



Courtesy of Nat. Child Labor Com.

FAMILY OF COTTON PICKERS, OKLAHOMA

The Path of Labor

THEME

Christianity and The World's Workers

"I am among you as he that serveth"

Authors

M. KATHARINE BENNETT

GRACE SCRIBNER

JOHN E. CALFEE

A. J. McKELWAY

L. H. HAMMOND

MIRIAM L. WOODBERRY

WALTER C. RAUSCHENBUSCH

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TO YOUNG MEN
AT COLLEGE
YEARLY

III

IN MOUNTAINS AND MILLS

**JOHN EDWARDS CALFEE
ALEXANDER JEFFREY McKELWAY**

In his hand are the deep places of the earth, the strength of the hills is his also.—Psa. 95: 4.

And I will make all my mountains a way, and my highways shall be exalted.—Isaiah 49: 11.

If thou take away from the midst of thee the yoke, the putting forth of the finger, and speaking vanity;

And if thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul: then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noon day.

And they that shall be of thee shall build the old waste places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, The repairer of the breach, The restorer of paths to dwell in.—Isaiah 58: 9-10, 12.

For there are men in these mountains as well as minerals, and industry digs them out to separate them, and to transform those who are fit unto better things. But industry does not care for the poor, the weak, the handicapped. God does; and in His behalf Christianity sends forth its appeal for practical Christian help and sympathy with the mountaineer.

H. PAUL DOUGLASS.

III

IN MOUNTAINS AND MILLS

JOHN EDWARDS CALFEE

Mountaineers

If we are to understand the mountain people we must know their ancestry, their mentality, their spiritual inheritances, their ideals, their capacity for development, and their means for satisfying their souls' desires. It is grossly unfair to judge a people by their accomplishments without some inventory of the available means of attainment which are within their reach.

That we may have this understanding we must go back to the opening year of the seventeenth century. To be exact and at the same time personal, King James I. in the year 1607 confiscated the estates of the native Irish from six counties of Ulster and replanted these estates with Scotch and English Presbyterians. They were aliens in blood, ideals and religion to the Irish, being looked upon as usurpers—all of which led to many bloody battles. When the leases expired the church people and the Crown had a falling out; the prosecutions of the Crown set the former to immigrating to lands of larger freedom. Horace Kephart has estimated this exodus to include fully thirty thousand

people during a two-year period ; many ultimately finding a home in America along what was, at that time, the westernmost frontier. Trained in the willingness to take care of themselves, schooled in fighting, confirmed, as Justin Winsor says, "in the belief of original sin, total depravity, predestination and election," and "seeing no use in an Indian but to be a target for their bullets," they found a rare opportunity for some exciting fighting. These people of Scotch-Irish descent, now known as Mountaineers, have taken several post-graduate courses in the art of war. Besides fighting with the Indians, they have fought the British, the Mexicans, and during dull seasons have fought each other. The mountain feud is the vermiform appendix of bygone times which has rootage back in the dark ages of mediaevalism. Tradition, habit of mind and manner of living qualified these pioneering people for their future homes in the mountains of what is now generally known as Appalachian America.

The Highlander has always been a Bible protestant, a hater of slavery, a firm believer in natural justice and slow to recognize any authority, other than that which is based upon real merit and personal worth. He is an extreme individualist, a devotee to personal valor, and finds co-operation a most difficult lesson to learn.

Where Do the Mountaineers Live?

Next in importance to the blood of any people is their home—the environment, natural resources and location with reference to the well-beaten paths of progress and civilization. The Mountaineers occupy

the mountain ends of eight adjoining states. To this fact may be due much of the retardation in their development. The numerous state boundary fences have kept apart a people who are naturally homogeneous in speech, manners, customs and ideals and thus has been prevented that coherence which is fundamental to race consciousness, a condition quite essential to the development of strong leadership. They have been taken into the councils of the state too little except by sheer force of superior individual ability. A strong, wise, foresighted native leadership is an imperative need of those who are remote from centers of population.

