

TAKING DISCONTENT OUT OF JOBS IS FRANKEL'S JOB

Uncle Sam Has Availed Himself of This Man's Ability in Smoothing Out the Rough Places Every Worker Encounters and in Bringing Employer and Employee Closer Together

BY WILLIAM ATHERTON DU PUY.

"THERE is a certain advertisement, says Dr. Lee K. Frankel, 'which has made a nationwide favorable impression, and which announces the sale of milk from contented cows.' If dairymen find it advisable to keep their cows contented that they may render profitable service, may it not also be considered the part of wisdom that employers of labor should take steps to maintain happiness among their workers?"

"As a matter of fact, during the last two decades employers everywhere have tried experiments in contentment in their shops and offices and have demonstrated beyond question that this effort has been a good investment. Now the United States government, having lagged far behind other employers, is making a study of the advisability of applying contentment methods in that branch of its service which employs more labor than any other, the postoffice department. Will Hays, postmaster-general, is enthusiastic over the idea of dispensing human kindness and consideration, and is organizing his department to that end."

One of the outstanding authorities of the nation upon this subject of relations between the employer and the employee was speaking. Dr. Frankel has been one of the few men in the United States who has made a profession of this question of making the workers happy and is recognized as knowing as much about it as any man in America. For ten years he has been in charge of such work with the Russell Sage Foundation and other such agencies. He has pioneered unknown fields. He has developed much fact that lies at the very root of the welfare of the nation. I asked him how he happened to choose this peculiar field of endeavor as his life work. He said it was quite by accident and was a possibility which he had hardly realized existed until he was a man past 30 years of age. He had grown up in Philadelphia and had graduated from the University of Pennsylvania, specializing in science. After graduation he had become a professor in that institution and had taught chemistry for six years. Afterward he had become associated with Franklin Institute, likewise in Philadelphia. It was while connected with that organization that he began giving his spare time to charity work in Philadelphia. He became something of a student of the problems of carrying relief to the suffering. In those days little attention was given to this problem and his meager studies, therefore, brought him more of reputation than he would have attained at a later period. As a result of that reputation he was asked to go to New York city and to associate himself with an organization of the various charitable agencies at work in that metropolis.

"That was 20 years ago," said Dr. Frankel. "Nothing can better illustrate the changed attitude of mind in this last 20 years than the nomenclature which was used. Two decades ago municipalities of this sort was likely to be designated as the

water bearing this disease. The problem was more than relieving the suffering of the individual affected. The actual problem was to see to it that the municipality furnished pure water.

"If there were delinquency on the part of the children in a workingman's family, it was decided that the problem was not merely to render what aid could be given to these delinquents, but to go further back and find the cause of the delinquency. A workman and seven children, for example, might be living in a three-room tenement. One room was kitchen and dining room, one was bedroom for parents and two small children, and the other room furnished sleeping and living quarters for five half-grown youngsters. The lack of privacy and the lack of attractiveness in this home was such as to drive the sons to the saloons and the daughters to the dance hall. The cure was in improving this home condition. Probably the cause was inadequate wages to the workers in the family. A better income would make better living possible.

"So in this case, relief of an unhappy condition led to the employer. We found that the cause of many of

Metropolitan Life Insurance company immediately became material upon whom I could try all my experiments. Many other large employers were just awakening to a similar consideration of their employees and what I did with the Metropolitan Life has been done in many other plants.

"When we offer employment to an individual we want to place him in the sort of work for which he is fitted. We, therefore, give him a psychological examination to determine where he fits best and try to avoid placing a square peg in a round hole. We want to know what are the physical defects in this individual, development of that disease. There is not a better tuberculosis sanitarium in the world. We have hundreds of girls in our employ who would have gone to the scrap heap but for this treatment. We give every employee a physical examination once a year that he may be kept fit.

"We have tried out many experiments as to working hours and have come to the conclusion that it is most profitable to us to work our people not more than eight hours a day and to give them Saturday afternoons off. Thus we maintain them in better physical condition, in a condition of greater happiness and they ren-

basket, or pie in a cafeteria, to repay the company for the expense of providing that lunch. We are inclined to believe that we recover the price of this hot meal every afternoon. We are very sure that providing it is one of the elements that holds our best people and allows us to take the pick of the labor market."

"Have other employers made similar advances?" I asked.

"One finds them everywhere he turns," said this gray-haired philosopher of human kindness. "I have traveled from coast to coast to observe the accomplishment of various

has been given to the worker. Government agencies are incomparably behind private agencies in this respect.

"What is true of the postoffice department building is true of virtually all the postoffice buildings throughout the country. In the big cities there are central postoffices which work thousands of employees



In Washington, for example, we have a new city postoffice building. Externally, it is a masterpiece of Greek architecture. Internally, it is so full of defects as to be deplorable. The big front corner rooms in this building, upstairs, which should be its choicest quarters, are without windows and are, therefore, without any natural light or ventilation. In every big postoffice, it happens that mail carriers have periods of idleness between the various deliveries. It is obvious that it would be to the advantage of the postoffice to provide some place where these men could spend this time agreeably.

