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GORDON A. JOHNSTONE, sworn, testified:

EXAMINATION BY MR. DALY.

Q What is your position in this plant?

A General manager.

Q How long have you been here?

A Since the 11th of November, 1912.

Q What other experience have you had in cotton plants in this country?

A I have been thirteen and a half years with the Danielson Cotton Company, Danielson, Conn., and about six or eight months with the Indiana Cotton Yarn Company who purchased the property.

Q Have you prepared at my request a statement of the physical conditions of the plant of the Fulton Bag & Cotton Mills?

A Yes Sir. (Exhibiting).

Q Is that a true and correct statement?

A Yes Sir.

Q Comparing this plant with other plants that you have been connected with what comparison can you make if any?

A You mean as to the physical condition of the plant?

Q Yes, of the mill.

A The physical condition of this plant is "A-1", in

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My judgment, I have seen a few plants better equipped, except possibly a mill that was brand new and had not been long in operation.

Q As superintendent of the plant how far does your jurisdiction go?

A In the position I am now?

Q Yes Sir, the position you hold in this plant?

A It covers the entire manufacturing.

Q What is your authority?

A It covers the entire manufacturing.

Q Does it cover the matter of discharging help?

A It does, as to the superintendents and men directly in authority. I do not go into the matter of each individual employee. Those are entirely under a department man; but in every case in this plant, and this is the first plant I have ever been in where I have seen this system working, it is the best I have ever seen. The system is this, that each operator, when working a notice, has to sign a card which is put on my desk. When the operator is discharged by a department manager the discharge ticket has to come to my desk and I investigate every case that in any way looks as if it would not be for the advantage of the company. In other words it is an oversight which would prevent any department manager from assuming autocratic

authority over the help that they cannot appeal from.

Q Do you give these superintendents instructions as to cases for discharge?

A No Sir, each case is based on its own merits. The superintendent brings each card to me in the morning. Twice a day we settle with help who get through, that is is the time, 9 o'clock in the morning and 2 o'clock in the afternoon

Q Do you know whether or not from the date of the first strike in October, 1913, to the date of the second strike, May, 1914, there were many discharges?

A No Sir, I have had some figures. It is about the average number; about 350 discharges during that time.

Q Would your records show the actual cause of those discharges? The cards you speak about?

A Yes Sir.

Q Mr. Rogers testified yesterday, in substance, that where men were exceedingly active in the organization of the Union at that time, agitating through the plant, that they lost their places; would the superintendents had instructions from you to that effect, Mr. Johnstone?

A No Sir, not specific instructions as to that, anymore than any other breach of discipline in the plant.

Q Would you consider that to be a breach of discipline?

Agitating there?

A I would not if they stayed on the work. If they left their work and went around among other operatives laughing and talking, I would, because machines will not run with the operatives away from them.

Q You are in close touch with the number of the employees?

A Yes Sir.

Q What conversations have you had with Mr. Elsas, President on these particular lines? The line of Unionism and the strike and the employment of strikers and the discharge of strikers?

A None whatever, nothing as regards the discharge of Union men. We have had a tremendous number of Union men working in our plant, and we have now. We keep them in our machine shop, and other departments are completely unionized.

Q After the strike of 1915 was there any effort on your part or any instructions issued by your superintendents, to the effect that there was a tendency to get rid of the men that were causing this Local No. 836 to grow in your plant?

A No Sir, none more so than if a man had not done his duty he would be let out. If he left his work as explained

the superintendents were instructed to that effect.

Q Do you approve of the organization of that Union?

A I have not any objection to it and I have not anything to say in its favor. Personally I do not believe in it. I have worked from the bottom of the mill to the top of it, and I have come in contact with it, and I know what it means to me. I know what it meant to me when I was in it.

Q You are opposed to the organization of Unions among the men?

A No, I am not.

Q What do you mean by your statement then?

A I mean by that statement that I personally have my own view-point. Let me explain. I am a Scotchman, born and raised in the country and was put to work to serve a trade when I was thirteen years and a half old; anybody must learn a trade. I learned my trade in Canada as a carriage maker.

Q What part of Canada?

