larger percentage of whose who did not like the work they were doing than there is in the white collar profession. In the heavy industries particularly I found something like the farmer's conviction that they were doing a man's job. It made them contemptuous of white collar workers.

I spent quite as much time looking at homes as at plants. The test I made of the industrial villages and of company houses was whether or no if I set myself to it I could make a decent home in them. I found even in the most barren and unattractive company districts women who had made attractive homes.

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There was the greatest difference in home-making ability, the training of women for it. The pride of the man who had a good housekeeper as a wife, a good cook, was great. I do not remember that a man ever asked me to come to his house unless he considered his wife a good housekeeper. I remember one so proud of his home and he took me all over it showing with delight how his Sunday clothes, his winter overcoat, the Sunday dress of his little girl, were hung on hangers with a calico curtain in front to keep them clean. His housekeeper, in this case a mother-in-law, confided to me in talking things over that night that in her judgment the reason so many men drank was that the women did not know how to keep house.

Visiting with the family after the supper dishes were cleared away I managed to get at what was most i portant in their lives. After steady work it was the church. After minister or Priest, the public school teacher was the most trusted friend of the household. In many places, however, I found her authority beginning to be divided with the company nurse for the company nurse was just being added to industrial staffs. Many of my reforming friends felt that in going into a factory and taking a salary a nurse was aligning herself with the evil intentions of the corporation, but the average man did not feel that way. She helped him out in too many tight places.

As to the relation of the workman to his union for often they belonged to a union I concluded that in the average

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industrial community it was not unlike that of the average citizen to his political party and political boss.

Both the union and the employer seemed to me to be missing opportunities to help ~~those~~ men to understand the structure of industry, perhaps because they did not themselves understand it too well, or sunk their understanding in politics. Both union and employer depended upon one or another form of force when there was unrest, rather than ~~xx~~ education and arbitration. In doing this they weakened, perhaps in the end destroyed that by which they all lived.

The most distressing thing in mills and factories seemed to me to be the atmosphere of suspicion which had accumulated by years of appeal to force. I felt it as soon as I went into certain plants - everybody watching me, the guide, the boss, the men at the machines.

But to conclude that because of this suspicion, this lack of understanding, which keeps so many industries always on the verge of destruction, there were no natural friendly contracts between management and the men is not to know the world. I found that practically always the foreman or the boss, sometimes the big boss, in an industry came up from the ranks. In various industrial towns I found the foreman's family or the superintendent's family living just around the corner and his brother, perhaps his father, working in the mine or the mill. He had been one in the family who had been able to lift himself. Nor did it

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follow that there was bad blood between a "big boss" and the head of a war-like union. I had been led to believe they did not speak in passing. I had supposed that if Samuel Gompers and Judge Gary met they would probably fly at each others throats, but at the Washington Industrial Conference in 1919 standing in a corridor of the Pan-American Building I saw the two approaching from different directions. They were going to pass close to me. I had a cold chill about what might happen. But what happened was that Mr. Gompers said, "Hello, Judge" in the friendliest tone and Judge Gary called cheerfully, "Hello, Sam." And that was all there was to it. Later when I was to see much of Judge Gary, trying to make out what the famous Gary code meant and how it was being applied, we talked more than once of Samuel Gompers and his technique. The Judge had great respect for him as a political opponent, as well he might.

It is hard to stop talking when I recall these four years, drifting up and down the country into factories and homes. The contrast between old ways and new ways was always before me. Many a sad thing I saw. Nothing more disturbing than the strikes for I managed to get on the outskirts of several to follow up the aftermath, and the aftermath was usually tragic.

There was the ghastly strike in certain fertilizer plants at Roosevelt down on the Jersey Coast. I followed it through to its unsatisfactory end. Rival labor and political bodies fought each other for days while the men with drawn and

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hopeless faces loafed in groups in saloons or on door steps.

"All going to the devil while their unions fight," said the woman who gave me my meals in the only boarding house in the desolate place. "I am for the union but the union does not know when they go into a strike which they can avoid what they are doing to men. It turns them into tramps. They leave their families and take to the road. It is better that they leave. I think the woman often think that so they won't have any more babies. No, the union does not see what it does to men. But what are the men going to do when things were like they were in this place? You know what their wages were. You know what a hellish sort of place this is. What are they going to do?"

