

THE ARMOUR ELEVATORS.

performs only that, but performs it with the precision of a machine; so that four million animals are annually killed and carved there, and despatched in fragments to the ends of the earth, with less ado and loss than an ordinary farmer would be put to in slaying and dressing a single porker.

One of Armour's mottoes is: 'Get the best.' He says: 'Good men are not cheap.' He pays men twenty-five thousand dollars a year for directing certain chief departments.

Mr. Armour's private office is a most unpretentious place. It contains no furniture save a roll-top desk and two or three chairs. This private office was constructed two years since at the instigation of Mr. Armour's sons, Ogden and Philip, who are his present partners, and who saw that the constant interruptions to which their father was subjected made demands upon his health and time that were incompatible with his advancing years.

A few months ago there was a movement to crush Armour in a grain 'corner.' He had contracted to deliver several million bushels of grain at a given date. Delivery of this sort, as is well known, means delivery in the elevators, not in the cars. Armour's granaries were full. The combination would not let him have a bushel's room in any other structure. And still he had three million bushels to move from the far West, and there were but thirty days left for the completion of the undertaking. When he discovered the 'freezing out' designs of his competitors he gave himself no anxiety whatever. He rang his office bell. A clerk responded.

'Send for Mr. —, the builder.'

Mr. — duly made his appearance.

There was a brief conversation. Twenty-eight days after that the newest and largest grain elevator in the world was in Armour's possession. It had been built for him in the interim by an enormous force of men working in three eight-hour shifts each day. The three million bushels were stored on the twenty-ninth day, and there was space to spare for a million more.

Armour always has a large store of cash in reserve. He can draw upon it instantly. He is a general who never dissipates his resources, and who is never cut off from his base of supplies.

The Armour Mission was established by a fund bequeathed by the late Joseph Armour. This fund Philip doubled, or quadrupled—the amount is not essential; the spirit is. The fundamental idea upon which it was based was the establishment of a Sunday home. There is a great hall where a Sunday-school assembles, and there are class-rooms opening into this. There, every Sunday, eighteen hundred young people gather and spend really happy hours. The place is the centre of life; cheerfulness is its characteristic. There is no denominationalism. One can hardly say that there is a creed, except it be: 'Worship God and love your fellow-man.' There is certainly no dogma. There is no distinction as to race; neither as to color. There is no sermonizing. Every Sunday afternoon Mr. Armour goes down to the Mission and spends his time there among

the children—especially among the younger ones. In those hours he is at his happiest. Connected with the place is a free kindergarten, and there is also a free dispensary.

What is the Armour Institute? It is easier to say what it is not, than what it is. Some would call it a Technical Training School; some, perhaps, a College of Science and the Liberal Arts; I should say: 'It is a place for developing character.'

He had seen that there are thousands of boys and girls who have to begin working-life with the simple preparation of our common schools. What Armour saw was the necessity for bridging over the gap between the common schools and the college. He met the necessity by creating the Institute.

A large and handsome building of red brick, trimmed with brownish stone, and open on all sides to the light and air, is the home of the Institute. It stands at the corner of Thirty-third street and Armour avenue. It is a hive of pleasant lecture-rooms and spacious laboratories. It is administered in two divisions, the 'Scientific Academy' and the 'Technical College.' In the one are taught Algebra, Plane Geometry, Solid Geometry, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, the English, French, German, and Latin languages, Greek History, Roman History, Modern History, Commercial Geography, Physical Geography; while in the other there are courses in Mechanical Engineering, Electricity and Electrical Engineering, Mining Engineering, and Metallurgy. And there are also what is called the 'Department of Domestic Arts,' where instruction is given in cooking and sewing and dressmaking; the 'Department of Library Science,' where the formation and management of book-collections is the chief theme for study; and the 'Department of Architecture,' the 'Department of Kindergartens,' and the 'Department of Commerce.' A superb gymnasium crowns the whole.

The Institute was opened in September last with six hundred pupils. There is no gratuitous instruction, but the terms of tuition are so low that any one who is determined to get an education can easily defray the cost of it. If he or she have no money for this purpose, then the term charges can be worked out, or an undertaking can be given that after graduating from the Institute and finding employment the charges will be paid in the course of time. For there is this healthy fundamental idea about the work—it is devoid of all appearance of charity. The standard is high. An education earned is the only one that can be properly valued by its possessor.

The Rev. Doctor F. W. Gunsaulus, who had been for six years pastor of Plymouth Congregational church in Chicago and is now the president of the Institute, is a man after Mr. Armour's own heart. He is thirty-seven years of age, a man of inexhaustible energy, of shrewd executive power, of lofty character, and an ardent enthusiast in all good work that tends to make life brighter. As a preacher Doctor Gunsaulus is remarkably eloquent, forcible, and helpful.

An important conversation occurred between pastor and parishioner, after the latter had returned from a visit to London, and had seen there the splendid work which is being done by Quintin Hogg and other philanthropic men. Armour declared that he would like to give Chicago an institute combining the features of the London Polytechnic with others of his own design. He outlined his plan; then he turned calmly to the reverend doctor and said:

'Do you believe in this?'

