

institutions and laws to changing conditions, under the action of free discussion and the pressure of public opinion thus created; and when it is further recognised that the primary condition of progress under such free discussion is such a flexibility and sensibility, combined with such an efficiency, of organisation in our representative institutions, as will make the conclusions reached by these bodies a true generalised expression of the best opinion they are intended to reflect. How to combine this sensibility to the best real opinion with a stability that will ensure a steady ship making progress on a true course, a ship that does not rock with every temporary wave of opinion nor drift with every current and breeze of social theory that impinges on it, is a problem whose solution has been fairly successfully worked out by long experience in political democracy. Much careful thought and probably some disappointing experiments will be required before an equally successful combination of checks and balances is secured in Industrial Democracy.

But Industrial Democratic methods must surpass political methods in efficiency, which has always been their great weakness. Let us admit, once for all, that cumbersome machinery causing inefficiency cannot, and will not, be tolerated by either masters or men in democratic industry. If democracy in industry has to be won at the cost of efficiency in the highest sense, then it will prove not an assistance, but a hindrance, to social progress. For it must be recognised as an economic axiom that the greatest social advance can be obtained only on the basis of the most efficient production of those goods and services necessary for the satisfaction of human wants. Only a high degree of efficiency in economic service of all kinds, rendered by all in proportion to the ability of each, together with a fair and just distribution of the wealth thus produced, can secure a high standard of life for every one, act as incentive to every one to bring to bear his best efforts and ensure at the same time that leisure for social welfare and self-improvement on which the progress of human society depends.

But I have no hesitation in expressing the opinion that the full application of the principle of democracy to industry will