

A Model Institution

We are all just children grown up, and a great industrial concern with hundreds of employes is no more complex to handle than a big family, with its little squabbles and good times mingling together in the problems of its daily life. This is the simple theory which E. L. Thompson, secretary and general manager of the Portland Woolen mills, attributes the contentment which pervades the plant. The Portland Woolen mills finds the quality of its product simply a manifestation of contented minds which finds ready response from willing hands to carry on their work according to the standard subconsciously instilled into the lives of those working under ideal conditions. "Get things right; then keep them right," is the motto the employes carry to their tasks. Believing that the best results are accomplished by individual development of talents, the heads of this organization have dwelt on the independence of the employe—development of the individual. And in the development of individual skill comes the development of earnings.

The question of wages has never been an insurmountable difficulty, because, like everything else in the plan of operation, there is perfect cooperation between employer and employe, resulting in a fair "give and take" proposition. Only recent-

ly the question of a 48 hour week came up, where previously 51 hours had been the schedule. The question was brought before the employes and a vote taken upon it. In some cases the heads of the plant found it necessary to urge the adoption of this measure, piece workers fearing a reduction of their wages. It was finally agreed upon to adopt the 48 hour schedule, with all wages placed on a piece work basis.

There has never been a strike in the history of the company and as further evidence of the results which the company's policy is achieving, the labor turnover in 1918 was less than 20 per cent as compared with 256 per cent, which was the average in the United States during that year.

A feature which Mr. Thompson has introduced into the plant and which is a monument to the spirit of cooperation, is the employe's clubhouse, constructed in 1918-19 and simply "grown up with the family." The history of this club goes back to a time when four or five workmen used to gather at noon lunch daily. Now a noonday meal is served to 300 or 400 employes in a large, orderly, sunny room or on long glassed porches, at absolute cost. A plate lunch is served for 15 cents which includes helpings of meat, potato and a vegetable. Coffee is 2 cents, bread and butter 3 cents. The price of a hearty lunch averages 25 cents. The

workers come from their looms and other machines and sit together at long white tables, in a neat, quiet, cheerful atmosphere and their lunch hour brings to them relaxation and rest.

The clubhouse contains rooms for both women and men. Down stairs is a library, a bowling alley, a large living room for the men and a well equipped dressing room for the women. The men's clubroom is built for comfort and use. Cards and billiard tables are part of the equipment, all of which sees hard daily usage. Clothes driers are provided that workmen may have warm, dry garments to don at the end of the day.

The bowling alley, clubrooms and library are used both night and day, for they are a part of the community life of the membership. Each employe is a member of the club and holds a membership card to the Portland clubhouse. Regulations and activities are carried out entirely on a club plan by the employes.

The women have a large, airy room all their own in a corner of the building upstairs, where they too may gather about a big, warm fireplace, enjoy the comfort and daintiness of white wicker furniture or dance on the smooth floor while the phonograph plays lively music. In a spotless white lavatory of this room is a complete medical department for the care of minor injuries.

Entertainments and meetings are held from time to time in the assembly hall. A moving picture projector is only part of the equipment for this side of the life. The plant has its own orchestra, under the leadership of Elmer Sneed. The social and employment work is in charge of Miss Hammond, industrial secretary.

The Portland Woolen mills plant covers 5 1/2 acres of ground. Each factory room has windows on practically all sides and darkness is a negative quantity in the lives of the workers. Tennis courts and gardens are a part of the landscaping of the sloping lawns.

Behind it all lies the personality of E. L. Thompson, whose philosophy of life has wrought an industrial structure which stands defiant before radical, destructive, revolutionary doctrines which are threatening industry. With opportunity goes responsibility, according to Mr. Thompson's conception, and in that sense of responsibility to his fellow workers he has been able to bring into their lives the growth of an ideal upon which is built the contentment of the industry.—Journal.

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Good Corn, tender and sweet, 1 1/2 can, dozen	\$1.75
Large can Saucy Kraut, 1 1/2 can, two for	25c
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Van Haters Bleaching Soap 7 bars	50c	
Crystal White Soap, 2 for 1 1/2; 7 for	50c	
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Creole Oil Soap, 2 bars for	15c	
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