

# The Watchman and Southron

SUMTER, S. C., WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 2, 1901.

## SOUTH CAROLINA'S GREATEST COTTON MILL.

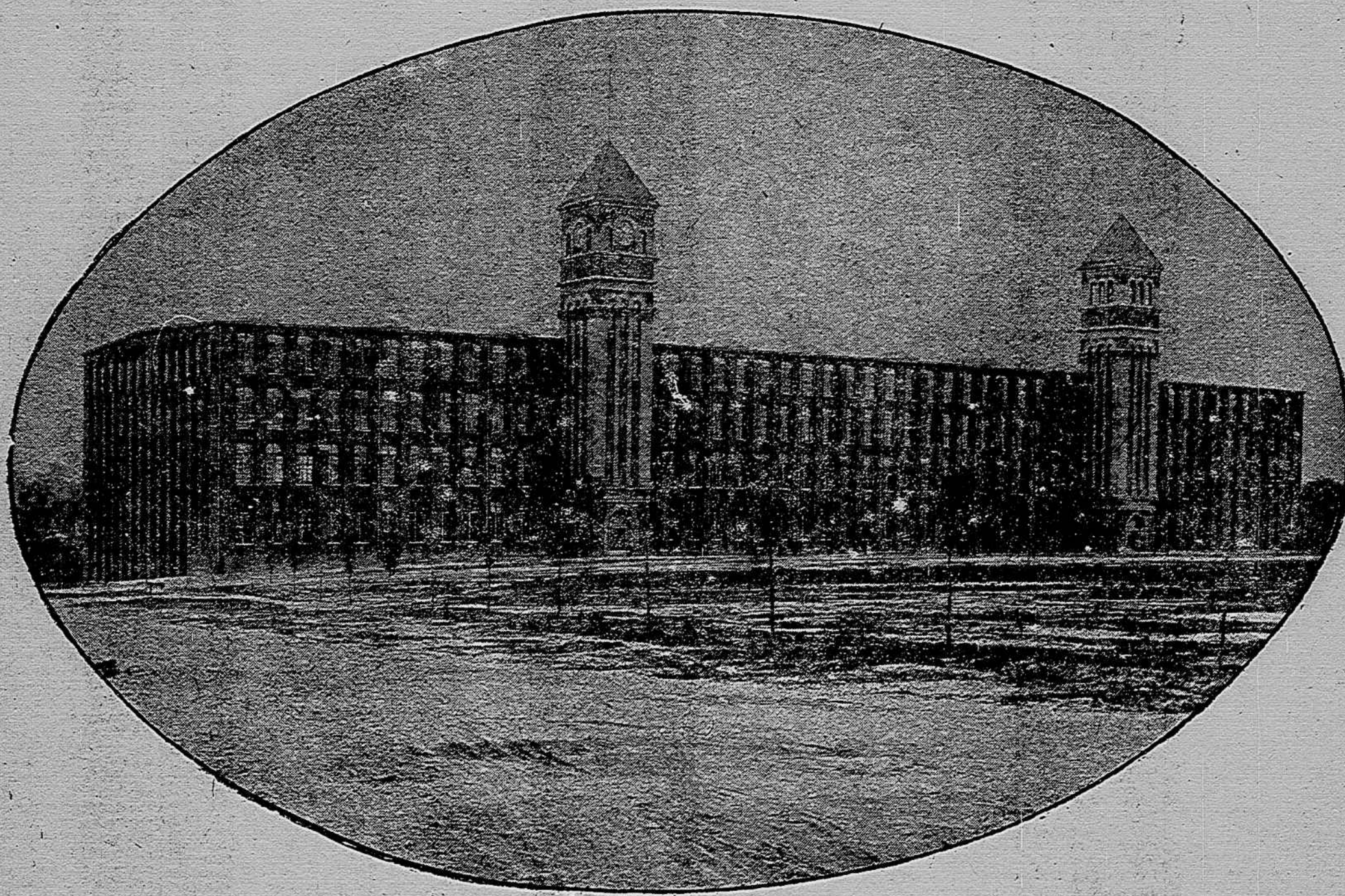
### THE OLYMPIA MILL

The Largest Cotton Factory Under One Roof.

