

MILL MEN IN RALEIGH

THE MASSACHUSETTS PARTY ON THEIR RETURN TRIP THROUGH THE STATE.

THEY WERE GREATLY PLEASED.

The Weather in Raleigh was Wretched and It was Impossible to Give Them A Fair Sight of the City's Manufactories--President Hoffman, of the Seaboard Air Line Accompanies Them--Mr. Lovering and Mr. Edmond's Interviewed.

The New England party of mill owners, an account of whose visits to leading Southern cities have appeared in the NEWS AND OBSERVER for several days, reached Raleigh on a special train Sunday night. Mr. Ashley, President of the Chamber of Commerce, had gone down on the Raleigh & Augusta train to meet them at Appi Forum, and welcome them into our city. The party is composed of the most prominent mill-owners in Massachusetts, one of whom owns \$3,000,000 stock in New England cotton mills. They stopped a short while on Sunday at Lockville, Chatham county, to examine the water power, and then came on to Raleigh. A number of prominent citizens called to see them in their special train. President Hoffman, of the Seaboard Air Line, and Mr. D. A. Tompkins, of Charlotte, accompanied them.

The eastern manufacturers during the day conversed about the handsome and profitable mills that they saw in the Carolinas and Georgia, and by the time they return to Massachusetts they will be in possession of a fund of very valuable information regarding the industrial situation in the South. Mr. Lovering, President of the Arkwright Club and the Taunton mills, said that it was likely that the only use that would be made of the valuable information that had been obtained would be to present them to the Arkwright Club, which was a close organization, but that it was likely that something would get out about the report.

While the committee does not indicate when or where a large cotton mill will be located, as a result of the investigation, mill men who accompany the party say that it would not be good business tact to say anything upon such matters, but that they are thoroughly satisfied that the careful and systematic inquiry that is being made will result in the building of at least one large mill in which New England capital will be largely interested.

The committee has expressed itself as being particularly struck with the favorable conditions of the factory labor, and were delighted to know that there was so much available native labor which seems to be so well satisfied with its work. The investigations of the committee extend from the percentage of wastage to the rate of taxes, the number of the yarn to the profit per yard, and every other question of detail.

Mr. R. H. Edmonds, of the Manufacturer's Record, who has been with the party since it left for the South, has given the correspondent of the NEWS AND OBSERVER some valuable and pertinent statistics upon the mill situation, which indicates that there is plenty of room for cotton mills in the South. He says:

Mr. Edmonds Interviewed.

"There are in the world about eighty-five million cotton spindles. It is claimed that cotton is the largest single industry in the world and that it has an aggregate investment of about two billion dollars. The South raises about 60 per cent of the entire crop of the world, but has only three million spindles, less than four per cent of these operating in the world. Southern cotton mills at present, notwithstanding the great increase of recent years consume less than ten per cent of the Southern cotton crop. It is estimated that the capital invested in the cotton mills in the South aggregates a little over one hundred million dollars. These figures enable us to form some conception of what the development of the cotton industry of the South means in the advancement and prosperity of this section. The Southern cotton crop now averages about three hundred millions in value, while if manufactured at home the aggregate value would be over one billion dollars. It is not to be expected that the South will for many years to come, if ever, consume in its own mills all of its cotton crop, but if the future increase in cotton manufacturing can be centered in the South it will mean a very rapid rate of growth in everything connected with our industrial interests.

"The increase of cotton mills means the building up of industrial towns and cities--the creation of a home market for the diversified agriculture, thus making Southern farmers more independent than they can in any other way become. It also means steady and profitable employment for thousands of hands that would otherwise be forced to remain in idleness. No other industry in the South is attracting such general attention. While the South has coal and iron and timber in greater abundance and more susceptible of utilization than any other section, nevertheless it does not have a monopoly of the raw material in these industries, but in cotton the South has an absolute monopoly in production so far as America is concerned and it is almost a certainty that it will for all time to come be able to maintain its present position as the chief cotton producing region in the world. With the development of industrial towns, furnishing a local market for farm products added to the very general increase in the production of food products during the last two years the South is steadily strengthening its ability to produce cotton at a low cost, thus insuring a future against foreign competition. Under these conditions it is of the utmost importance that the South should devote its energy and capital to the development of its own textile interests and thus prove its faith in its own business. This will be the strongest argument that can be advanced to the capitalists of other sections to prove the South's pre-eminence advantages.

