SURROUNDINGS OF THE FACTORY,
ROTARY PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPANY, ENGLAND

"THE RIVER COLNE FLOWS THROUGH THE PROPERTY"
COTTAGES AT BOURNVILLE
INDUSTRIAL VILLAGE OF CADBURY BROS.

SEMI-DETACHED COTTAGES AT BOURNVILLE, ENGLAND
SOCIAL WORK IN BRITISH FACTORIES: BY MARY RANKIN CRANSTON

In England, as elsewhere, there are factories, good, bad and indifferent from a sociological standpoint. Those in the third class are, in the main, alike the world over; those in the second are rather better than the same kind in America, which is due largely to British industrial legislation. All English factories must measure up to a certain standard as regards sanitation and what may be called the impersonal side of industrial betterment, while factory inspectors are alert to see that the requirements of the law are complied with. The good, or improved, factories are very good indeed, ranging from those of such proportions that the plant and its employees form a town of no considerable size, to smaller enterprises which are able to carry on social work upon a more personal basis because conditions are less complex.

The most complete scheme of English industrial betterment is found at Port Sunlight, just across the Mersey from Liverpool. Some years ago Messrs. Lever Bros. bought this tract of land, at that time covered with dilapidated, unsanitary houses. During the years since their factory has been located there a marvelous transformation has taken place; it is to-day one of earth's beauty spots externally, at the same time offering its inhabitants educational and social advantages of high order.

A man in the employ of Lever Bros. finds himself at work in a building having every appliance for comfort, light and ventilation. After the day's work is done he leaves the factory for a pleasant walk along well-kept streets shaded with fine old trees, past beautiful flower gardens surrounding the attractive cottages of his fellow workmen, until he reaches his own home with its quaint gables and tiny latticed windows, with perhaps a blossoming rose climbing over the doorway, or, it may be, boxes of fragrant, old-fashioned flowers adorning every window. He may rent a cottage like this for from six to eight shillings ($1.50 to $2.00) a week. His children may attend the excellent free village school; on Sunday he may take his family to service in the picturesque little church and during the week they may go to festivals, or lectures, or concerts in the village play-house.

If the employee is a girl she may find good board at a low price in the house provided for unprotected young girls; at noon she will have a substantial luncheon in the factory dining-room and, out of working-
hours, may enjoy the privileges of the girls' club house. Various clubs invite her membership and social pleasures fill her spare time. And so, while Port Sunlight is remote from the large cities, there is no difficulty in holding a good class of employees because there is sufficient variety in its community life to satisfy the gregarious instincts common to us all.

JUST across the river, twenty minutes' ride from Liverpool, in Warrington, is another industrial betterment factory which manufactures soap and other toilet articles. As Warrington, a city of about sixty-five thousand inhabitants, has abundant housing accommodation for its working class population, Messrs. Joseph Crossfield & Sons find it unnecessary to concern themselves with building cottages for their employees, but instead are developing many social features peculiar to their needs.

The firm is an old one, having begun business years ago with an uncle of the present Messrs. Crossfield at its head. Factory conditions in those days were very different from what they are today. Lack of industrial legislation made an employer practically a czar among his people. The story is told that the original Crossfield made a rule that as long as fire was under the boilers the men could not leave work. It was his custom to place lighted candles there in order to keep the factory going in other departments where the boilers were not needed.

Very different is the factory to-day, for the managing director, thoroughly in sympathy with social service, not only welcomes new ideas in industrial betterment, but annually sends a committee to the continent as well as to different parts of England in search of the latest features for factory improvement. Recently such a committee visited the Berlin and Amsterdam Museums of Security to find out new inventions for safe-guarding machinery. As far as inventions of this kind have been applied to dangerous machinery, they are installed at the Crossfield factory already, but the firm is desirous of not only avoiding accidents, but of reducing the noise to a minimum. This can be done and is done with some of the machines; it is thought that it may be done with all, without detriment to the machine, or in any way interfering with efficiency or output. It is believed that, on the contrary, it will be beneficial to all concerned, for clanking ma-
chinery causes nervousness, which impedes work and is likely to pro-
duce deafness, permanently injuring the worker.