A New Brunswick. When I got my trade learned I was given a set of tools as my recompense for three years in service.

Q You had learned the trade though?

A I had learned the trade and everything else that

went with it, and I came to the United States and went to work. I was then going on eighteen years of age and I went to work in Cambridge in a carriage shop and I was told that I was obliged to join the Union before I could work in there. I was told by the man I was working for and that it was a unionized shop. I asked the question then what it meant, and they said, "We have a Union schedule of wages for all ages of \$15.00 a week" and I says, "Does that mean that no matter what he does \$15.00 a week is about the maximum?" I could see they stated under this contract, "\$15.00 is union wages you can get; you cannot get any more in this shop, " and I quit the carriage making business and went to work in a mill at either five or six dollars a week, I forget which; in any line of work I would not ever carry an average. I do not believe in my carrying somebody else who wants to work half as hard as I want to work. That is my personal experience entirely.

At this point Mr. Johnstone was temporarily excused for the purpose of examining Dr. Stone, and his examination was then resumed as follows:

Q You were here when the strike began in 1913, weren't you? In October?

A Yes Sir.

Q Were you here on May 20th?

A Yes Sir.

Q Prior to October 13th, 1913, what complaints did you have from those men that went out on strike, if any?

A Never had a complaint. I just want to tell you the kind of feeling we had in this plant up until the 18th day of October. The week prior to that we had a mass meeting of the employees at the Wesley House known as our "premium night", and Mr. Oscar Elsas came down and made a little speech to the people. That hall was packed so full you could not get any more people in it, and the streets were packed also. It was just one of the finest meetings I ever saw, showing the good will between the owners of this plant and employees. There was something like six thousand to seven thousand dollars given away that night in premiums to those who had filled the requirements of the premium system. On Saturday, the 18th of October, our assistant superintendent, a Mr. Metzger, a German, in the carrying out of his duties called attention to one of these fixers in No. 2 mill to some irregularity on one of the looms, and he struck the assistant superintendent. He first cursed him out and then struck him and then Mr. Metzger simply turned and walked off; never even replied or said a word, walked out and reported the matter.

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Q Where is Metzger?

A He is in the employ of the company.

Q Is he a capable, competent man?

A Yes Sir, he is a very bright young fellow working to learn the business. He is serving his time here. He had taken a technical course in Germany and had come over to this country and was employed here learning the practical end of it. He had been in the mill for three or four years and had worked in every department, as an ordinary fixer, and had worked his way up.

Q How long has he been here?

A I should judge he has been here some four or five years. He was here before I came.

Q How long after he was advanced?

A About three years. And he struck Mr. Metzger and the matter was called to the attention of the superintendent and he gave the overseer instructions to discharge the fixer and the matter was brought to my attention in the regular way and I approved of it, of the fixer being discharged and the overseer was going to some other place and he had resigned. His notice was up. He was going through that day and made a little turmoil in the room. Everything was settled up, he was settled with Monday morning. That was on Saturday noontime. I did not get here Monday morning until 7:50. It was a cold



Q Were any claims made then as to the conditions of the mill village?

A None whatsoever. A committee waited on Mr. Elsas.

Q Were you present when the committee came up?

A Yes Sir.

Q Did they make any claims as to what was in this contract?

A None whatsoever.

Q Or other rules in the mill?

A They made complaint as to one rule in the mill.

Q What was that?

A The question of putting in six day for a week's notice instead of five.

Q That was put back to five was it?

A Yes Sir, we agreed to change it. The first day they met us, they wanted Fowler put back and Metzger discharged. We told them that was an impossibility, and the second day they asked for this rule to be made five days instead of six which we at once accepted and they all went back to their work the next morning.

Q From that day until May 20th, 1914, did any committee wait on you?

A No Sir.

Q Not from the mill men?

A No sir.

Q Did any particular person from the mill wait upon you as to conditions?

A No Sir.

Q As to working conditions in the mill?

A No Sir.

Q Or conditions in the mill village?

A No Sir.

Q Or as to the contract?

A No Sir.

Q Or as to fines and deductions?

A No Sir.

Q No complaints were made?