"Now, to me, it is unthinkable that the United States government should not construct postoffices in such a way as to extend every consideration to the comfort of its workers. It is inconceivable that the government should be the most laggard of all employers."

"Would the problem be a particularly difficult one as applied to government workers?" I asked.

"There is practically no difficulty in the whole situation," replied Dr. Frankel. "The improvements of the conditions of workers and the advantages coming from those improvements are no longer controverted questions, either from the standpoint of methods to be used or benefits to be derived. Applying modern methods to the postoffice department is merely proceeding to the accomplishment of a task which we understand perfectly. Providing facilities will, of course, cost money and congress must make the necessary appropriations, but the facilities can be established. Providing the base for the mail-distributing plants is one of the fundamental questions to be determined."

"When the postoffice department has taken this lead in giving proper consideration to its employees there is no question that the same principle will be applied to other departments. When it is in operation there is no question that the sultry, cynical attitude often evidenced by the government employees will disappear, will be replaced by that state of mind which typifies the contented and happy worker. The government, as the employer, will be greatly benefited and will be reimbursed many times over in added service for the expense required."

Asparagus Causes Blues, Says Osteopath Doctor.

Vegetable Not Condemned but Poor Condition of Person Who Eats It.

CLEVELAND, O., Aug. 27.—Asparagus causes "the blues," said Dr. Charles Hazzard of New York City, former president of the American Osteopathic association, in a paper which he read today at the national osteopathic convention. This is not the fault of the asparagus, however, explained the doctor. He did not condemn asparagus but explained that when it does cause "the blues," it is because the person's system is already clogged with its own impurities. He said:

"The asparagus is the last straw which, added to the toxic state of the system, produces a physical state of the brain and nerves which is reflected as 'the blues.' This happens because the mechanistic state of the person's physical system is such that the organs of elimination have not been capable of doing their work well for such a long time that the system has become poisoned with its own debris. But had the system been kept always in good mechanical condition, elimination would always have proceeded normally, the system would have kept clear of poisons, and no bad effects would have followed the eating of asparagus. For the normal mechanism would readily throw off the acid of the vegetables."

Mental functions, in other words, according to the speaker, are markedly influenced by the condition of the blood. He explained this as follows: "In the struggle that men's physical organism must constantly keep up in order to grow, function, and keep healthy, it is always that organism that is handicapped by the presence of obstructions to the free flow of its nerve and blood currents that has the least chance to survive and keep well."

"A man's mental functions cannot keep clear and efficient and normal unless his brain and nerves are fed by copious streams of pure blood. The blood cannot be pure and circulate freely so long as the organs of elimination are obstructed."

"So it is that 'what is one man's meat becomes another man's poison.' Faulty diet is largely a matter relative to the mechanical status of the physical body of the individual."

the ailments of the derelicts of the city lead back to the employer. A man may have been injured at his work and thus become incapable of holding a job and supporting his family. Wrong lighting in the factories may have injured the eyes of an employee and driven him to the bread line. He may have been broken by improper sanitary conditions, by the physical tax of over-long hours. In fact, the further we went, the more thoroughly we became convinced that the causes back of the fact that individuals require charity were usually industrial causes.

"It was upon this discovery that has been based that remarkable improvement in the relation that exists between employer and employee, that has grown up during the last 20 years and which I hold is the development of the present generation which means more to the people of the world than does any other."

"It was back in 1903 that I went to



DR. LEE K. FRANKEL, WHO IS HELPING THE GOVERNMENT'S CAMPAIGN FOR CONTENTED WORKERS.



department of charities. Today it is designated as the department of public welfare.

"Twenty years ago people who were interested in these problems were dispensing charity. Their whole idea was the relief of suffering. The individual was ill or unfortunate, without work or without means, and the aim was to relieve the resulting suffering."

"It was about this time, 20 years ago, that this New York group began intelligent study of the problems that arose out of the dispensing of charity. There were those of us, for instance, who began to go back of the fact that individuals required relief and to attempt to determine the circumstances which brought them to their unfortunate condition. If a man were ill and could not work—whence had come the illness? If he had typhoid fever, for example, it was established as a fact that the fault lay with the municipality which distributed

Europe for the Russell Sage foundation and there made a survey of all that was being done in various countries that would better the condition of the worker. In 1903 I was on a train going from New York to Philadelphia and discussed to some chance acquaintance upon the results of my trip to Europe and my investigations in New York, drawing the conclusion that the improvement of relations between employer and worker would not only mean new possibilities of happiness for the worker, but would mean new prosperity for the employer."

"Come with us," said one of the gentlemen with whom I was talking, "and put your theories into practice. We are, respectively, the president and vice-president of the Metropolitan Life Insurance company, and if you are willing, we will hire you on the spot."