'I would give my life to such a work,' exclaimed Doctor Gunsaulus.

'Good. Then I will put a million and a half behind it.'

While he was showing us the Institute he wanted me to see the electricity room, especially.

'I set great store by this,' said Mr. Armour. 'In a few years we shall be doing everything by electricity, and these young men are getting ready for the coming changes.'

It was easy enough there at the Institute to see that Mr. Armour believes in youth.

He does not have much confidence in the chance of reforming grown men. One of his favorite expressions is: 'I want to get into partnership with that boy.'

Another is 'Let every youngster know that he counts for one. Don't make him wait till he has a vote before you tell him that.'

Up at the top of the building we found a cookery school.

'This is a vital spot,' said Mr. Armour. 'We do not sufficiently appreciate in this country the national importance of cooks. There are plenty of people who can paint well and sing well, but there are few who can cook well. In this room we prescribe for domestic happiness.'

On another occasion I asked Mr. Armour if he had ever taken an active interest in politics.

'No,' he replied; 'but a few months

ago some people in Chicago got it into their heads that they would like to have me mayor during the Exhibition year. But that isn't in my line. I have never been in politics. I don't know much about politics. I have made it a principle of life never to engage in enterprises whose details I have not mastered. Perhaps I might make a fair mayor of Chicago, but I know I am a first-class butcher. I think, if you will permit me, I will stick to the stock-yards.'

For a man of many millions, Mr. Armour's life is an amazingly simple one. He has a good-sized house on Prairie avenue, but there are many men in Chicago worth, say, one hundred and fifty thousand dollars, who live with more ostentation than he.

Armour honors a mother, and when he goes to the Mission and sees the future mothers of the country—the most of them tots of very tender years—he is apt to say: 'We can't be too careful of this raw material.' His own mother is a sainted memory with him, and his father, a sturdy-natured man, was a most careful trainer of humanity. The parents were farming people.

'A man should do good while he lives,' said Mr. Armour himself. 'Wills are easily broken and set aside. I built the "Armour Flats" to yield a yearly revenue to the Mission. There's an endowed work that cannot be altered by death, or by misunderstandings among trustees, or by bickerings of any kind. Besides, a man can do something to carry out his ideas while he lives, but he can't do so after he is in his grave. In those flats across the street we've tried to carry out the home idea, as I call it. Build pleasant homes for people of small incomes, and they will leave their ugly surroundings and lead brighter lives.'

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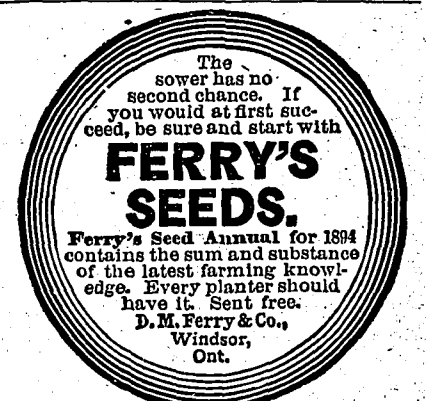
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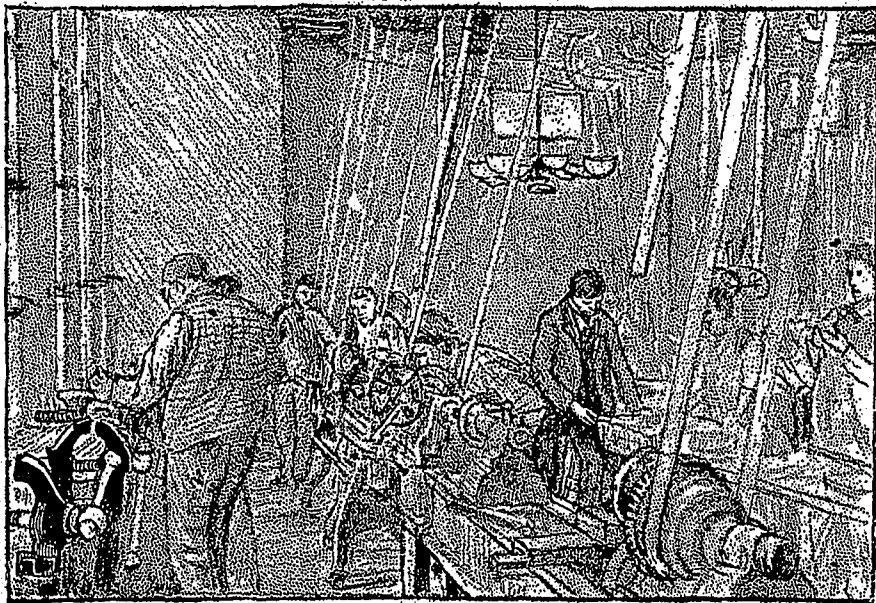


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THE MACHINE SHOP, ARMOUR INSTITUTE.