~~It could so easily have been different. That I knew from what I had been seeing in plants where men were given the attention accorded every other factor in the industry, but it were different all concerned must agree that industry is not an abstract idea, that it is a human undertaking.~~

It was the men who saw industry as a co-operative undertaking that gave me heart. I do not mean political co-operation but practical co-operation, worked out on the ground by the persons concerned. The problems and needs of no two industrial undertakings are ever alike. For results each must be treated according to the situation. The greatest contributions I found to industrial peace and stability came when a man recognized that a condition was wrong and set out to correct it.

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There was Thomas Lynch, President of the Coke and Coal Mines of Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania. Tommy Lynch had swung a pick before John Lewis did and like Lewis had risen by virtue of hard work and real ability, from one position to another - one to become the head of a group of mines, the other to become the head of a group of miners. But no union could keep up with Tommy Lynch in the improvements he demanded for his mines and miners. It was he who originated the famous slogan "Safety First." When I talked with him about rescue crews he swore heartily, "Damn rescue work - prevent accidents."

Tommy Lynch's work did not end in the mine. He had a theory that you could not be a good worker unless you had a good home. He literally lifted some seven thousand company houses which he had inherited from an old management out of their locations between high mountains of lifeless slag and put them onto tilable land, gave every woman water in her kitchen and a plot of land for a garden.

In 1914 when I was first there out of seven thousand homes six thousand nine hundred and twenty three had gardens. And such gardens! It took three days for Mr. Lynch and two or three other distinguished gentlemen to decide on the winners of the nine prizes given for the finest displays. They were estimating that the vegetable gardens yielded $143,000.00 worth of vegetables that year. I went back to see what they were doing with those gardens in the middle of the late depression. There were even more of them and they were even more productive. Knowing what the garden meant the miners had turned to the cultivation with

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immense energy. The company had plowed and fertilized tracts of untilled land near each settlement and they were raising extra food for the winter. Many of these miners at this time were selling vegetables in the near-by town markets.

Believing as I do that the connection of men and women with the soil is not only one of the healthiest things for the body but essential for the mind and the soul these gardens aroused almost as much thankfulness in my heart as the safety work.

But Tommy Lynch could not have worked out his notions of safety and gardening without the co-operation of the miners, even if it was sometimes begrudging.

Then there was Henry Ford attacking the problem which most concerned his plant - labor turn-over - in his case something like twelve hundred percent. He had come into the industrial picture with his minimum wage of five dollars a day just before I began my work. In May of 1915 I set up shop for ten days in a Detroit Hotel in order to study what he was doing. The days I spent in and around the Ford factory - nights tired out with observations and emotions I came back to a hot bath - dinner in bed, talking my findings into a dictaphone until I fell off to sleep.

Connections had not been hard to make. There was then at the head of Ford Publicity an experienced and able gentleman who realized that articles in The American Magazine on the Ford plant, whether favorable or not, were good for the concern and saw to it that I had every chance. Mr. Ford, himself,

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was my first important objective. He saw me in his big office looking down on the plant, a plant then employing eighteen thousand men. At the first glimpse of his smiling face I was startled by the resemblence to the picture of the young Lincoln which had played such a part in the launching of the Lincoln articles in McClure's. It was a face of a poet and a philosopher , as in the young Lincoln there was a young Emerson.

Like a poet and a philosopher Henry Ford was unhurried. He was no slave to his desk. I saw it deep in dust when he was wrestling with the first successor to Model-T. "Mr. Ford does not often come in," my conductor told me. "He is wandering through the factories these days. We never touch his desk."

He was boyish and natural in off hours. Coming in to theprivate lunch room for officers at the plant where I judged a place was always left for him, I saw him throw his long right leg over the back of the chair before he slid leisurely into the seat.

"I have got an idea," he said. "People complain about the doors of the car - not convenient. I am going to put a can opener into every car from now on and let them cut their own."

He delighted in the flow of Ford jokes, wanted to hear the latest, to see it in the house organ.

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When he saw me it is he who did the talking, and it was rather as if he was straightening out his thoughts rather than replying to my questions. When I asked him his reasons for mass production he had a stright-a-way answer.

"It is to give people everything they want and then some," he said. And then he went on to enlarge in a way I have never forgotten.