A None whatsoever. Now I want to qualify this statement here. There may have been complaints made by operatives, some complaint they had to make about their overseer or something of that kind. We have a system here I want to explain so that I won't be misunderstood, that it makes no difference who, in the employ of this company, feels they are unjustly treated they have the right to apply to their overseer then to Mr. Rogers, and then to me and on to Mr. Oscar. We may have had a number

of these complaints of that kind which were adjusted and the overseer, if he was to blame, reprimanded and the hand put back in.

Q Did the superintendent appeal to you to bring out any complaints?

A No Sir, there were none.

Q Did you know anything about this talk about your firing people that belonged to the Union?

A No Sir, I do not.

Q No complaints were made to you about it?

A No Sir, there were not.

Q Then to what do you attribute the cause of this 74 or 84 going out on May 20th, 1914?

A I should judge from the outside agitation of the ones we would not take back October 20th - there were some we would not take back on October 20th. Those who had threatened to shoot and others who had had me arrested for carrying a revolver, a thing I never have done in my life, and I would not take these back. They went into court and swore, and as we asked to have the rule declared everybody swore I had a different kind of gun in my hands, one a pearl-handled, another black, another one a hammerless and then down to one who claimed I had a gun about that size (indicating). So far as those were concerned I

would not take them back, and there were some six or eight we wanted to take back and they formed in a committee representing the rest of the employees. This was explained to the committee that these hands would not be taken back who caused the strike on October 20th and they agreed we were right and would stand on it.

Q As a matter of fact Mr. Elsas agreed to make some investigations didn't he as to Fleming's conduct.

A Yes Sir.

Q Did he do that?

A Yes Sir, we did.

Q Did you help do that?

A I did, yes Sir.

Q But they never were taken back?

A He was not. He was the only one.

Q The truth of the charges you think were true in the investigation?

A Yes Sir.

Q Was that the result of the investigation?

A Yes Sir, future developments have proved it.

Q Did you have any system by which you kept tabs upon your workers, a detective system?

A No Sir, we had a perfectly straight system.

Q Had you this system in the day's business?

- A No Sir.
- Q During the strike did you have such a system?
- A Yes sir.
- Q What was that system?
- A We had some men employed in the mills as workers.
- Q Did you have any men from other cities?
- A I don't know where they came from, we got them from a detective agency in the city.
- Q Which agency do you know?
- A I don't know. Mr Elsas attended to that.
- Q How many of these men did you have?
- A We had one in each mill during the strike.
- Q Do you know their names?
- A No Sir.
- Q Were they textile workers?
- A Yes Sir.
- Q Did you have them in the camp?
- A Yes sir, they had not worked in the mill, though, they were outside men.
- Q They would report any of the doings of the strikers would they?
- A Yes Sir.
- Q If there was any violence would they report that in?
- A Yes Sir.

connected and we do not know them and we are afraid of their going inside this plant here and doing damage to the property.

Q As to the number that went out on May 20th, 1914, have you a record of them?

A Yes Sir, I have counted the different names. I called out the names and my clerk wrote them down. I stopped each one as he went through the gate and took his name.

Q Do you remember the number?

A Yes Sir.

Q How many were there?

A 76.

Q And the next day do you remember, after, the strike did more leave?

A Yes Sir, there were some more that stayed out the next morning.

Q How many in all left the mill do you think?

A There never was a day during the strike that 100 employees would not have started every machine.

Q Then 100 was about the amount?

A There may have been more going out, but we had some coming in.

Q How many do you think went out altogether?

A I could not tell you, because most of them worked notices and did not specify they were going out on strike.

Q Simply quit?

A Quit, yes; when their notices were made out they were brought to my desk from May 20th until the plant was in full operation. I personally saw every hand and talked with them and there were very few who told me they were going to join the strike or had any reason for going away other than they did not wish to be mixed up in this unpleasant situation. A number of women put in a notice and went for fear of bodily harm, afraid of being hurt while going to and from work, who never joined the Union and who came back to work later.

Q Were any of your operatives injured while going to and coming back from work?

A Yes Sir, we had quite a number of assaults.

Q How many?

