

INSTITUTE OF HUMAN RELATIONS: INDUSTRIAL INVESTIGATIONS.

(Prof. Elliott Smith).

The field of investigation proposed is the human aspects of the increase of technological efficiency in industry; and the first instance to be studied is the increase in recent years in the number of spinning frames and looms per operative. The endeavour is being made (a) to devise methods by which examples of introduction of changes without great dislocation can be compared with cases which have produced problems of lay-offs, "middle-age obsolescence," labour unrest, and strikes, and to relate these to managerial and other factors, (b) to utilise a representative committee in such a way as to secure their suggestions on and contribution to the material as fully as possible. The method being adopted[†] is as follows:

1. The most significant instances of successful and unsuccessful increase in textile efficiency have first to be selected.
2. Each case is studied by an expert investigator (two former industrial managers are being employed for this task) who interviews both management and labour, examines balance sheets, cost accounts, employment records, etc., and compiles history of relevant developments in finance, technique, management, labour action, etc., over the period of the introductions.
3. Such "case/records" are to be made comparable by dividing each matter (state of business, financial soundness, managerial policy, labour action, etc.) into standard "unit-phases."
4. Material is submitted to the committee at this stage, and each member is asked to indicate the points which he thinks have not been fully explored. The investigator then returns, if necessary, to secure such additional material, and adds it to his requirements for subsequent interviews.
5. Each instance will then be written up (as a careful case history, and ^{also} as a condensed phase-arrangement) under both the joint and individual criticism of the representative of each science.
6. The material in this form will also be annotated by each representative, to emphasise the point of view which his particular science suggests. It is proposed to publish these annotations in addition to the final material.

([†] It had been in operation for about six months at this time.)

April, 1931.

(Council - May 13th, 1931)