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METHODS OF REDUCING HOURS OF WORK IN FACTORIES.

In his report the chief inspector of factories in Great Britain shows that prior to 1914 there had been a growing tendency to shorten hours, but upon Britain's entrance into the war and her consequent need of greater production an order was promulgated considerably extending hours of work in practically all establishments producing munitions of war.

The immediate effect of this extension was an increase in output, but eventually the continued and excessive overtime reacted unfavorably upon both the health and efficiency of the workers, and the movement to reduce hours was revived. After the signing of the armistice this demand became more insistent and the movement proceeded so rapidly that reports upon what schemes were being adopted to shorten hours and with what results were called for by the Government. The report showed that the reduction was being effected in three ways:

(1) The one-break day system under which work commences after breakfast and only one meal-time allowed.

(2) The two-day shift system, under which work is carried on by workpeople each working from six to eight hours daily.

(3) The five-day week system, under which no work is done on Saturday.

The one-day break system. The practice of the one-day break system, which has followed for years in certain industries, especially by many of those in London, gradually increased during the past year, being adopted in numerous industries of a varied character. Some of the engineering trades had adopted the shorter hour schedule before the trade union conference with the Government in 1914. The general opinion seems to be that the adoption of the one-day break has resulted in better time keeping and better health on the part of the workers, and that the output has not been affected much.

Among the cases cited is that of a firm manufacturing large amounts of textile machinery, which gives some interesting information on the application of the eight-hour day. In 1913 this firm reduced its hours from 52 to 48 and adopted the one-day break system. From a trial of this system they found that "molders on practically all jobs have made the same number of boxes per blow, that machinists (men and women on piecework) have, with one or two exceptions, earned the same wages in the reduced period, that, though it is difficult to compare results, time workers were doing as much work as before, and that even on their piece-work they state that in June, July, and August, 1917 (52-hour week), 14 to 17 per cent of the men and 11 to 22 per cent of the women arrived late, while in the same three months in 1918 only 1 to 1 1/2 per cent of the men and 1 to 1 1/2 per cent of the women arrived late. The most noteworthy feature of this no engineering firm was found to be, having adopted the one-day break day system, reverted to the old system.

In the textile trades the employers generally favor the one-day break day on the ground that work time is better broken up, and the satisfactory period of the day, as much of the work is piecework, the cost of production has remained practically the same. Some of the individual workers in this industry object to the early breakfast hour, and to the curtailing of their evening leisure, but even on their part there has been a general desire to return to the old system.

In the woollen industry opinions regarding the advantages of the new system vary, but most of the employers feel that output has not varied much, though one firm reported a slight loss during the winter months. The effect of shorter hours in the flax spinning and weaving industry differs greatly with the character of the work. The output of a spinning mill depends so largely upon the continuous operation of the machinery that, in one operator's opinion, the efficiency of the worker, and the amount of output, will be almost proportional to the number of hours lost. Cost of production, they maintain, will also be increased. On the contrary, the human element plays a much larger part, the effective working of the loom being dependent upon the efficiency of the worker. The weavers are paid by the piece and can make up lost time by speeding up a little.

A curious phase of the situation is that though most of the workers favor the system the objections to this method of shortening hours come from them rather than the employers, who almost without exception favor it. The chief objections of the workers were: (1) Breakfast before starting work, an increased consumption of coal and gas; (2) the interval between breakfast and dinner is too long (this difficulty, however, is easily met in establishments having canteens); (3) domestic arrangements are thrown into confusion and the hardships of the housewife, especially if she is also a worker, are increased. To the manifest advantages of the system, namely, an increase in the efficiency of the worker, an appeal to a better class of workers, better time keeping, and less sickness, the inspector for Scotland calls attention. In the workrooms, especially in the winter, when opportunity is given for properly heating them, before work is begun; and (2) the additional rest which workpeople secure.

The Two Day-Shift System. By the second method of reducing hours, known as the two day-shift system, the day is divided into two shifts of six or eight hours each between 6 a.m. and 10 p.m. Usually there is a break between the two shifts which gives opportunity for airing workrooms, adjusting machinery, and other changes which produce safer and more hygienic conditions.

While this system is not permissible for women and young people under the ordinary provisions of the war and adopted by a considerable number of firms. Safeguards were thrown around women and young people in the matter of the early or late employment. Sunday employment, long work periods before

workers, as so many persons in England are for the general purposes of education. Even the schools of the early hours were not supported from the public funds. The state education was probably the Spartan. In Sparta the individual had no rights, the state controlled everything. Children were taken from their parents, and if physically strong were allowed to live, but if weak were exposed to die. The living were reared to be the future soldiers or mothers of the nation.

Charles the First in his day attempted to establish state schools, but it was not until the Reformation that a state system of education was put into operation. It was established in Saxony through the efforts of Martin Luther.

England had lagged behind in the foundation of state schools because of the influence of an established church, through which all instruction was carried on. It was being more clearly understood, however, that education was a matter of the state, not the home or the church alone, and England was gradually turning to this system.

Consider Individual. Today systems were not being so much considered as the individual child and his abilities. The day of abstract teaching had passed, and moral teaching was now carried out by the story method with its lesson, as used by the Great Teacher.

Education should be arranged to suit the age of the child. Many teachers did not sufficiently understand children, especially when they were developing from childhood into youth. That period, however, the most difficult in the life of any boy or girl.

Religion Separate. In the United States religious education was carried out in various ways in the different states, but was always outside the Public Schools. In one of the states religious knowledge was necessary on the examinations, but the teaching was done by the churches, and the examination papers set by a council of churches.

