

is, I am told, greater than that of the chief justice of the United States. He very kindly had me shown through his mills, stipulating first that I should not ask questions of the operators about wages, etc. He told me that the China trade was becoming a great one for our cotton mills, and if our Chinese exports were entirely cut off, some of the mills would not be working. He complained about the low freight rates which were awarded to the New England mills, by the ships which carry the Texas cotton from Galveston, and gave me to understand that the competition in making cotton good was becoming so great that it would hardly pay to build new mills. As he said this I looked out of the window and saw the new \$500,000 plant which he was himself constructing, and it seemed to me that his new investment was at variance with his statement.

I have found the same condition existing in Georgia. At the town of Columbus there are five cotton mills, which make colored goods. They turn out millions of yards of shirting, towels and other goods every year, and they give employment to thousands of people. The Eagle and Phoenix factories there have eighteen hundred hands, and they use fifty bales of cotton every day. These mills paid good dividends for years, and since their organization they have doubled their capital stock. They ship tickings to Canada and other parts of the north, and they compete with the New England mills. I am told, in the different markets. It is said that the Swift mills of Columbus made more than 11 per cent above the dividends of 8 per cent which they declared last year, or a profit of about 19 per cent on their investment. These mills make chevots, denims, hickory stripes, fancy skirtings and other goods of like nature. They make Turkish towels and other fine goods. They do beautiful coloring, and this notwithstanding that the cotton men of New England used to claim that the south could never do fine work, because the southern streams were muddy and would not bleach the goods properly. This is the case with many of the streams, but the Swift mills got over this by bleaching their water. Columbus is on the Chattahoochee river, the water of which is something like pea soup. This is the water used for bleaching the goods. It is clarified by running it into an enormous tank and then putting a little alum in it. The tank contains 20,000 gallons of water, and it is filled every afternoon. Into it at intervals every week is dropped about forty pounds of alum. This precipitates the dirt and makes the water as clear as crystal, and the cost, all told, is not more than 50 cents per week.

Another great cotton-making center in Georgia is the city of Augusta. It has twelve factories, with a capital stock of more than \$7,000,000. It pays out more than \$1,000,000 a year to its factory employes, and during the hardest of times its mills have been running at full speed and paying full wages. They have all along paid dividends of 6 per cent and upward, and they are making big money today. Some of these mills make sheetings and different kinds of fine colored goods. Some of the Augusta cotton goods go to England, and a part of their output is sold in Boston.

One of the reasons the south can

make money in manufacturing is that there are practically no labor organizations here. There is, so far, no chance for the walking delegate in South Carolina, and trades unions are practically unknown. There are but few strikes, and you hear no talk of the eight-hour law. The laborers work from eleven to twelve hours. They work hard, too, and they are glad to get a chance to work. They are almost altogether white people. The negroes are not employed in the cotton mills. I have been told again and again that they do well on the plantations and for rough work, but they are of no value in handling machinery. The factory labor of the south comes from the farms. It is largely made up of what used to be called the poor white trash of people who are accustomed to living off of little, and who did not see a \$10 bill from one year's end to the other. It was like the millennium for these persons to get their wages regularly twice a month, and they are happy in their work, although their pay is much less than that of the northern laborer, who works fewer hours. They live much better now than they did when working on their farms.

Their log cabins have been changed to pretty little cottages such as you may see by the hundreds, scattered around every big cotton mill center of the south. They are, it seems to me, more happy and better situated than the factory operatives of the north. They are equally intelligent, and the mill men tell me that the supply of labor is practically unlimited.

In some places the factory employes are saving money. Some of the mills have savings banks connected with them, and business has generally improved in the cotton milling centers. It will, I believe, continue to improve, and today there is no part of the United States in a better financial condition than that through which I have been traveling. The increase in the money thrown into circulation by such means is enormous. In 1880 the south had, in round numbers, \$257,000,000 invested in different kinds of manufacturing. By 1890 the capital stock had increased to six hundred and fifty-nine million dollars. The gain during this time was thirty-six per cent greater in the south than in the rest of the country, and the increase in the wages paid was greater than the increase in the capital stock. In 1880 the factory hands of the south got about \$76,000,000 in wages, and in 1890 they received more than \$222,000,000 or just about three times as much. At the present time the south has in round numbers about five hundred cotton mills and the amount of money invested in cotton manufacturing is, I am told, in the neighborhood of one hundred and twenty million dollars.

The cotton factories of the south are fitted out with the finest machinery. They are equipped with the latest inventions, and everything that will save a cent is bought without regard to cost. I went through the big mill at Spartanburg today. The plant cost about \$500,000, and it covers several acres of ground. It has three stories, and every bit of it hums with machinery. Much of the cotton is brought directly from the gin to the mill, and in this case there is no freight to pay. Other cotton is shipped in from the plantations near by, and today a great part of the cotton used in

the factories of this company has to be imported. Let us follow one of the cotton bales through the factory and see it turned from lint into cloth. The bale is first broken open, and the cotton is thrown upon an endless chain or belt, which carries it up through the mill, breaks it up and picks it to pieces. It is passed through machines which take out the dirt, run through great rollers, which separate the little strands of the lint, put them together again and finally leave them joined almost into yarn. The cotton finally comes from these machines in a continuous web, which looks like cotton batting. Handle it now, and you will find that it is much finer and whiter than when it was in the bale. It next goes to the carding machine, where it is run through wheels, or cylinders, covered with wire teeth. These teeth are so fine that there are thousands of them on a square foot of surface. They brush and comb the cotton as it goes through them, and it comes out finally in the shape of a seemingly endless strand, or rope, of soft yarn. This rope at the beginning is bigger around than a man's thumb. It is almost an inch in thickness, but it is as soft as down. It passes from these machines on through other twisting machines, being gradually twisted finer and growing smaller and smaller, until it at last is of about the size of a fishing line. Feel it now. It is still soft. Another strand of the same size, which has been reduced from another rope, is united with it, and the two are twisted and re-twisted by machinery until they are of the size of the finest cotton thread.

The rope of an inch in thickness is now so small that it would thread a needle. The fibers have been doubled several hundred times, and they are now down to the strength and size needed for the making of cloth. As they come from the machine they are rolled upon spindles or long spools and are ready for the weaving room. Another set of threads are wound upon rollers of the width of the cloth. These are to make the long threads of the cloth. The spindles are to move in and out between the long threads and make the short threads which go across the piece of cloth. In the weaving, room there are thousands on thousands of these spindles flying to and fro, back and forth, through the cloth. Each loom is attended by a girl or man, and a great factory-like din fills the room. Thread by thread the great rolls of cloth are turned out, but the spindles work so fast that thousands of yards are woven every day, and the shuttle flies from one side of the loom to the other about one hundred and fifty times every minute. The cloth has to be cleaned and smoothed up after it is finished. It is then packed up in bales, much like cotton bales, and is shipped to South America and Asia, and even to Europe.

It is important in preparing cotton for the foreign market that it be put in certain kinds of packages. Some of that which goes to South America has to be shipped so that it can be carried over the mountains on the backs of mules, and the factories find that each country has its own special kinds of cloth and special bundles. We study the foreign markets less than any other nation, and I am told that our raw cotton goes to Europe in worse shape than that of any other country. The covering of the