The Highlanders' misfortune has been that of being stranded far out of the course of the well-beaten paths of progress, which have detoured to the north and south of the rugged mountains. The combined area of the Mountaineers' land is about twice the size of the New England States. It has been estimated that from 85 to 90 per cent. of it is on mountain slopes, with 70 per cent., or more, steeper than a rise of one foot to every five. What was once a good home in pioneering days when the population was sparse, hunting good, the methods of living and farming primitive, and when men and women fought the forces of nature with their wits and their bare hands, has been changed. The transformation has come about in the most natural way in the world; the yearly increasing population has pressed harder upon the limits of subsistence until that pressure has become so fierce in the extremely rugged sections that the land has been called by one writer "The Land of Do Without."

never could make a Smith do nothing he didn't want to do." The mother, gaunt and overworked and silent as she may be, is the center of the home. Her duties are many and varied. Besides giving birth to a large family, and attending to the household duties, she invariably cares for the chickens and milks the cow, carries the water and often splits the wood; then she is expected to be both ready and willing to give a lift in the corn field with the hoe, or to have a hand in making of molasses and saving the fodder. The father is inconsiderate, but rarely unkind to either mother or children; he retains his forefathers' love of hunting and fishing and his prowess with a gun is a never failing source of joy. In his necessary trips down the creek to the store, or to the county seat on court day, he comes in contact with fellowmen—hence broadens his field of vision and lessens the dull monotony.

In the majority of cases it is the mother who longs for better things and greater opportunities for her boys and girls than she has herself had. A prominent educator who has spent his life in the mountains says, "I have yet to see illiterate children of a literate mother; but, have found many, many cases of illiterate children of a literate father." This one truth impresses the great need of seeking out and educating the future mothers of American citizens.

Religious Life

The Mountaineers are strongly Protestant. They have inherited the beliefs of their grandsires and their



Courtesy of Prof. John T. Smith, Berea, Ky.
A ROAD IN THE MOUNTAINS
"When the creek is up, the road is riz."

isolation has kept them in the same narrow paths. The writer, during all his travels throughout the mountain regions, has never met a professed infidel. They are over-fond of arguing upon religious subjects. Sermons are usually doctrinal, especially if there be brethren of a different faith at hand with whom a controversy may be provoked. Church houses, as they are always called, are few and rarely attractive either within or without. There are whole counties without one good church building outside the county seat. Thousands of people do not hear on an average two sermons a year. The Sunday-schools are more numerous, and are usually held in the school house. They start with the beginning of good weather in the summer and suspend operations during the long winter months. They are in many cases organized by young folks of the community who have been away at school during the year and have felt the need of uplift for the ones at home. In cases where the Sunday-school lives throughout the year, the credit is almost invariably due to one of these returned young people, now the district school teacher, who has caught the vision.

Schools

The public schools are of short duration, running from four and a half to seven months a year. The school buildings are in many cases extremely poor with little equipment for teaching purposes. The attendance is irregular because the roads are bad, and because of the illiteracy and near illiteracy of many parents who are unable to realize the importance of

schooling. The illiterate voters number fully 15 per cent. of the voting population; when to this are added the illiterates and near illiterates of all others over ten years of age the figures become appalling. Education beyond the arts of reading and writing and figuring rapidly passes into the realms of luxury and is considered by some grown-ups as unnecessary and worth while only for those who aspire to become lawyers, doctors, teachers, etc. Teaching is looked upon by many people as an easy way to earn money sitting down! Schools are sought after and sometimes purchased by an agreement with the trustee to board with him or render him some special favor, even a cash price is a condition going back only a few years. The Mountaineer has been shut in by the barriers of nature to primitive conditions of two centuries ago when muscular power was man's greatest need; consequently he has not yet come into a deep realization of the value of schools and books. Bridging the gap from making a living by the sweat of the brow to the employment of scientific knowledge and skill is a leap of six generations and demands not only great educational statesmanship but patient effort and encouragement in arousing desire for intellectual things.