The factory is operated by the most up-to-date electrical machin-
ery. In the power house every precaution is taken to keep it in good
order. To prevent the admission of dust the interiors are kept under
"plus pressure" which requires considerable force to open a door,
making the draught come from the inside instead of the outside,
which would admit whatever dust there might be. In the machinery
rooms, there are boards placed on the wall, painted black with space
for every tool needed in repairing. To prevent delay by having to
hunt up a misplaced tool these boards have the space for each one
painted white so that a man can tell at a glance if all are at hand
before he begins his work.

An efficient fire brigade is maintained, consisting of forty-six men
chosen on account of their ability for such work and the nearness of
their homes. The girls in all departments are regularly drilled in
the quickest and calmest way of leaving the buildings at the sound of
the fire signal. Each girl must rapidly and closely follow the one in
front of her, but not touch her. Without confusion, one hundred and
twenty girls can be out of a room in thirty seconds after the alarm.

The plant covers acres of ground, making necessary a system of
railways within the works. As a precaution against accidents, rail-
way shunters wear scarlet coats, and all passages leading to crossings
are closed by chains which require a few seconds to unhook and to re-
hook after passing. Much attention is paid to education. No one
under fourteen is employed. A few years ago it was found that only
fourteen per cent. of those under seventeen were attending evening
classes in Warrington. Wishing to raise the average and to encour-
age attendance, the firm offered to pay the fees for all school courses
and to give a money prize to every one under seventeen years of age
who could show a good report from his teacher. The year following
this proposal found thirty-eight per cent. at school. The plan was
then extended to all male employees under twenty, with the result
that seventy-three per cent. then attended the evening classes. Much
gratified at the success of this voluntary attendance, the firm decided
that in future attendance upon evening classes should be compulsory.
When "under twenty" is the compulsory limit, boys entering the fac-
tory at fourteen will thus have six years' schooling with fees paid and
SPECIAL WORK IN BRITISH FACTORIES

an equal amount of cash as prize money. Just as much attention is paid to the education of the girls who are being induced to attend evening classes on the same plan, to learn needlework, cooking and housekeeping.

Turning to the lighter side of industrial betterment, a great deal of purely social work is done, encouraged by the company but managed by the employees themselves. It is the firm’s policy to give every facility for the promotion of recreative features where a desire for them is manifested by the workers, to give suggestions, advice and money where needful, but to leave the active management entirely in the hands of the employees, rightly considering industrial betterment to be upon a more enduring basis under such circumstances.

Lectures, concerts, dances and plays are given in the pretty social hall which has yellow for the color scheme and is adorned with palms and ferns. The firm gave the hall, but the employees bought the plants, paid for the decorations and for the stage, with its shifting scenery, which occupies one end of the room. There are various athletic and social clubs, a dramatic society, gymnasium, lunch rooms for both men and women and a technical library.

Music is the most distinctive feature of the Crossfield works. In certain departments, where it does not interfere with factory routine, at stated hours during the day the girls sing while at work. It is very pleasant for a visitor to be greeted by such sweet old songs as “Bonnie Dundee” and “Blue Bells of Scotland.” In the beginning the girls had formed a musical club taught by one of their number. Their interest and improvement were so marked that this year they are to have a musical director paid by the firm. The brass band, composed of men, took first prize at the National Brass Band contest at Crystal Palace in 1904, in competition with twenty-five others.

At one time or another most of us have fallen victims to the postcard craze. While the making of picture postcards is a new industry it is one which has grown enormously. The idea originated with a German business man and a New York photographer. Their first venture in New York city was a failure. Being convinced of its practicability the German returned to his native land and succeeded in establishing the business there. Proving highly
A STREET IN LEVER BROS.' VILLAGE, PORT SUNLIGHT

GROUP OF WORKMEN'S COTTAGES IN PORT SUNLIGHT
IN THE CLUB GROUNDS AT COLNESIDE

ENTRANCE TO THE FACTORY, ROTARY PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPANY
successful, a branch house was opened six years ago near London, at West Drayton, which has had phenomenal growth.

An industry which appeals, in all its processes, to the artistic sensibilities, it is not surprising that the Rotary Photographic Company is developing its social work along aesthetic lines. The Company recently purchased a large house, formerly a dwelling house, with beautiful grounds, made the necessary alterations, furnished it and turned it over to the employees for a club house. Colneside, as it is called from the little river Colne winding in and out through the grounds, is quite complete in all its appointments. Handsome parlors have wide windows opening on the lawn; there are game rooms, a billiard room, restaurant, reading room, bathrooms and several bedrooms for the convenience of the London force, which can enjoy the privileges of the club only occasionally and must remain over night when they go to West Drayton. A man and his wife are installed as caretakers, and the club is managed by a committee of nine, seven elected by the factory people, two by the directors.