"The census of 1880 shows that the South had about 600,000 spindles, with a capital of \$21,000,000, by 1890 this had increased to \$61,000,000 of capital and about one million seven hundred thousand spindles. At the present time there are, including mills now under construction, about three million spindles, and on the basis of 1890, this would mean an aggregate capitalization of about one hundred millions. The great part of this remarkable development has been made by Southern people with Southern capital. When to the work that the South is doing in building cotton mills shall be added mills that New England people will doubtless build in the South during the next few years, the rate of growth will far exceed even the very rapid progress of the last five years."

The committee is taking a special interest in water powers, but all along the line the trend of the investigations has been more on the line of the labor situation than anything else. The cost of coal has been found to be satisfactory, the supply of cotton entirely so, and the welcome of the people most encouraging. Indeed the committee has in its trip through the Carolinas and Georgia been pretty well satisfied that for some time to come there is no cause for apprehension from the labor agitator or organizer.

The morning was spent at Raleigh, where the cotton mills were closely inspected. Considerable time was spent at the Raleigh Cotton Mills where the "mule" process of spinning is used. The mill operates 6,192 spindles, and additional spindles are now being put in. A stop was made at the Pilot Cotton Mills. The rain interfered with the party driving over Raleigh, as well as in seeing the water powers at Weldon.

The party has quite a bundle of valuable data that has been gathered from the many mills visited in the Carolinas and Georgia.

Interview with Mr. Lovering.

Mr. Wm. C. Lovering, President of the Arkwright Club, said, speaking for his party of mill men:

"All we have to say is that we are profoundly thankful to the people of the South, and to the railroad authorities for having received us so cordially and given us such ample opportunities to inspect the cotton manufacturing sections of the South. The proverbial hospitality of the South has been fully maintained throughout, and we have received nothing but kind words and encouragement from every section.

The impression that has been abroad in some places in the South, namely, that the Eastern manufacturers are about to move their mill plants bodily to the South has been very much modified if not done away with by this visit. It is not that the manufacturers of the East are going to make any wholesale movement in this direction but they do recognize the fact that the South presents remarkable advantages and opportunities for the extension of cotton spinning and that it is perfectly natural that cotton should be spun where cotton is grown. Undoubtedly the immediate increase in the spindles of our country is destined to be near the cotton fields. The proximity to coal, in many sections and the abundance of water privileges together with a plentiful supply of cotton close at hand are advantages not to be ignored. The gentlemen of the party have been deeply impressed by all these things, and return to the East satisfied that their cursory exploiting of the South is liable to result in the mutual advantage of both sections.

Mr. Tompkins Interviewed.

Mr. D. A. Tompkins, of Charlotte, who was largely instrumental in arranging the trip for the party of prominent New England mill-men, is very much pleased with the trip and said to the Southern Press correspondent: "It is most desirable that Southern people should develop the cotton mill industry themselves. But if there are Eastern mill people who are willing to join with us, in perfect good faith, and we can get the benefit of their knowledge and experience, and as they will probably come South anyway, whether we want them specially or not, it is better to show them everything, explain the conditions and make the situation clear so that when they do come here to operate mills it will be with a full knowledge of the existing conditions. We would rather have them appreciate our labor situation, and leave their labor in New England, and it would be preferable if they leave some of their New England ideas before coming South." This, Mr. Tompkins said, was plainly the chief reason for having the Massachusetts party see everything that there was to be seen. The party returned much delighted with its trip.

On Their Way Home.

NORFOLK, Va., April 8.--The party of Massachusetts mill-men who have been making a trip through the South, arrived here this afternoon on a special train over the Seaboard Air-Line. They went to Baltimore via Baltimore Steam Packet Co., as the guests of President Hoffman, who was with them.

They report that on the entire trip they were most enthusiastically received by Southern people. It has been pleasing to them to note that there has not been the slightest evidence of anything like sectional prejudice but on the contrary, the people have evinced a most friendly disposition.

Mr. D. A. Tompkins, of Charlotte, who was with the party during the entire trip, says that the action of Vice-President St. John, of the Seaboard road, in sending this party through the South in a special train, caused most favorable comment to be made about the interest he is working up everywhere for the benefit of the South.

It is stated that some members of this party will undoubtedly enter in some way into cotton manufacturing in the South, although plans are not perfected. The purpose of this trip was to get necessary data upon the basis of which plans can be formulated. The party left the South with even better impressions of its advantages than they had when they came, although it was composed of men who were well impressed with the South before leaving home.

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