"There's no reason why everybody shouldn't have everything he needs if we managed it right, weren't afraid of making too much. Our business is to make things so cheap that everybody can buy 'em. Take these shears", and he picked up a handsome pair of large shears on his desk, "they sell for three or four dollars I guess. No reason you couldn't get them down to fifty cents. Yes, fifty cents" he repeated as I gasped. "No reason at all. Best in the world, - so every little girl in the world could have a pair. There's more money in giving everybody things then in keeping them dear so only a few can have them. I want our car so cheap that every workman in our shop can have one if he wants it. Makes things everybody can have that's what we want to do. And give 'em money enough. The trouble's been we didn't pay men enough. High wages pay. People do more work. We never thought we'd get back our $5.00 a day. Didn't think of it. Just thought that something was wrong that so many people were out of work and hadn't anything saved up and thought we ought to divide, but we got it all back right away. That means we can make the car cheaper, and give more men work. Of course when you're building and trying new things all the time you've got to have money, but you get it if you make men. I don't know that our scheme is best. It will take five years to try it out but we are doing the best we can and changing when we strike a snag."

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What it simmered down to was that if you wanted to make a business you must make men and you must make men by seeing that they had a chance for what we are pleased to call these days a good life. And if they are going to have a good life they must not only have money but low prices.

There was a great deal more I soon found than $5.00 a day and upwards that was behind the making of men at Fords. There was the most scientific system for handling mass production processes that I had ever seen. Tasks were graded ~~xxxxxxxxx~~ A workman was given every incentive to get into higher classes. But I was not long at Ford's before I discovered that it was not this system, already established, it was not the $5.00, it was not the flourishing business, it was not advertising - deeply and efficiently and aggressively as all these things were handled, which at that moment ~~xxxxxxxx~~ was absorbing the leaders of the business. It was what Mr. Ford was calling "the making of men." It was a thoroughly worthwhile and deeply human method. Mr. Ford knew that do all you can for a man in the factory - a short day - higher wages - good conditions - training ~~xxxxxxxx~~ - advancement - and if things are not right for him at home he will not in the long run be a good workman. So he set out to reorganize the home ~~xxxxxx~~ life of the men.

It was done by a sociological department made up at that time of some eighty men all taken out of the factory itself, for Mr. Ford's theory was then that no matter what you wanted done you could always find somebody among the eighteen

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thousand "down there", as he called it, that was qualified. So they had selected eighty for social service work and they were doing it with a thoroughness and a frankness which was almost as important as the five dollars a day had been.

Paternal was the adjective generally applied to the Ford method, but one of the interesting things about Mr. Ford is the little effect a word has on him. Call a thing what you like, it is the idea, the method, that he is after. If that seems to him to make sense you may have your word, it doesn't trouble him.

So they went energetically about their determination to add to what they were doing for the making of men inside of the factory a thorough over-hauling of their lives outside. There were certain things that were laid down as essential. You had to be clean - cleanliness had played no part in the lives of hundreds of these men. But when they did not get their "big envelope" and asked why they were told it was because their hands were dirty, they didn't wash their necks, didn't wear clean clothes. Ford's men must be clean. Already it had made an astonishing difference in the general look of the factory. And this cleanliness was carried by the socialogical department into the home. The men must be kept clean and the women must do their part. Many of the women as well as the men were discovering for the first time the satisfaction of cleanliness. "Feels good," said a working woman to me, reluctant but a thorough convert according to my conductor - "Feels good to be clean".

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They were enemies of liquor and no man who drank could keep his place. But he was not thrown out. He must reform, and some of the most surprising cures of habitual drunkenness that I have ever come across I found in the Ford factory in 1915.

There was a strong sympathy throughout the factory for derelicts. There were four hundred men in Ford's when I was there who had served prison terms. Nobody knew them but each had his special guardian and no mother ever looked after a child more carefully than these guardians looked after their charges.

In this social work Mr. Ford was constantly and deeply interested. As near as I could make out there was nothing of which they all talked more.

I dined one night with four or five of the officers, including Mr. Ford, and while I had expected to hear much about mass production and wage problems the only thing I heard was, "How are you getting on with Mary?" "How about John?" "Do you think we can make this housing scheme work?" That is, what I was discovering at Ford's was that they were not thinking in terms of labor and capital but in terms of Tom, Dick and Harry. ~~They were doing the same kind of work as my fine friend Clara Tawney and her cohorts do in New York City in the Charity Organization Society~~ They were taking men and women, individuals, families and with patience and sense and humor and determination were putting them on their feet, giving them

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interest and direction in managing their lives. This was the Henry Ford of 1916.

But work like that of Tommy Lynch and Henry Ford depended upon individual qualities of a rare and exceptional kind, also, upon the opportunity to test your ideas. They were neither of them willing to let bad situations, a stiff problem alone. It challenged their wits, particularly was this true when it concerned men in mine and factory. They were not hampered by dogmas or politics. They did things in their own way and if one thing did not work tried another, and both had a rare power to persuade men to follow them. They were self-made, unhampered products of old fashioned democracy and both were thorns in the flesh of those who worked according to blue prints, mechanized organizations or the status quo. But the success of both with the particular labor problems they tackled was the answer to critics.