The grounds are beautiful. Near the house are bright flower beds, further away is the tennis court, while fine old trees give an attractive setting to the whole. Many seats are placed under the trees, where readers may enjoy books from the club library or spend a restful hour. "These grounds are very pretty, I should think they would encourage matrimony," a visitor suggested. "We shall be glad if that does happen," replied a member of the firm. "Wouldn't that be rather bad for business?" "Well, as it is, we have marriages among our people. We regard it as a good thing when a man and a girl who have worked together for some time and have learned to know each other well, decide to spend the rest of their lives together. It is, moreover, an indication of a high moral standard in a factory when there are desirable marriages among the employees."

When the club house was ready to be turned over to them, the employees, unknown to the managers, gave their pennies and sixpences until enough money was subscribed to buy and present to the wife of the managing director a golden key with which to unlock the door the afternoon the house was declared open.

The unique feature of the Rotary Photographic Company is the practice of exchanging workmen between the German and English houses. One day a workman in the English factory asked if work
could be found for him in the German establishment, as he would like to see how a certain process was carried on there. As he could not be spared without having some one to take his place, the matter was taken up with the German house with the request that workmen from the two factories should, from time to time, substitute for one another. This was done and found to be such an excellent plan for the interchange of ideas that it has been kept up ever since. It is purely voluntary but very popular with the men.

The factory of Messrs. J. & J. Colman, at Norwich, which shares fame almost equally with the ancient cathedral, is known as Carrow Works. It has been there long enough to seem historic to the American mind. The town and all that it contains is old, even some of Messrs. Colman’s employees living up to this peculiarity since there are seventy men who have been with them from forty to sixty years, one as long as sixty-seven years. The united service of these veterans amounts to more than three thousand four hundred years. Such faithfulness speaks volumes for the attitude of the firm to its men. Not all of the employees are old, however, nor are all of them men—hundreds of women and young girls earn their daily bread at Carrow Works. As may be expected, there are many social institutions for the benefit of these three thousand workers. Beginning with provision for safety there is a fire brigade, formed in 1881 after a disastrous fire in the factory. Composed of four paid firemen and six policemen, having the very best apparatus money can buy, its maintenance costs the company annually over $10,000. In connection with it, is an ambulance department with dispensary and physician where first aid to the injured is given.

There are schools, not for children alone, but also for men and women, technical training classes, clubs, recreation grounds, library, reading room and savings bank. A trust fund of £2,000 a year was left by the late Mr. J. J. Colman as a pension fund for incapacitated employees with the express stipulation that it should in no way relieve the company of its responsibilities to the staff.

At the cocoa works of Messrs. Cadbury Bros. at Bournville, near Birmingham, the force is about equally divided between men and young women. Believing that factory work for married women is harmful for the next generation, Messrs. Cadbury refuse to
employ them. Further than this, they forestall the possibility of race suicide as far as in them lies, by requiring the young women to exercise regularly in the gymnasium under the direction of trained instructors. Classes in physical culture as well as gymnasium exercises are held in the company’s time. Exercise is also required of male employees who have, in addition to their gymnasium, an open air swimming pool. As Cadbury Bros. are owners of acres of land at Bourneville it is possible for them to make provision for sports, fields for the men, tennis courts and recreation grounds for the girls. The Saturday half holiday is universal in England. At that time and on holidays the country takes on the aspect of an immense pleasure ground, so numerous are the cricket fields, tennis courts, bowling greens and recreation grounds dotted with thousands of factory people taking healthful exercise in the open air.

The Cadbury cottages are more uniform in character, though somewhat different in type from those at Port Sunlight. Rents are about the same and the occupants get about as much for their money in the way of comfort and conveniences.

In their social work, British industrial betterment employers are not trying to accomplish unasked for philanthropy; on the contrary they consider it good business as money-making men to give employees the chance for doing the best work possible by seeing to it that factories are clean, healthful and comfortable. In providing recreative and educational opportunities, efficient, reliable, faithful workers are attracted, men and women who become identified with the firm’s interests and who take personal pride in keeping up the factory’s reputation for good work, justice and right industrial relations between employer and employee.