

Industrial Progress,



UNDOUBTEDLY, we to-day are far ahead of our ancestors one hundred years back, in the number and magnitude of the operations which we can perform. To-day, by the use of mechanical carriers, coal can be loaded into the bunkers of a ship at a rate exceeding five hundred tons an hour. One hundred years ago, when the loading was done by hand, such an operation was impossible without the expenditure of an immense amount of labor. To-day, a ship at sea can communicate with a port hundreds of miles distant. Less than a hundred years ago such an operation was undreamed of. This condition of affairs is termed "Industrial Progress," and the object of this essay is to determine and compare the advantages and disadvantages of such progress to humanity in general.

Before treating directly of these advantages and disadvantages just mentioned, I would like to say a word relative to the cause of industrial progress. It is trite to say that men are not always satisfied with the conditions under which they live and labor. Yet I must state this as it is the true cause of progress. Man wishes to do better and, when the means at his immediate disposal will not serve, he seeks new ones. So, where dissatisfaction or discontent is rife, there will one find the ingenuity of man active. The recent coal strike in Great Britain is causing men to seek a substitute for coal or to find means of economizing in its consumption. It may be objected that necessity is the cause of progress. True, but it is the remote cause determining the dissatisfaction, which is the proximate cause.

The phrase "Industrial Progress" designates that evolution or improvement which has occurred, since man was created, in the arts of production. The rate of progress has not always been the same. Indeed, there have been whole centuries in which scarcely any industrial progress was made. Then there have been times at which the progress was very great. Shortly after the year 1750 there began, in Great Britain, a tremendous industrial change which spread to all civilized countries and became known as "The Industrial Revolution." Following this "Revolution" we find one man enabled, by the use of the spinning-jenny, to do the work of eight spinners. We find the steam engine replacing the coach and