In those localities, scattered here and there throughout the mountain region, where mission schools and community centers have been established, the change for the better in conditions physical, mental and moral is at once apparent. Too much credit cannot be given to the value of these small but efficient centers of light in uplifting the mountaineer. By long and careful

study on the subject I am convinced that we never can bring the great mass of the people *out* to the light, but, on the other hand, we must carry the light *in*. I feel confident in saying that were a half dozen such centers of influence established in each mountain county of the seven states, the so-called "mountain problem" would be solved in a generation, and the wealth of sturdy, pure Anglo-Saxon population would be ready to take its place as one of the great assets of our nation!

Occupations

For many years farming and lumbering have been the chief occupations and means of livelihood. (The conditions of those living in the valleys or broad uplands have already been referred to.) "The mountain problem" deals with those in isolated coves and on steep hillsides, and here we find farming conditions most discouraging. Hillsides are cleared of their natural growth of timber, the ground is stirred by shallow plowing, corn is planted for the first crop, and because the grade is too steep for a horse, it must be tended by hand. When the crop is gathered the ground lies bare and unprotected, and by the return of springtime much of the top soil has been washed away by the frequent violent rains. Repetition of this program for a number of years renders the soil no longer fit to raise anything and it is then allowed to "lie out." Effort is made to raise no more than will be required to keep the family in corn meal and the cow and mule in fodder during the winter months.

Some explanation of this lack of inclination to be forehanded is necessary. The menfolk are idle much of the time, not because they are temperamentally lazy—the reason is an environmental one in which there is no economic outlook. The land is by very nature fitted to poultry and stock raising or to fruit growing. These pursuits have so far met with little favor, for why grow peaches or apples, or have eggs and butter for market, when there is no market? The stagnant conditions of the commercial life are due largely to lack of means of transportation. Ideas of progress resemble people in that they require roads over which they may travel. A few national highways running through the mountains and connecting trade centers with outlying districts would quadruple the energies and products of the whole region. The razor-back hog and the scrub cow have had their place, for they, too, like their master have been able to endure hardships and look out for part of their own board. They will pass away as roads, schools and churches come in. The day is at hand when all mission work in the mountains must take into consideration the construction of roads, connecting the work with the outside world, and what is more, it must think of them as an imperative necessity taking rank in importance with buildings. I fear too much of the pointing has been up while the great need has been for some wise person to point the way out. Leadership out as well as up is fundamental to all mission work in the mountains.

Public Works

We are hearing more and more, during the last few years, of changing conditions in the mountains owing to the development of coal and lumber camps. There is no coal in the Carolina mountains, but exceptionally rich fields extend down through Virginia, Kentucky and Tennessee. Tapping these fields railroads are rapidly creeping up the hollows into many remote districts, thus bringing in the outside world, with all its accompanying blessings and evils. Conditions in coal and lumber camps, so far as their influence on the life of the people is concerned, are very similar. On the whole the camps appear to have bettered conditions, in that there is always steady work to be had, at good wages, and many now handle money who before had very little. Many camps maintain district nurses and company doctors. There has been some difficulty in keeping the men steadily at work, the habit being to get a little money ahead and then lay off until more is needed. This tendency is due to the fact that the mountain man is an individualist, and co-operation is a principle yet to be learned. However, camps are reluctant to bring in foreign labor where it can be at all avoided. One amusing incident is told of a company being unable to induce the natives to do the necessary grading for the railroad, but when Negroes were imported for the labor, they made much complaint, and threatened to run them off.

One authority says, "The spirit and life of the miner is better than it was fifteen years ago; they send their children to day school and Sunday-school better, they

live in better houses, they respond more readily to appeals for better roads, better schools and improved conditions generally."

