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Editorials

Technocracy

DURING the past few weeks the newspapers and magazines of the country have been flooded with discussions and opinions of technocracy. The diversified opinions of the various writers are decidedly amusing to an open-minded observer. To date, only two authorized magazine articles have been written by the group of men known as Technocracy, and in both of these the statement is clearly and distinctly made that the purpose of the organization is to study and interpret the present economic situation from an engineering standpoint and that they do not offer any solution to the problem. Despite this fact, however, we have had wildly imaginative writers tell us that the Technocrats believe that they have a fool-proof remedy for our ills and paint vivid pictures of inhuman and soulless engineers ruling the country and dictating the thoughts and actions of every individual, even so far as the food he shall eat. This is, of course, so absurd that it need not be discussed. Howard Scott, Director of Technocracy and author of both the authorized magazine articles, made the statement that with our present-day machinery and methods, and employing all the available men, they could manufacture enough goods to supply the needs of the country working only 16 hours each week. This is evidently the basis for believing that the Technocrats offer a solution for our trouble. Other writers attack the figures given out by Mr. Scott, saying that they are grossly exaggerated and in deriding his statements fail to discover that even if they are over-estimated, the bare facts still remain, some of which are self-evident and others not so, but yet are important factors in our problem. Other writers assail the record of Mr. Scott, attacking him personally, and in so doing, lose sight of

the meaning of his arguments. One goes so far as to accuse him of plagiarism from an earlier economist.

Whether the figures given out by the organization are accurate to the last decimal, or whether the head of the group is a college graduate or not, or whether some of their ideas have been secured from another or conceived from their own brains, let us be impartial in our judgment of them until their arguments have been proven beyond all doubt to be erroneous or gather such material from their efforts and thoughts that may be of value to us in attempting to reach a point in civilization where every individual may have his share of health, happiness and prosperity.

—J. E. B.

One Silver Lining

DURING this period of unemployment self-education and cultural advancement have claimed the interest and attention of more people than during any period within the last half century. People everywhere, who are out of jobs, are giving more time to thought, study, and reading, than they have ever done before. This is indicated by a number of things. The increased circulation of libraries, the enrollment in university graduate courses, and the conversation of the ever-present curb-stone philosopher all show that the general public is reading, studying, and thinking for itself like never before.

This tendency is shown strongly by the enrollment in the "unemployment college" instituted by Lafayette College at Easton, Pennsylvania. When the courses were organized, as a result of President Lewis' belief that educational institutions have a "distinct community responsibility to live up to during the present economic distress," fewer than 100 students were enrolled. In the middle

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of December the enrollment had increased to 125 and subjects have been added to the curriculum because of the interest shown.

Unemployed machinists, draftsmen, teachers, clerks, ministers, engineers, newspaper men, railway conductors, weavers, and foremen are among those learning some of the things that they have never before had time to study.

It is said that on the basis of enrollment, the most popular course has been the one in government and law, and the second most popular the one in money and banking. Mechanical engineering and public speaking are tied for third place. There is no fee, college credit, or examination in the "unemployment college." This desire for self-betterment is at least one silver lining to the clouds of depression.

—F. H. T.