Only how could men of lesser personality, lesser freedom of action and lesser boldness in trying out things follow? They could not. They had to have a more scientific practice if they were to achieve genuine co-operation in working out their problems. And what I was seeing in certain plants as I went up and down the country convinced me that had come in the Frederick Taylor Science of Management.

I had first heard of Taylor in the American Magazine office. John Phillips had sensed something important on foot when he read that Louis Brandeis, acting as counsel for certain shippers

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in a suit they had brought against the railroads, had told the defendents that they could afford lower rates if they would re-organize their business on the lines of scientific management which Frederick Taylor had developed. They could lower rates and raise wages.

"And who is Frederick Taylor?" asked Mr. Phillips. "Baker, you better find out."

And so Frederick Taylor had come to know The American group and he had given to The American much to our pride his first popular article explaining what he meant by scientific management. In the following letter Mr. Taylor tells a protesting friend why he gave it to us.

"I have no doubt that the Atlantic Monthly would give us a better audience from a literary point of view than we could get from The American Magazine. But the readers of The Atlantic Monthly consist probably very largely of professors and literary men, who woubd be interested more in the abstract theory than in the actual good which would come from the introduction of scientific management.

"On the other hand, I feel that the readers of the American Magazine consist largely of those who are actually doing the practical work of the world. The people whom I want to reach with the article are principally those men who are doing the manufacturing and construction work of our country, both employers and employees, and I have an idea that many more persons of that kind would be reached through the American Magazine than through The Atlantic Monthly.

"In considering the best magazine to publish the paper in, I am very considerably influenced by the opinion I have formed of the editors who have been here to talk over the subject; and of these Ray Stannard Baker was by far the most thorough and enthusiastic in his analysis of the whole subject. He looked at all sides in a way which no other editor dreamed of doing. He even got next to the workingmen and talked to them at great length on the subject. I cannot but feel, also, that the audience which reads the work of men of his type must be an intelligent and earnest audience.

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"Mr. _____, who has just been here, suggested that among a certain class of people the American Magazine is looked upon as a muckraking magazine. I think that any magazine which opposed the "stand-patters" and was not under the control of the moneyed powers of the United States would now be classed among the muckwakers. This, therefore, has no very great weight with me."

Taylor believed like Henry Ford that the world could take all we could make, that the power of consumption was limitless. "To give the world all it needs is the mission of industry," he shouted at me one day I spent with him at Boxley, his home near Philadelphia, shouted it with many picturesque oaths. I have never known a man who could swear so beautifully and so unconsciously.

Mr. Taylor's system in part or whole had been applied in many factories which I visited in my four years. You knew its outward sign as soon as you entered the yard. Order, routing, were first laws and the old cluttered shops where you fell over dump heaps and picked your way around scattered material were now models of classified order. A man knew where to find the thing he needed and things were placed where it took the fewest steps to reach them.

Quite as conspicuous as the physical changes in the shop was the change in what may be called its human atmosphere. Under the Taylor system the business of management was not only planning but controlling what it planned. Management laid out ahead the days work for each man at his machine, to him they went with their instructions, to them he went for explanations and suggestions. Office and shop

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intermingled. They realized their mutual dependence as they never had before, learned to respect each other for what they were worth. Watching the functioning one realized men had come to feel more or less as Taylor himself felt:- that nothing of moment was ever accomplished save by co-operation which must be "intimate and friendly." Praised once for his work on the art of cutting metal he said a thing all leaders would do well to heed:-

"I feel strongly that work of any account in order to be done rightly should be done through true co-operation, rather than through the individual effort of any one man; and, in fact, I should feel rather ashamed of any achievement in which I attempted to do the whole thing myself."

Nothing was more exciting to me than the principles by which Taylor had developed his science. They were the principles he had applied to revolutionary discoveries and inventions in engineering. I made a brief table of them. They make the best code I know for progress in human undertakings:-

1) Find out what others have done before you and begin where they left off.

2) Question everything - prove everything.

3) Tackle only one variable at a time. Shun the temptation to try more than one in order to get quick results.

4) Hold surrounding conditions as constant and uniform as possible while experimenting with your variable.

5) Work with all men against no one. Make them want to go along.