In this brief study of the Mountaineer and his present condition, an effort has been made to state facts simply and clearly but without a spirit of pessimism. Hard and trying as life in many of its aspects is, it is not hopeless. The very fact that these sturdy folk respond slowly to changing conditions, but nevertheless surely and steadily, but makes the task the more worth while. Nowhere else in our country can be found such a group of native American stock with a more perfect sense of loyalty and devotion to our nation. These men of the mountains will acquit themselves on the battlefields of Europe second to none. They know neither the word cowardice nor fear of hardships. The great mountain people are the nation's richest undeveloped asset and destined to take their rightful place at no far distant time.

IN MILLS

ALEXANDER JEFFREY McKELWAY

Southern Factory Workers

Because of its kindly climate, abundant rainfall and for the most part productive soil, the South has always been an agricultural rather than a manufacturing section of the country. The comparatively few manufacturing enterprises established before 1861 shared the general ruin wrought by the Civil War, and industry did not begin to revive until the eighties. During the last three decades, there has been a tremendous advance in manufactures of various kinds, especially where the cheapness of fuel as in Alabama, Tennessee, Kentucky, and Virginia, or the harnessing of waterpower as in Georgia and the Carolinas, has encouraged the establishment of factories and workshops.

Along the Piedmont edge of the cotton-belt, the prevailing industry for the last thirty years has been the cotton mill. Beginning with Danville, Virginia, the cotton manufacturing region of the South stretches in a wide curve, with its convex side turned toward the coastal plain, to the western borders of Alabama. Mississippi, Louisiana, Arkansas and Texas have comparatively few cotton mills. In Alabama, the cotton-mill industry competes with the steel and iron industry for first place. In Tennessee both woolen and cotton mills are important. In North Carolina it is the prevailing

industry, though the manufacture of woodenware and furniture has a center at Thomasville, and there are large tobacco factories at Winston-Salem and at Durham. In Virginia the manufacture of tobacco is a more important industry than cotton manufacture, but in Georgia cotton manufacturing is the commanding industry of the state, and in South Carolina is almost the sole industrial enterprise. South Carolina stands next to Massachusetts in the number of spindles, and North Carolina has more cotton mills, though of smaller size than either of the states just mentioned. The nearness of the supply of the raw material, access to coal fields, abundance of waterpower and above all cheap labor, made it inevitable that the characteristic and commanding industry of this section of the South should be the manufacture of cotton. Yet it is a pity that an industry that has always, in England, New England, and the region around Philadelphia been cursed with low wages and the wholesale employment of women and children should have been given such a place of importance in the New South. The cotton industry cannot thrive in a high-wage state unless the ranks of the workers are constantly recruited, as in Massachusetts and New England, generally from an immigrant population that has not attained to the American standard of living.

Sources of Labor

The cotton mill operatives of the South are almost exclusively of native American stock. In North Carolina, the census shows that less than one-tenth of



WORKER IN MODERN COTTON MILL

Louis Hines, Photographer

one per cent. are of foreign birth or parentage. During the long period of agricultural depression following low prices for corn, cotton, and tobacco, it was an easy matter to persuade the tenant farmers, with no immediate prospect of bettering their condition on the farms, to move to the cotton mill where, unfortunately, the husband and father found little work that was possible for him, but where the labor of his children and his womankind was in demand. The labor supply was drawn in part from the mountain region of the Carolinas, Georgia and Tennessee, it being roughly estimated that about one-fourth of the labor supply came from the mountains: mainly from the Piedmont region, where most of the mills were located, and from the coastal plain, into which the mills have also penetrated, though not in such numbers as exist in the Piedmont. The racial stock in the mountain regions is English, with an admixture of Scotch-Irish. In the Piedmont section Scotch-Irish, with a good proportion of English and German stock, German colonies having settled this region before the Revolution. In the Cape Fear section of North Carolina, the Highland Scotch form the chief supply of cotton mill labor, and in the cotton mills of the coastal plain the English stock predominates.

