

Atlanta, Ga

December 15, 1914.

We have avoided making statements for the newspapers because we have not regarded the matter as a strike in our Plant, having run practically full, and during the very depressed period with the Cotton Mills, when many of them have shut down, we have continued to work, merely to give employment to our hands, and to show our appreciation of their loyalty. Our hands are fully satisfied, and have refused to go out on a strike except a very few, who left us without notice, and many of whom have returned to work, saying they had been misled. Not over 5% of our employees have been out on what they have termed a strike, and our employees have resented the attempts of people who have had no connection with our Plant at any time in trying to induce them to leave our employ.

The whole trouble originated on May 20. It has been explained that on May 19 about 5 o'clock, a communication was addressed to us, setting forth that during the past few months we had discharged about 85 employees because they were members of the Union. Being so late in the evening we could not give the matter consideration, but the next morning about 8 o'clock went into a Directors' Meeting with a view to acting on this communication, but before we could conclude on this matter, the strike was called on the morning of May 20 at 9 o'clock. The only demand made was that 85 people should be reinstated. During the same interval, - that is, from Oct. 1913 to May 1914, we had discharged over 300 operatives.

We did not know union from non-union. If the union knew of 85 members, what was their intention regarding those non-union members, who were in the large majority?

All demands outside of the reinstatement feature were afterthoughts, and were not a basis of the trouble.

The features subsequently brought up were embraced under the following lines,--

First, our contract form. This contract has been in existence in our plant for many years. It has no objectionable features; in fact, the same effect might be accomplished by merely posting notices to that effect in the Mills, as has been declared by our Supreme Court, which likewise upheld, as well as to its reasonableness, <sup>But</sup> the reason that we do not run under such conditions is that certain help would plead ignorance of the rule, or inability to read; therefore, to prevent such excuse, we have a printed Contract which each and every employee signs before entering the service of the Company, and in the case of minors, is signed by both the minor and the parent or guardian.

The purpose of our employment contract is not intended entirely as a protection to this Company. It is essential to our protection, in order that when we make contracts for the sale of our goods, we may have reasonable assurance that we may be able to comply therewith. The question of protection, however, is <sup>also</sup> to the <sup>other</sup> employees of the Company. The process of Cotton manufacture is of a continuous nature. The arbitrary quitting of an employee may involuntarily throw out many other employees. This can only be avoided by giving us an opportunity to replace an employee upon notice of his intention to

quit.

The essential feature of this contract is to demand of the employees one week's notice of intention to quit, and the penalty, if they fail to do so, is that they forfeit one week's time. The interpretation that we have put on this clause is that if they work not less than five days' notice, it will be considered equivalent to one week.

#### FINES.

Some statements have been made regarding fines assessed. Our method of fining is brought about only by the necessity for discipline, and not from the desire on our part to collect money from our employees. Records kept covering a period from Jan. 1, 1913, to May 2, 1914, - in other words, sixteen months, - show a total amount of miscellaneous fines, \$309.76; fines for defective work \$1249.23. Proportion of fines given to employees for discovery of defective work, - which, in other words, was a refund to those who helped us to find defective work, - \$871.03. This, therefore, shows a net collection on our part of \$687.96; or, roughly speaking \$44.00 a month, which would hardly pay clerk hire for carrying on the system necessary to keep track of this matter.

The object of fines is to minimize the defective work, which finally reacts on the earning capacity of the employees, and subsequent operations, who are all paid on a piece rate basis, but all of whom are interested in having good material placed before them.

WAGES.

We pay the highest wages of any Mill in the State, or, in fact, in the South on the same character of work. Efficient operatives, i.e., those who work regularly, and are interested in their work, have voluntarily made the statement to us time and time again that they have never worked in a Mill where they have drawn as much as they have here.

EFFICIENCY COUNTS.

Supplementing our high rate of wages, we also pay a premium for steady work. "Steady work" means that an employee should either report daily, or work daily, without interruption, except for a good excuse. An investigation on that point will soon convince you that we have done everything in our power to encourage steady work, and have been more than liberal in an interpretation of this section, with a view to giving the operatives a chance to earn the premium. There is no feature of efficiency or earning capacity attached to the premium; the only thing that is required is that they should work every day, or have an

excuse for not working, and in this connection, if we let them off after reporting here, they are credited the same as though they had been at work, so far as the premium is concerned.

At the termination of the first three months of employment 3% is paid on their total earnings, (Same as if deposited in Savings Bank:) after the second three months 5%; for the next six months 7%; and this rate of 7% continues for each and every six months thereafter.

Our records show that for less than eleven months, - i.e., from Jan.1 to week ending Nov.21,1914, we have paid out in premiums \$13,454.80. This, you will see, is an additional incentive to steady employment, and must not be considered in the wage average, or any of our references to wages.

#### SANITARY CONDITIONS.

When certain demands were made of us for changing the toilets, etc., by the Sanitary Department of the City, (which demand was undoubtedly brought on by pressure due to the labor agitation,) we acquiesced and did exactly what was required. We have experienced great difficulty with the new installation, the same as the old, as to keeping the property in such condition as we would like. The unfortunate part is the employees, to a large extent, are seemingly not interested in their own welfare, and although we maintain men regularly, whose duty it is to keep the Village cleaned, we are faced with the lack of co-operation on the part of the tenants themselves, - therefore, we are not to be blamed for these conditions, since

we are doing everything possible, - in fact, more than can be expected of any landlord.

#### WELFARE WORK.

Possibly it has not been called to your attention that we have been directly and indirectly interested for a number of years in attempting to build up the moral and physical condition of our employees. Such efforts have been expressed to a great extent in what we call the "Wesley House" or "Settlement Home". This work was started many years ago, first by us, and, later, on discovering that our help was rather suspicious of our intentions, we were glad to turn the work over to the Methodist Mission Board, who became interested and desired to carry on the work. The understanding was, however, that whatever work they did should be absolutely non-sectarian, and we believe that it has been carried on along these lines.

The work comprises "Clubs for boys and girls" under their own control and managed by their own officers, and merely guided by adults in charge of the work.

Gymnastic clubs for boys and girls, each on different nights.

Public and social entertainments of varying kinds.

Free clinics from some of the best physicians in the City, for different diseases, such as eye, ear, nose and throat, children's and female diseases.

Trained nurses, who visit the families and teach them how to care for the sick, and how to live.

Free library.

Day nursery, where children of self-supporting mothers

are taken care of for the sum of 25 cents per week, which includes food and care of the children during that period.

Kindergarten.

Last, but not least, - a Night School, which has become so successful that it has received the sanction of the Board of Education of this City, who gladly furnishes teachers to help carry on the work. Our average attendance at the Night School is almost 100, which speaks well for the intention of the growing-up help to become educated while they have to work.

To accomplish the above work we have set aside a large brick building in its entirety, in which are housed all the workers and the different Departments above mentioned. This building contains 47 rooms and an auditorium.

In addition to the above we keep a resident physician whose duty it is to give free treatment and advice to all who apply to him. He also attends to accident cases, but is not called on to perform major operations; for the attention of such, we call in skilled surgeons.

TENT COLONY.

We have made investigations, and are satisfied that of the people living in what is known as the Tent Colony only a small percentage have been recent employees of this Company, and a great many of whom have never been employed by us. We have been informed that many of them are not Cotton Mill workers. It is quite evident that the main proposition of this Tent Colony is to appeal to the sympathy of the Public to obtain large funds throughout the Country on the basis of a strike at this Company's Plant, which does not exist and

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never has existed.