

An experiment in Industrial Civilization

Notes on Salem Cotton Undertaking

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Nothing harder than to admit that you do not know it all. Nothing harder for he who has done a creditable thing - carried on a creditable thing - who feels himself solid - knows what he is doing - and has not conceived that it is possible to do differently. It is a kind of disease this static satisfied condition, like unwillingness to change your diet - your sleeping ^{habits} tablets. Industry often has had attacks of this static disease. Probably that is what is the matter with the cotton manufacturing industry in this country. For twenty years now it has been afflicted - it has done all sorts of things to help itself, gone South where there was cheaper labor, tried for higher duties and got them. Twenty per cent in 1911 - 29 per cent in our last but no matter what the outside panics it was still ^a anemic.

It blamed everybody but itself, too. No one talks about cotton that does not cry out, "see what silk has done for us, see what rayon has done to us." See what all these outside new fabrics have done." And like the ousting of a fine old family - one that had come to a point of facility where it regarded itself as solid as the families of Beacon Hill, families, which, by the way, ^{it} have had in a great many cases, been supported in luxury for years.

But finally it has begun to look within - not very generally I should say - not very profoundly, excepting in two or three cases. In one case at least the cotton industry has gotten

down to the bottom of things and is attempting to rebuild according to the new light of our industrial life. It is a story-this rebuilding - a story of ^a fine old leader, rich in tradition, confident of the solidity of those traditions, always open to facts, throwing aside conventions and prejudices, traditions of ~~a~~ whole great industry and saying, "Let's see what is in this." Saying it freely, honestly, humorlessly. A fine old sport - the head of the Naumkeag who has undertaken to save himself and incidently to teach a whole industry a lesson. But his sportsmanship has been matched by the leaders of the workers. If he saw clearly and was not afraid to acknowledge ~~that~~ the cotton industry could not be restored without the aid of men on the looms. The men on the looms saw that their jobs could not be saved without throwing in their interests with those of management. The two have got to work out the thing themselves, or the ~~great man club~~ ^{Naumkeag} would close its doors and they, twenty five hundred workers, would be scattered in all directions. They saw it and these two groups that so foolishly have considered themselves a separate unit in the cotton industry as other industries have grown to work. Intelligence, not politics, science, investigation not talk - to save the ~~man club~~ ^{Naumkeag} factory.

How they came to any such sensible, quite unheard of undertaking in the cotton manufacture can hardly be understood

without a look at the two sides, Naumkeag. Go to Salem and look at it. This factory, ninety years old, one of the first strides of New England cotton business - rather a revolutionary enterprise from the start, because it was, I believe, the first cotton factory in this country that got it into its head that it could run by steam power instead of water power and sat itself ^{down} close to the water shipping you see, and brought in coal - made itself great.

for decades withstood every ^{calamity} of the life of cotton factories.

It went through the Civil War and prospered. It went through the dull period that followed and lived. It went through all the changing conditions which new races of labor made imperative. The early Americans deserted it - then came the Irish. The Irish moved on into politics - road making - building and on from Canada came the French. There were not enough of them and the Poles came in.

Now at Naumkeag you have ^{about half a half of these two} nationalities, scarcely an American - outside of management. ^{which is exclusively} ~~it is almost truly American.~~ What a story

of the restless ^{feel - people} ~~feet~~ of nations - the eagerness of men to see ^{signs of these} ~~signs~~

the chance, you have under your eyes in the ninety years that man

has lived! It was struck by ^{fire} ~~less~~ than twenty years ago

and it rebuilt itself in a way that makes it a factory that every manufacturer ^{interested in} ~~laid to~~ the best in his industry must see and it has kept itself up too. All mechanical sides - kept itself up finely in human relations. The men and women who earn their bread at these looms have seen one and another change in their interest made.

looks have been one and another change in their interest made.
in human relations. The men and women who each their place at these
have been no too. All important sides - have been no time
manifested to the best in its history what was and it was
and it looked itself in a way that makes it a history that clearly
has been. It was a time of a less than twenty years ago
the science. You have never seen in the history of the world
of the history of the world - the science of man to see the
outlets of management. It is a time of a less than twenty years ago
now at the time of the world. It is a time of a less than twenty years ago
there were not enough of them and the world was in.
into politics - long making - and on the world was in.
the world was in - then came the time. The world was in.

*These numbers which are
they make a stable factor in the world - many
then comes - children a grand child
passing with the factor.*

Some of the world was in and the world was in.
the world was in and the world was in.
the world was in and the world was in.
the world was in and the world was in.
the world was in and the world was in.
the world was in and the world was in.
the world was in and the world was in.
the world was in and the world was in.

of Salem

was in all these years
A fine benign father Naumkeag has been, But Naumkeag could not live in a diseased industry and feel no touch of the trouble.

Healthy as it was - watchful as it was - the *disease is recent* that was sweeping through cotton manufacturers *it's in 1918* touched it. For eighty

years they had gone on without a strike and then eleven years *in 1918* ago there was a real walk-out. The people thought they ought to have more money. *It was quickly settled - 300 only of the 2000* The management did not see how we could give

it. *It was* you see. But the strike itself-never was there such a one. *Mr. Smith, Whitehead* elegant, smiling comes down and invites them all to tea or something equivalent.

And the representatives of the union come and they talk and talk and apparently they never quarrel and they got the thing on the table. It takes some weeks, but at the end of the some weeks they all go back to work. Certain things have been *granted* but not the wages.

For *dishonest management* has had the intelligence to show to the workers that if *Naumkeag* is to go on and keep their jobs for them it cannot pay a higher wage scale. I should say about the best thing that could be said of this strike was what John O'Connell, the head of the textile workers of America, living in Salem, interested always in Naumkeag

But after it was over there was nothing on either side which could *shame* or future relation of the two. *of* Many striking, warring groups, can say that.

[illegible]

I have been heard of just such a state
some - heard - as one heard the story of it
from the two sides it sounds like
a good temporary agreement to ~~cancel~~
~~cancel~~ shut down temporarily in order
to give a free chance to adjust affairs
these meetings of management &
representatives - ~~The~~ Naylor the
75% would mean the ship came in
sound like sum but after the tea-
nailers
of course no seed procedure
would have been possible without
these who repeated one another

He had looked up the name. He asked the man who had talked with him about it.

"Oh, it is that fellow Cooke down in Philadelphia. He has sold the whole thing to the . " And so agent O'Connell being enterprising and fair went to see Cooke in Philadelphia and they talked the thing over.

John Alert, practical, experienced and with imagination, *caught the meaning of the thing* O'Connell ~~said~~, and ~~he~~ went back to talk to ~~local number~~ and this is what he said to them: *Say to the N. workers: -*

"If there are experts of any kind who can assemble and give us facts we do not now have, let us employ them. If there are any measuring and time study practices that will help us to get the facts, let us co-operatively use them. If there are other ways of getting facts let us adopt them. For it is only through getting the facts, facing the facts and using the facts through joint action, that the enterprise and those associated with it in the long run will prosper.

"I see no need for arbitration in situations, where a decision can be reached through ascertaining the facts. Arbitration usually is a compromise of ideas. Cold facts cannot be compromised. Arbitration usually ends in compromising the beliefs, opinions and ideas of the parties to such situations. Facts based on joint analytical research cannot be compromised. They stop us from 'talking through our hat.'

On that presentation the organized workers of N. decided to go along with it.
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