The people on the tenant farms, or from farms of their own in mountain coves and the sandy region of the coastal plain, had small opportunities for education on account of the short school terms and the use of the children on the farms; The churches, though numerous, were generally occupied once or twice a

month, the majority of the people, except in the Scotch and Scotch-Irish regions where they are Presbyterians, being members of the Methodist and Baptist Churches. When they came to the cotton mills, school buildings were in most cases accessible, but the demand for the labor of the children left the schools stripped of children over ten or twelve years of age, the age depending upon the standards of the state child labor law of the period and its enforcement. Until very recently, children of ten years of age could be employed by law in South Carolina and Georgia, and there was little enforcement of the law which established a twelve-year age-limit. In North Carolina the statutes still permit the employment of children of twelve years and there is practically no enforcement of the law. In addition to the employment of children at an early age, there was the long working day to be considered, at first with no restriction of hours, then with the establishment of a sixty-six hour week, which meant a twelve-hour day for the first five working days of the week, with a half-holiday on Saturday; now with the sixty-hour week for children under sixteen, which means an eleven-hour day. For many years, night work, even for children, added its horrors to the situation, both physically and morally, North Carolina being the worst sinner in this regard. Now night work for children under sixteen is pretty generally prohibited by law, though sometimes with poor enforcement of the law.

Missions and Cotton Mills

Mission churches have been established in cotton mill villages, yet few of these churches are self-sustaining or have regular services every Sunday. Sunday schools are more generally sustained. But the moving habit of cotton mill employes, constantly striving to benefit their condition at the next mill, has militated against the permanence of church membership and support. Nor have the churches shown any steady or continuous zeal for the religious needs of the factory workers, mill churches having been more of a liability than an asset from the point of view of financial support. It can be readily imagined, also, that after a sixty-six or sixty-hour week of work, after night work in many mills continuing until Saturday, midnight, there was little encouragement for either adults or children to attend church and Sunday School on Sunday. With old church relations that had been established in the country ceasing, with those re-established in the mill villages frequently discontinued through the removal of families from one mill to another, the church-going habit, so characteristic of the Southern people, was largely broken.

Corporation and Betterment Work

In recent years, the larger and more prosperous cotton mills, denominated by the South Carolina Commissioner of Labor, "show mills," have become interested in alleviating the monotonous condition of factory employes by the establishment of numerous kinds of betterment work, paid for, of course, by the

employes themselves, through the large dividends their labor allows the mill-owners to accumulate. In some mills hospitals have been established, Y. M. C. A. halls erected and their work encouraged, playgrounds maintained for the children, in a few instances swimming pools supplied, schools of longer terms with better buildings and better paid teachers supported in part from mill funds, and more regular church services supplied through the payment of a part of the preachers' salaries by the corporation. But at the same time, the very mill owners who thus advertised their benevolence have been in many cases the influential part of the cotton mill lobby that at the state capital has resisted any legislation looking to the abolition of child labor or the shortening of the hours of labor even for the mothers of the race or for their children.

Federal Child Labor Bill

It was partly because of the child labor conditions of many of the Southern states, though the child labor evil is a national one and no part of the country has been wholly free from it, that the Congress of the United States at last took up the problem of child labor as one of national concern, and in the summer of 1916 passed the Federal Child Labor bill, which President Wilson approved on September 1 of that year. The new Act, however, did not go into effect until September 1, 1917, and on the last of August, an injunction against the enforcement of the act was sought, on the nominal petition of a father of cotton

mill children, who claimed that he was entitled to their wages until they were twenty-one years of age, but really on the motion of the Southern Cotton Manufacturers, who employed an imposing array of counsel to argue that the Child Labor Act was unconstitutional. Judge James E. Boyd, Federal judge of the Western District of North Carolina, agreed with the contention of these attorneys and granted the injunction against the enforcement of the Federal law within the jurisdiction of his court. That has not interfered with its enforcement elsewhere in the United States, however, and Congress provided a fund of \$150,000 to enforce it. The duty of administering the law and inspecting the factories and workshops was assigned to the Child Labor Division of the Children's Bureau, Miss Grace Abbott, formerly of Chicago, being the efficient chief of that division. The Department of Justice has appealed the injunction case to the Supreme Court of the United States and the friends of the children throughout the nation hope and pray that that great Court will see its way clear to sustain the constitutionality of an Act that means so much for the welfare of the children and their protection from the consequences of child labor.