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There is enduring vitality in these principles and there is universality. They are as good for battered commonwealths as for backward disorganized industries. Think what it would mean in Washington today if all the experimenters began where others had left off, if no demonstrated failure was repeated, if theory was held to be but twenty five percent of an achievement, practice seventy five, if one variable at a time was experimented with, if time was taken for solutions and above all if everybody concerned accepted "intimate and friendly" cooperation as the most essential of all factors in our Restoration.

This hunt for practical applications of the Golden Rule in industry left me in much better spirits than my studies of transportation and tariff privileges. The longer I looked into the/ the deeper/my conviction that in the long run they would latter had been ruin the hope of peaceful unity of life in America. They seemed to me inconsistant with democracy as I understood it and certainly inconsistant with my simple notions of what made men and women of character. Were we not getting a larger and larger class interested only in what money would buy? Particularly did I dislike the spreading belief that wealth piled up by a combination of ability, illegality, and bludgeoning could be so used as to justify itself. The good to be done would cancel the evil done. What it amounted to was the promotion of humanitarianism at the expense of Christian ethics/made for and that I believe made for moral softness instead of stoutness.

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But there was nothing soft about the experiments I had been following. Where they succeeded it was by following unconsciously generally Taylor's stiff principles. Patient training, stern discipline, active co-operation alone produced safety, health, efficient workman, abundance of cheap honest output. I had faith in these things. They were the foundation of genuine social service. All desired goods followed them as they became part of the nation's habit of life, reaching down to its lowest depths.

Many of my reforming friends were shocked because the one and only reason most industrial leaders gave for their experiments was that it paid. Generally speaking the leaders were the kind who would have cut their tongues out before acknowledging that any other motive than profit influenced them. Certainly they sought dividends, but they believed stability, order, peace, progress, co-operation, were back of dividends. That industry which paid must as Mr. Ford said "make men." That the right thing paid was one of their most far-reaching demonstrations. Men had not believed it. They were proving the contrary, so in spite of the charge of many of my friends that I was going over to the enemy, joining the corporation lawyer and the company nurse I clung to the new ideals. What I never could make some of these friends see was that I had no quarrel with corporate business so long as it played fair. It was the unfairness I feared and despised. I had no quarrel with men of wealth if they could show performance ———————

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back of it untainted by privilege.

Sometimes I suspected that the gains I set forth as practical results of this experimenting inside by industry were resented by those who had been working for them for years through legislation, organization, agitation, because they had come about by other methods then theirs and generally in a more complete form than they had ventured to demand. But that they had been a driving force behind the new movement inside industry was certain. Their methods could not do the thing, but it could and did drive men to proving it could be done.

My critics who charged me with giving comfort to the enemy did not see that often this enemy disliked what I was trying to do even more deeply than he ever had mye so-called muckraking. Indeed, he took those pictures of new industrial methods and principles as a kind of back-handed muck-raking - indirect and so unfair. It threw all established methods of force into a relief as damaging as anything I ever had said about their high duties and their manipulations of railroad rates.

Whatever challenges my new interest aroused, however confused as my own defense of it was, I knew only that I should keep my eye on it and report any development which seemed to me a step ahead. That, of course, was counting on continued editorial sympathy in The American. But hardly had I finished my book before that sympathy was cut off by a change in ownership.

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The change was inevitable, things being as they were in the magazine world after 1914. The crew who had manned our little ship so gallantly in 1906 when we left McClure's had lost only one of its numbers. A few months after we started Lincoln Steffens withdrew. He objected to the editing of his articles, demanded that they go in as he wrote them. The same editorial principles were being applied to his productions that were applied to those of other contributors. They were the principles which he, himself, had been accustomed to apply and to submit to on McClure's. The Editorial Board decided the policy could not be changed and accepted Steffens' resignation.

Back of his withdrawal, as I saw it, was Steffens' growing dissatisfaction with the restrictions of journalism. He wanted a wider field, one in which he could more directly influence political and social leaders, preach more directly his notions of the Golden Rule which certainly at that time was his chosen guide.

Certainly it was the creed of The American. It had always been John Phillips' answer to our fervent efforts to change things. "The only way to improve the world is to persuade it to follow the Golden Rule."

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I suppose Steffens had heard of the Golden Rule, but I am certain he had never thought about it as a practical scheme for improving society. It seemed to me at the time that it came to him as an illumination and for some years he held tight to it, preaching it to political bosses, to the tycoons of Wall Street, the Brahmas of Boston, confronting them with amazing frankness and no little satisfaction with their open disregard of its meanings. He became greatly disillusioned finally by discovering that men were quite willing to accept the Golden Rule when it applied to their opponents but it was another matter when it came to applying it to themselves.