"This proposition I afterward accepted and the employees of the

that they may be removed, if possible. We examine his heart, sight, hearing, teeth. Where there are defects, we direct him toward their removal. The proper glasses, for example, may save a man's sight. The proper treatment may arrest tuberculosis. We have a sanitarium in the mountains to which we send any employee who gives evidence of the

der more service in the course of a year than they would if we worked them long hours. We know by actual experiment that we can get better service if we pay a wage which is sufficient to maintain the worker in comfort. The employee who has not the wherewithal to live decently cannot become a satisfactory employee."

"We have worked upon the theory that precedent and prejudice must be discarded and that it may be to the employers' profit to make certain concessions to his workers that seems unreasonably visionary. In our home plant in New York city, for instance, we provide an excellent, nourishing, hot meal to 6000 employees, and we do it at our own expense. We wondered if the amount of work we would secure from these employees during the afternoon would not be sufficiently greater if they had this hot, nourishing meal than if they had cold sandwiches from a lunch

employers of labor. Let me cite you a few concrete examples.

"The industrial commission of Ohio found that job selling was widely in practice no longer ago than 1916 and that foremen collected from \$5 to \$20 for distributing them. The introduction of the proper employment machinery organization makes this sort of graft impossible. It reduces the labor turnover materially and the Dennison Manufacturing company found that it cost them \$50 and the Curtis company that it cost \$90 to put a new name on the books.

"The Ford Motor company inaugurated compulsory education among its foreign-speaking employees and the accident rate was decreased 54 per cent, which was attributed to the ability of the workers to read the signs of warning."

"The Joseph & Feis company of Cincinnati analyzed the production of their employees and found that the non-English speaking individuals were least productive. They established compulsory classes, during which they gave half pay. Increased production made this course profitable."

"An English report of a 100 years ago states that the hours of employment for children in a certain industry were decreased from 11½ to 10½ hours a day, and that not a farthing had been lost."

"The Zeiss Optical company, in Germany, cut the working hours from nine to eight and noted an increase in per hour production of 16 per cent and in daily production of 3 per cent."

"The Cleveland Hardware company, instead of working its people overtime in the busy season, as had been its custom, maintained the usual programme of nine hours a day. The production was greater than when they worked overtime. The next season, when the rush came, it decreased the working time to eight hours and the output increased."

"A button factory in Rochester finds it profitable to provide music. It speeds up production. In noisy parts of the factory it substitutes for the music potted plants and other things pleasing to the eye."

"When the railroad liability law was enacted the number of accidents was decreased 47 per cent. Twenty-two of the foremost industrial concerns of the United States report an average reduction of 51 per cent of accidents after the introduction of organized safety work. With the International Harvester company the reduction was 80 per cent. Thirty per cent of these reductions are attributed to educational work among the employees."

"It was shown by actual experiment that workers were capable of

15 per cent more hard exertion at a temperature of 68 degrees than at 75 degrees and 30 per cent more than at 85 degrees. It is therefore better for employer and employee to maintain as nearly ideal temperature as possible.

"In 19 metal trades in which careful studies were made, it was found that 23 per cent of the workers required attention. When one examination a year was inaugurated the decrease in such cases was 2 per cent. In plants where semi-annual examinations were made the decrease was 10 per cent. By increasing the frequency of these examinations the percentage of illness was reduced 75 per cent. The increased efficiency of the labor more than paid the expense and there was a by-product of human happiness that was all velvet."

"A revolutionary and quite surprising thing is found when the panacea of higher wages is applied to an industrial situation. It does not look reasonable, but, as a matter of fact, it has been shown over and over again that higher wages result in cheaper production. The individual getting better wages becomes physically fitter and, therefore, capable of a better day's work. The burden of depression from unhappy home conditions is lifted and the worker becomes happier and more contented. There are fewer days of absence from work because of these improved conditions. The scale of labor turnover runs down very sharply as higher wages are paid, and labor turnover is one of the costliest phases of employment. One of the most remarkable developments of the time is the demonstrated fact that paying low rates for labor is unprofitable to the employer."

"All of these findings of the last two decades are steadily combining themselves into a mass of labor information that is leading to the dawn of an entirely new era for people who work. I look to the development of conditions in labor before this generation is past which at the beginning of this century would have seemed so visionary as to have demanded no attention whatever."

"Has the government, as an employer," I asked, "kept pace with the private employer?"

"That is just the thing," said Dr. Frankel, "that has aroused the postmaster general. The postoffice department is the most extensive employer of labor in the government service. It has 300,000 workers scattered all over the United States. Now take, for example, the postoffice department building here in the city of Washington. This building, in which 2600 people work, has no rest room. If a woman clerk faints at her desk, there is no place to which we can carry her for treatment. If an accident happens, there is no provision for first aid. It would be difficult to find a private organization anywhere working a group of people like this that did not have these most obvious conveniences for the care of their workers. There is no recreation room, reading room nor any other agency for the benefit of the workers in this entire building. It seems that absolutely no thought