The Federal Child Labor Act provides, in brief, that the products of no mine or quarry in which children under sixteen years of age are employed, shall be shipped in inter-state or foreign commerce, and that the products of no factory, cannery or work-shop shall be shipped in inter-state or foreign commerce, if such establishments employ children under fourteen years

of age at all, or children under sixteen are employed more than eight hours a day, or more than six days a week, or at night. The effect of the law has already become manifest in the dismissal from employment of thousands of children. For it is a well-known fact that Federal laws, enforced by Federal courts, are much more effective as a terror to evil-doers than state laws, whose enforcement too often rests with courts and juries of the vicinage which may be inclined to tolerate the very evils they are sworn to correct.

The existence of the Federal law has also proved influential in inducing the legislatures of several states, with the acquiescence if not the active support of the manufacturers, to bring their state legislation on child labor up to the Federal standards, as manufacturers doing business in low standard states would naturally be the objects of the special vigilance of Federal inspectors. It is not too much to say that President Wilson signed a second Emancipation Proclamation on September 1, 1916.

The Challenge to Home Missions

The practical abolition of child labor in its worst form which will inevitably result from the adequate enforcement of the Federal law, and the new state laws, will give a splendid opportunity to ministers and home mission workers for doing a long neglected work among a population rich in possibilities of service to both church and state. One of the first effects will be an advance in wages. The textile industry generally has been a low-wage industry because it has

involved a system of family labor, in which the women and children of the household have all contributed their toil for the family support. It is a well understood economic law that child labor reduces the wage scale, and that the restriction of child labor, and more certainly its abolition, raises wages for the adult worker. When the child can compete with its father in the labor market, in industry requiring in most of its operations so little skill and experience that the labor of the child is as valuable as the labor of the adult, the wage scale is measured by the child standard. What are high wages for a child are low wages for the head of a household on which to support his family with the mother the home-maker and the children at school. When all the members of a family able to work are employed, the sum of wages will support the family, and higher wages for the individual worker, not being necessary, will not be paid. The establishment of the eight-hour day also tends to the raising of the wage scale through the increased demand for workers. The opportunity for the education of the children is an equal opportunity for religious instruction, for religion does not thrive where illiteracy prevails, and "ignorance is not a remedy for anything." With more comfortable living conditions, through a better wage scale, with greater leisure through the prevalence of shorter hours, there is larger opportunity for the minister and the mission worker to gain the attention and interest of the people in the things of the spirit. The mill churches will tend more and more to self-support and the people will feel that the

churches supported by themselves belong to them. The old complaint of the mill-workers against the mill-owner, "We work in his mill, we send our children to his school, we go to his church, we are sent to his hospital, we live in his houses and we are buried in his grave-yard," will be forgotten. For one of the worst things about the estate of the Southern mill-workers is the existence of a belated, though sometimes benevolent feudalism, which has effectually prevented the growth of democracy and the establishment of democratic institutions.

Lack of Organization

The organization of the factory workers in the cotton mills into labor unions has been generally impossible, on account of the opposition of the factory owners; and the helplessness of the individual in dealing with the officials of a corporation has been rendered worse by the lack of education, of which child labor has deprived a whole generation of cotton-mill-workers, and by the ownership of the mill villages with all that they contain by the employers and not by the employes. There is nothing more likely to develop the independence of the mill workers than a better wage scale and better living conditions. Hitherto, his freedom of choice in many essential things has been the liberty of exchanging one feudal lord for another, by moving to another mill village.