Religious instruction in the province of Ontario was carried on in the schools to a certain extent, but the parents of any child might have it withdrawn from any religious exercise to which they objected.

It was most difficult, stated Dr. Jones, to obtain a definite programme for the teaching of religion in the schools, which would be acceptable to all. What was most required was the turning out of moral, religious, Christian men and women to be instructors to the children.

Thanked Press. A resolution was unanimously adopted thanking the press for the great assistance it had given in connection with the Forward Movement, and which had so much contributed to its success.

A committee to report on the feasibility of a religious survey of the city at a special meeting to be held on March 15 was appointed, composed of Rev. R. E. Whyte, chairman; Rev. D. A. Armstrong, Rev. J. W. Woodside, Rev. Geo. S. Clendinning and Rev. A. N. Marshall.

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LABOR CONDITIONS IN JAPAN.

Drawing a parallel between the conditions in Japan at the present day and those in England at the beginning of the nineteenth century, Oswald White, vice-consul at Osaka in a report on Japanese labor, says that in both cases the factory system is taking the place of the domestic system, and the attendant evils which are now coming into prominence in Japan are similar to those experienced in England a century ago.

In the course of his report, Mr. White says that Japanese labor is usually summed up as being cheap in price and poor in quality, and, as a rough generalization, this judgment may be accepted. The average Japanese workman, though excellent in stature compared with a European, is strong and well developed, and capable of working long hours at a time, though it is said he falls short of the European in the case of work requiring great physical strength and stamina.

One of his merits has been described as obedience, and one of his demerits apathy, the latter being probably largely the result of economic conditions. The long hours of the Japanese workman are, however, in stature compared with a European, is strong and well developed, and capable of working long hours at a time, though it is said he falls short of the European in the case of work requiring great physical strength and stamina.

Progress in connection with the factory system has been especially rapid in the last five years, and Japan is rapidly acquiring an important position among manufacturing countries. The supply of labor is plentiful, but skilled labor is scarce. A feature of Japanese industry is the quantity of woman and child labor. The spinning and weaving companies employ 100,000 girls, of whom a considerable number are children, as against a quarter that number of men. Similarly in weaving, all kinds, the number of women working in 1912 was stated to be 139,000 in factories, and 205,000 in cottages, while the number of men was given at 15,000 and 11,000 respectively.

The Japanese workman works long hours, 10 to 12 on an average, with few holidays. Casual labor is obtained from so-called human markets. Here irregular workmen gather every day, and contractors come and collect as many men as are wanted for particular jobs. They are generally to be found in the vicinity of arsenals, shipbuilding yards, ironworks, and similar establishments, and around the docks, at the ports where the demand for labor constantly varies. The pay received in the various industries has increased steadily year by year, and during the war it nearly doubled. Unfortunately, prices have risen, too, and there is little doubt that in Japan prices have risen first, and wages after.

Many causes conspire to keep down wages. Labor is plentiful and inefficient. These two reasons prevent labor from getting more than a bare living wage. It is at this point that the competition of woman and child labor, and of the cottage industries, is felt.

Japan has her housing problem, though perhaps it is not so acute as in the West. It is stated that the population of Tokio has been growing at the rate of 100,000 annually, and that the housing accommodation grows only at the rate of 30,000.

Trade unions are at the present moment non-existent, and under the law would have little power if formed. They are not illegal, but labor constantly varies. The pay received in the various industries has increased steadily year by year, and during the war it nearly doubled. Unfortunately, prices have risen, too, and there is little doubt that in Japan prices have risen first, and wages after.

In his conclusions, Mr. White says that the conditions are so complex that changes must come slowly. Nor would it be safe to conclude from the parallel drawn that they would closely follow the trend of events in England in the last century. The Japanese character is different from the English, and what is one man's meat is another man's poison.

CO-OPERATION THE CURE FOR ILLS OF 20TH CENTURY GOVERNMENT.

"Community work, plus co-operative movement, can educate the citizen to preserve democracy," said John Collier in his address to the University on "The Alternative of the 20th Century, Autocracy or Democracy." Mr. Collier is a prominent community work enthusiast in the United States.

"The people do not understand the complexity of a scientific Government," said Mr. Collier, "and what people do not understand, they fear." "They confuse scientific Government with plutocracy and the consequence is that difficulties arise in the path of any scientific policy. The conclusion is obvious—a nation in this condition must progress back to autocracy."

"The Government is out of touch with the people," and "the result would be revolution, but for—now I come to the crux of the whole situation—Community Organization which will give the citizen practical, intensive training in scientific government. This can be achieved by giving everyone something to do to supplement the work of the State. Interest must be fostered in education, healthy housing, recreational guidance, recreation, public forums, etc. As soon as the citizen feels the power of his contact with the Government, he begins to realize just what that government is to him."

NEWSPAPERS INCREASE PAY.

Announcement was made by the three newspapers published in Scranton last week of a voluntary increase in wages to all employees of composing and news rooms of \$5 per week. In the future printers and reporters will receive \$42 per week with a corresponding increase for executive employees.

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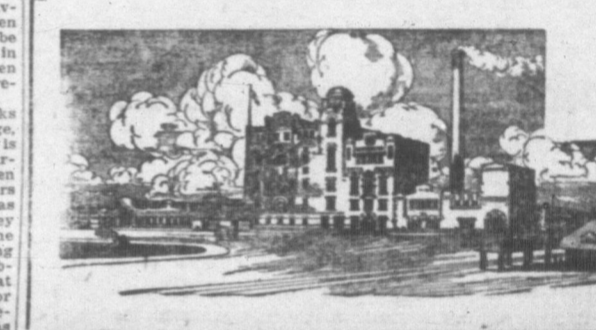
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