My first realization that Steffens was struggling with the problem which confronted us all, that is whether we should stick to our profession or become progagandists, was one day

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when I looked up suddenly to find him standing by my desk more sober, less certain of himself than I had ever seen him.

"Charles Edward Russell has gone over to the socialist party," he said. "Is that not what we should all be doing? Should we not make The American Magazine a socialist organ? I flared. Our only hope for usefullness is in keeping our freedom, avoiding dogma, I argued. And that The American continued to do.

In the years that were to come wars and revolutions largely occupied Steffens. Wherever there was a revolution you found him. He wrote many brilliant comments on what was going on in the world. When he came back from Russia after the Kerensky revolution he was like a man who had seen a long hoped for vision.

"I have looked at the millennium at it works," he told me.

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It was to be the practical application of that Golden Rule he had so long preached. But to my mind the Russian Revolution had only just begun. The event in which he saw the coming of the Lord I looked on as only the first of probably many convulsions forced by successive generations of unsatisfied radicals, irreconcilable counter revolutionists. But when I voiced these pessimistic notions to Steffens he called me heartless and blind.

But there were other forces working against the type of journalism in which we believed. We were classed as muckrakers and the school had been so commercialized that the public was beginning to suspect it. The public is not as stupid as it sometimes seems. The truth of the matter was that the muckraking school was stupid. It had lost the passion for facts in a passion for subscriptions.

The coming of the War in 1914 forced a new program. It became a grave question whether under the changed conditions, the increased confusion of mind, the intellectual and financial uncertainties, an independent magazine backed with little money could live. In undertaking The American we had all of us put in all the money we could lay our hands on. We had cut the salaries of McClure's in two, reduced our scale of living accordingly, and done it gayly as an adventure.

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And it had been a fine fruitful adventure in professional comradeship. We had made a good magazine, and we were all for making a better on and convinced we could do it. "I don't think", Ray Baker wrote me not long ago, "that I look back to any period of my life with greater interest than I do to that - - the eager enthusiasm, the earnestness, and the gaiety!" But we had come to a time when under the new conditions the magazine required fresh money and we had no more to put in.

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The upshot was that in 1915 The American was sold to the Crowell Publishing Company. The new owners wanted a different type of magazine and John Siddell, who had been steadily with us since I had unearthed him in Cleveland as a help in investigating the Standard Oil Company, was made active editor. Siddell was admirably cut out to make the type of periodical the new controlling interests wanted. I have never known anyone in or out of the profession with his omnivorous curiosity about human beings and their ways. He had enormous admiration for achievement of any sort, the thing done whatever its nature or trend. His interest in human kind was not diluted by any desire to save the world. / It included all men. He had a shrewd conviction that putting things down as they are did more to save the world than any crusade. His instincts were entirely healthy and decent. The magazine was bound to be what we call wholesome. Very quickly he put his impress on the new journal, made it a fine commercial success.

Gradually the old staff disintegrated. Peter Dunne went over to the editorial page of Collier's - Bert Boyden went to France with the Y M C A - Mr. Phillips remained as a director and a consultant - Siddell would hear to nothing else. "He is the greatest teacher I have ever known. I could learn from him if I were making shoes," he declared. And years later when facing his tragic death he was preparing a new man to take his place he told him solemnly, "Never fail to spend an hour a day with J S P just talking things over."

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As for me it was soon obvious there was no place for my type of work on the new American. If I were to be free I must again give up security. Hardly, however, had I acted on my resolution before along came Mr. Louis Alber of the Coit Alber Lecture Bureau, one of the best known concerns at that time in the business. Mr. Alber had frequently invited me to join his troupe and always I had laughed at the invitation. I was too busy, moreover I had no experience, did not know how to lecture. Now, however, it was a different matter. I was free and I might forget the situation in which I found myself by undertaking a new type of work. Was not lecturing a natural adjunct to my profession? Moreover, Mr. Alber wanted me to speak on these New Ideals in Business which I had been discussing in the magazine and he wanted me to speak on what was known as a Chautauqua circuit, a kind of Peripatetic Chautauqua. Perhaps my willingness to go had an element of curiosity in it, a desire to find out what this husky child of my old friend Chautauqua was like.

At all events I signed up for a seven weeks circuit, forty nine days in forty nine different places, but hardly had I put my name to the paper when there came a chilling thought that I had agreed to do something for which I had no training. What was to be done about it?

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