A I should judge 15 or 20 during the time, and continuous fighting in the place all the time.

Q Were there any strikers assaulted by any of your men?

A If they were they never had them in court, excepting in one case where they were afraid some feeling would arise

when a man from the strikers went out in the street and came near hitting some woemn. They had one of our men up on that charge and he was fined \$5.00.

Q Did you ever see a contract like this in any other mill?

A I did not, no Sir.

Q What is your opinion of this contract?

A I think it is a good thing.

Q For what reason?

A For the simple reason that a city ordinance is a good thing to regulate the people who violate thrules; for the simple reasonthat any law is a good thing. It is a restragnt on those who would otherwise be taking advantage of society.

Q Don't you think there are times when a law becومه so strict as to become a burden upon the people?

A I don't think so. If you do not want to violate them they are no burden, are they?

Q Have you a list of those who went out on strike?

A Yes Sir, I have it right here (indicating). There it is with the names I took.

Q This is the first time?

A Yes Sir. (To be produced by Mr. Elsas as an Exhibit).

Q You have had a number of years of experience and



direct contact with cotton mill employees in other sections?

A Yes Sir.

Q What is your judgment as to the comparative physical condition of the workers in this mill with those you have met in other mills?

A I was very agreeably surprised when I came South. I came with fear and trembling having read so much and seen so many newspaper articles and heard men talk about the conditions of the cotton industry in the South. When I came to this plant and took charge of it I never was so agreeably surprised in my life as to the condition of the plant itself and as to the operatives. They were more than above the average in intelligence. They are all Americans.

Q Since you have been connected with that mill do you consider that any improvement has taken place in the personnel of the operatives?

A Yes Sir, we have nothing near so many moving around as we did when I first came here.. It is a very conservative estimate to say we do not have 30% of the average going through the plant now, who work notices and get a settlement that way. I count them that way seeing a great many work notices and come in Monday morning just to get their two weeks pay at one time and

come back. I count them as having worked notices to quit.

Q Will you state in a general way what your instructions are from the officers of this company as to the conduct of the plant and the standard they set for the employees, and in a general way what your instructions as general manager are.

A I never worked in a place, and I have been working since I was very young, where the employees get the consideration that they do in this plant. I know of no place, and I say that without fear of contradiction, where help are so considered as they are here. Some of the rules are strict. They are good. The rules that are strict are good rules. They make for better discipline, make for better employees and make for a better set of employees after they get over with the first little scare they have, and it is mighty good. I know of no plant of this size where there is a more satisfied lot of employees than there is right under me now, or in fact has always been even during the strike for a time. The help are fairly treated and there is nobody that cannot get a hearing. The fact that there are three or four or five thousand a year in the plant would not indicate there is any unrest in the plant.

Q Have you ever been in a plant where you had that number going through in proportion to the normal complement

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A I think that is about the average in cotton mills. I should say that at least 25% of the employees change places twice a year and the other 50 % will average once a year and 25 % will remain. I think that is about the average.

Q Would your records show that at least half your people stay for a number of years?

A No, I don't think so, without working notices going out for the usual change, they would not be cotton mill operatives. We have mechanics and printers that are permanent fixtures.

Q I am talking about cotton mill operatives.

A A census taken a few years ago in New England showed 25% of mill people -- 30% of the help -- in transit over the country in moving vans and other ways. That is a conservative estimate.

Q You take your records with 3500 changes in a year that your records show --

A We haven't 3500 here. We had 1600 last year, I have in the records given to me last summer. It has actually increased over that because I have a record that I kept. That is the very first thing I started on when I came, the population, weekly and the number of employees who worked notices, and discharges and quits.

Q Then this record you got last summer is too large?

A I don't know what record you have got.

Q This record shows that former help would be about 500 permanent that would live there and 700 floating.

A Yes Sir, that is about 60%.

Q Have you ever lived in mill villages?

A Yes Sir.

Q In this and other sections of the country?

A Yes Sir, I have lived in other sections. The last charge I had was in Connecticut.

Q How do the conditions in this mill village compare with conditions in other mill villages?

