South Manchester, Connecticut

December 21, 1912.

My dear Miss Tarbell:

As I was in New York for several days your letter of Dec 15. is still unanswered.

I feel that the questions you ask about rates of production per hour or days of varying length are from the nature of the problem impossible to answer with exactness and assurance. There are so many factors entering in that what might be true as regards one set of conditions would be very misleading if applied to another. Nothing but careful scientific study in each case could serve as a basis for a

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2 positive statement. You will readily see that such considerations as the physical surroundings i.e. light, heat, ventilation, noise or quiet, etc. would affect the result. The amount of physical and of nervous strain would enter very largely into it; and it would make a great difference whether the task could be done in a sitting or in a standing position.

Our experience in measuring milk demonstrates that the product per hour when running (ten hours) is almost precisely the same as when running eight hours and the curious thing about it is that the very slight difference which we have found is in favor of the long day. I do not know how to account

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3 for that reduces it so that the hands feel less sense of pressure when running on short time. Certainly the nicotine (acids from psychological effect) would be to increased effort so as to make up as far as possible for the demand pay while on short time.

From my own experience & European visits I believe that the hours of work could even be increased without loss of efficiency or productivity by the simple device of introducing more rest periods so as to break the strain several times each day instead of only once as we do in America. I do not mean that I advocate longer hours. I simply state my belief that considering the operative solely from the physical

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4 point of view he (or she) is on the average able to do even more than is now demanded of him, and without deterioration or breakdown. I have for long periods done hard physical work for full days and for overtime up to 13 or 14 hours a day. I think that this question can not be treated as a mere physical one. It is not simply whether man can do so much or not. It is whether he should do it and whether it is best for him and his enjoyment of life & always do the Circuit. From my own experience and from a great deal of observation of others I say without reserve that ten hours is enough. It is not too much — for the average man or

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5 January.

Here we come into another trouble. There are many who are not up to the average. What are we going to do with them? If they retain at the whole task it may be too much for them. If we gauge the task to the strength of the weakest we suffer an economic loss and accept a heavy handicap. This is one of the troubles with the factory system. It does not discriminate between individuals. Careful and considerate oversight and wise classification can do much to alleviate, but can never eliminate this trouble.

I shall tell my brother Howell of your desire to talk with him about our various attempts to help

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6 ans perfect outside of the workshops.

Yours very truly

Charles Cheney

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