

**THE WORKS MANAGER TO-DAY:  
AN ADDRESS PREPARED FOR A  
SERIES OF PRIVATE GATHERINGS  
OF WORKS MANAGERS**

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The Works Manager To-Day: An Address Prepared for a Series of Private Gatherings of Works Managers by Sidney Webb

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*Chapman, Sidney James Webb*  
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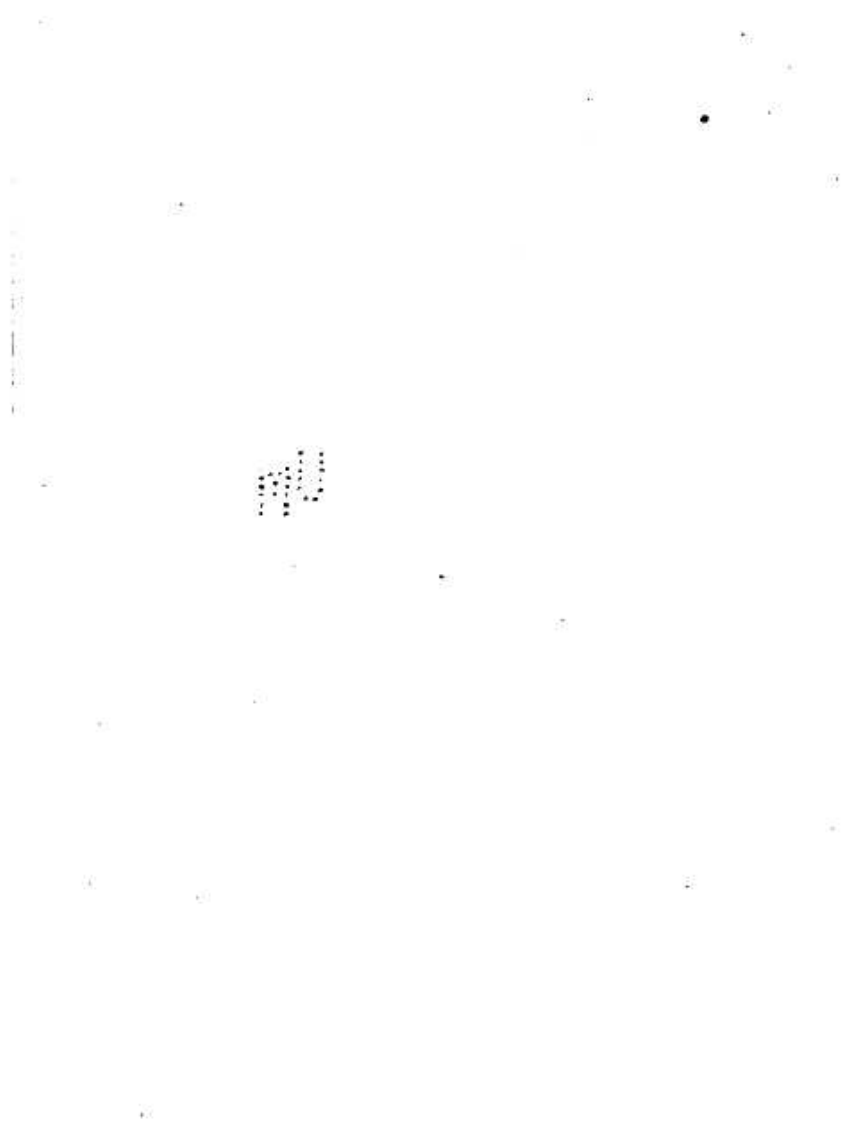
BY

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*L. J. Davis*  
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## THE WORKS MANAGER TO-DAY

MR. CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN—You have asked me to talk to you about the function of the Works Manager and his relation to the staff. Whilst I appreciate the compliment that you pay me, I comply with some trepidation, because I have never myself had the experience of the factory. But I have taken part in administration on a large scale and on a small; and there is something to be learnt, even about works management, from the larger experience of life and the study of the necessary relations between men and things, which not every works manager has found out for himself. At any rate I will try to make some suggestions for your consideration, with regard to certain matters which will have been within the experience of every one among you.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> It is not easy to suggest any books dealing generally with the subject of this address. Some hints may be gleaned from such books as *The Library of Factory Management*, 6 volumes, published by the A. W. Shaw Company of Chicago, 1915; *Profit Making in Shop*

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### I

#### THE FUNCTION OF MANAGEMENT

FIRST let me remind you that you belong to a brain-working profession, just as much so as the lawyer or the doctor, the architect or the engineer, though your vocation is only now becoming conscious of itself as a distinct profession, the profession of management. The function of the manager or superintendent in an industrial concern—we need not for the moment discriminate between the different grades of management—is plainly something different from that of the craftsman, labourer, or machine-operator: it is

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*and Factory Management*, 1908; *Principles of Industrial Engineering*, by Charles B. Going, 1911; *Principles of Industrial Organisation*, by D. S. Kimball, 1913; *Works Management*, by W. D. Ennis, 1911; *Principles of Industrial Management*, by J. C. Duncan, 1911; *The Factory Manager and Accountant*, by H. Roland, 431 pp., 1903; *The Works Manager's Handbook*, by W. S. Hutton, 444 pp., 1907 (first published in 1890); *Organising a Factory*, by C. F. Woods, 156 pp., 1905; *Factory Organisation and Administration*, by H. Diemer, 317 pp., 1910; and the newest treatise, *The Administration of Industrial Enterprise, with Special Reference to Factory Practice*, by Edward D. Jones, 442 pp., 1917. But I am afraid that these works are written mainly from a different standpoint, principally with a view to American experience and practice, and relating more to buildings, plant, and machinery than to psychological problems. Something may be gained from the *Proceedings of the Conference of Employment Managers of Boston, Mass.* (Bulletin 202 of U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1916). Books on specific subjects are referred to on subsequent pages.

## THE FUNCTION OF MANAGEMENT 3

not his business actually to make the product with his own hands. Nor is it the same as that of the inventor, whether in mechanics or chemistry, in metallurgy or electricity; or that of the designer or draughtsman, who adapts the invention or the plan to the material available and the product desired. Moreover, the function of the works manager ought not to be that of the buyer of materials, components, or stores, for which there should be a separate Purchasing Department, any more than it is that of finding a market for the products of the enterprise, whether this is done by advertising, by commercial travelling, by a special selling agency, or exclusively by obtaining orders and entering into contracts at the head office.<sup>1</sup> Equally separate is the whole work of the clerical and accounting staff. What we are concerned with here, whether we are considering any grade of managers or superintendents, is the quite distinct profession of organising men—of so arranging and directing the activities of a band of producers,

<sup>1</sup> The "Sales Manager," for whom an association has been formed lately in London, has, of course, entirely different functions from those which are herein dealt with. There is in Great Britain a flourishing Association of Colliery Managers, and an ably conducted Institute of Gas Engineers, both of which appear to be Associations of Professional Managers in their respective industries (see the Supplements on "Professional Associations," issued with *The New Statesman* of 14 and 21 April 1917).