A I don't know of a place I have been that is kept as clean as this mill village is and it compares 100 times better than anything in my mind. Very few mills have anything at all, -- have any other system of sanitation than outhouses.

Q Did the city of Atlanta call the mill's attention of the condition of the mill village last year?

A I believe the sanitary department came down last year and insisted on the latrine system being taken out. It was an outhouse system, and was a flushing system. I am comparing the sanitary condition with the New England mills. They use the outhouse back of the house that has empty pits on one side that are filled up

and the house moved. You will find no odors down here.

Q Who furnished these premises?

A The company, and there were no strings tied to it, but we furnished them continuous employment, individual services. There was no string to it.

Note: Mr. Johnstone was recalled on the following day at his own request to make an additional statement and testified as follows:

Q What is it you want to put in, Mr. Johnstone?

A You remember the question you asked in regard to the contract being too stringent, and I made the reply that I did not believe the contract was any more stringent than our laws we have lived under. You asked the question if the laws were not too stringent and I said in effect that to the man who was living under them and not violating them they were not too stringent, or something like that.

Q You came here from Connecticut, didn't you?

A Yes Sir.

Q I think you testified yesterday that the mill village as compared with some other mill villages was as good as any you have seen?

A Yes sir, I did.

Q Do you remember what ones you stated? Had you any particular ones in mind?

A The only one I think is better than ours is the

new mill village of the Lawton Mills Manufacturing Company. That is a brand new mill in the last five years.

Q Is that in New England?

A Yes Sir; with that one exception I do not know of any.

Q Have you seen mill villages in New England?

A Very much so for because quite a long time I scoured around them looking for operatives.

Q Have you been in New England recently to observe mill villages?

A Not within two years. Of course you want to compare this mill village with other mill villages in cities of equal size.

Q As a matter of fact in New England do the operatives live in villages like they did some years ago?

A Yes Sir, they do.

Q Do you or not think there is any tendency for them to move out of the mill villages into better localities?

A There may be but I don't know of any cases. I will illustrate on the stream I was on; the Falls Manufacturing Company have their village known as Greenville, Connecticut; then we come along up to Taftville, their village having some three or four hundred houses.

Q Are they built along this same style as villages in the South?

A Absolutely, except they had cellars under them all walled around. Then in the country where the land is cheap they are spaced apart. Sometimes the yards on the street are six or eight or ten feet apart. Then we come to the Slater Mills at Jewett City and they own their own village. They are a large corporation, and their village does not compare in the least with this village we have here. And we go up further along the stream to Plainfield; then Quinebeg and then Danielson Cotton Company, Willainsville Manufacturing Company, now the Goodyear Company and then you come to Putnam and their villages do not compare with this village, and Webster, and that about covers that stream from Norwich to Worcester.

Q How long has it been since you were in those villages?

A I have been in those villages for the last fifteen years until I came here about three years ago. They are all equipped with out houses, with the exception of the Plainfield Mill and the Danielson Cotton company where I was. They do not use outhouses. And they put in bath rooms, when I went there, but with those two exceptions throughout that whole territory those villages had the little out houses and not even the latrine system.

Q I asked you yesterday, of course I have not seen the testimony, I think I asked you this as to what complaints

had ever been made with reference to conditions in the village, to you.

A I never have had a single complaint excepting in two or three instances that have been brought to my attention by some people living down in the village who the neighbors claimed were behaving roughly at night.. We investigated, and when the conditions were found as they stated they were moved out. As to livingquarters I have never had a complaint from one operator.

Q Were you ever waited on by anyone not connected with the mill village - social workers of any description - and had your attention called to any conditions about the village?

A Well, the Wesley House workers have often spoken to me about somebody that had consumption and to get them to go to the Battle Hill Sanitarium; that it was better for their people that they should go.

Q Did you take all such cases and investigate them?

A Yes sir, I conferred with the people and advised them.

Q Did you send anybody to the sanitarium?

A There were one or two that went. I did not send them. All they requested me to do was to talk to them and advise them of the propriety of their going. Of course I have not any control over them and could not advise them



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one way or the other.

Q. Is there anything else you would like to say?

A. No Sir.

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