When the prohibition movement began to make headway in the South, one of the first restrictions of the liquor traffic was that made for rural regions and

unincorporated towns. With this step gained, the incorporation of towns and villages was actually discouraged, lest the saloon should be permitted entrance by a vote of the people concerned. But now, with the Southern states so largely prohibition territory and with national prohibition on the way, the reason for this anomalous condition of affairs in the South no longer exists. Ministers, teachers and mission workers can do no more valuable service to factory communities than by starting movements for the incorporation of factory villages. As the case stands now in the typical cotton mill town of the South, the people have absolutely no voice in their own local government. They vote on state and national issues and have frequently displayed a notable degree of independence of the expressed wishes of their employers in casting their votes. But local self-government for them does not exist. Yet they come of a self-governing race and they are sending their sons now to the battlefields of Europe to help in making the world safe for democracy. What a travesty it is that these returning soldiers of America, when they resume their old life in the cotton factories of the South, should have no voice in the election of the town or school officials, local authority, wherever it exists, being wholly in the hands of their employers. For illustration, a minister who was once employed by the writer as a child labor investigator, was forbidden access to the school building, was forbidden to sleep in the village hotel and was practically ordered off the premises as a trespasser, on the ground that the village and all

that it contained was mill property. The owner of another factory town is called the "King" of the village and rather boasts of an incident that has been published more than once, of the visit of a so-called "labor agitator" to the community, and of the order which the King issued and was duly obeyed, that the visitor should be put on the next train leaving town and threateningly invited not to return. With the incorporation of mill villages, the people will have the privilege of electing their own Mayor or Commissioners, of adopting directly or indirectly their own ordinances, of appointing their own school boards, and of paying for their schools through just and equitable taxes, poll taxes and property taxes, which will furnish more ample funds for school purposes under a system of local district taxation, than have ever been provided even by the most liberal mill management through benevolent contributions.

Misnomers

There has been a great deal of nonsense spoken and written about the "poor white trash" of the South. The phrase was originally given by the negro slaves to the whites of the overseer or tenant class who were unable to own slaves themselves. There is no "poor white" class in the South that is distinct from the poor of any other section. There are "poor whites" in remote regions of New York State that have remained poor for generations, and the same conditions have obtained throughout the more inaccessible mountain regions of the Appalachian system from Pennsylvania

to Alabama. There are also other districts in the South, where, because of the poverty of the soil, the natives have remained in comparative poverty, and are locally styled, "hill-billies," "sand-hillers," or "crackers," the latter designation coming from the primitive methods of pounding corn in a mortar to make hominy or coarse meal. But there is no fixed "poor white" class in the South. The tenant class on the farms and the cotton mill employees, are comparatively poor, because of hard conditions of existence and the absence of education which tends to the perpetuation of ignorance and poverty into the next generation. But in general it may be said that the "poor whites" of the South are a class of people which in the mass is constantly rising into a better condition, from which a large proportion are constantly emerging into affluence and influence, and into which are constantly sinking those who have failed in the battle of life, who drag their children down with them. But this is true of those whom we call "the poor" everywhere. There is no more fertile field in the country today for religious, educational, social and civil agencies than the neglected mill villages of the South.

The Opportunity

The Church should approach the problem of reaching and training and evangelizing the mill population of the South not from the viewpoint of their miserable condition which should appeal to the sentiment of pity, but from the knowledge that here are a people of native American stock, who have resisted immor-

ality in family relations, who are naturally religious, and who only need opportunity to respond quickly to the stimulus which the training of the church and the school can give. The writer has been a teacher in a mill school, a pastor of a church with mission churches for factory villages, the superintendent of the home mission work of his church in a manufacturing state of the South, and for the past thirteen years one of the Secretaries of the National Child Labor Committee, whose first mission was the abolition of child labor, but which is now beginning its constructive task in the encouragement of education for the children of all the people. It is now advocating the extension of Federal aid to primary education for the wiping out of the remaining illiteracy of the nation and for the Americanization of the foreign population. He can testify to the brightness and willingness to learn of the younger generation and to the sobriety, decency, and self-respect of the greater part of the older members of factory communities. The coming generation has been saved from the menace of racial degeneracy and the lowering of all the standards of life, through the abolition of the child labor evil. And now for the Church of Christ the fields are white for the harvest of souls.