More than a Million Dollars Invested in a Great Enterprise—One Plant Operating More than 100,000 Spindles—The Opportunities Offered Unskilled and Untrained Help.

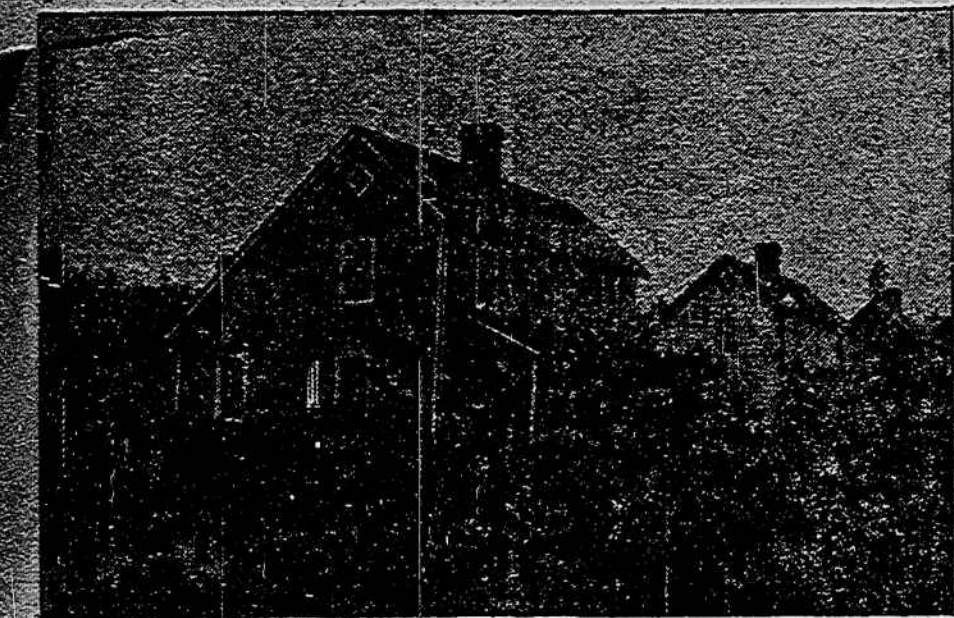
Most Modern and Up-to-Date Mill Plant in the Country.

Every Convenience and Comfort Offered Mill Help—A Happy and Contented Family.



THE OLYMPIA COTTON MILL, COLUMBIA, S. C.

The climax of cotton mill development in this State for the century just closed was reached in the Olympia Cotton Mill. It stands out conspicuously as the highest type of mill construction in this country, and is pronounced by competent mill people to be the most complete, up-to-date and promising cotton manufacturing plant in the country. It represents the type of Whaley mills, all of which are successful. It is without doubt the largest cotton mill under a single roof in the entire Southern States, and competent judges pronounce that it is the most complete mill plant in this country, and no nation is ahead of this country in the cotton mill business. People hear and know that the Olympia Mill is the largest in the South, but they may not know, nor do they think, of what combinations go to make this magnificent structure what it is. Think of a single cotton mill consuming 3,000 bales of cotton. It will employ, when all machinery is installed and in operation, more than 1,200 able-bodied operatives.



AN AVENUE OF OPERATIVES' HOMES.

It has the most modern and improved machinery and, with the new and up-to-date machinery, operatives can readily earn more than they would in old plants with antiquated equipment. It has the best class and most up-to-date homes for its operatives. It is on the direct line of the Columbia Electric Street Railway, and within a few minutes' ride of the heart of the city. It is near enough to the city to give all the advantages and pleasures of the city of Columbia. It will build a \$20,000 school building for the children of its operatives and support the school of its own accord and out of its own funds. It offers the best school and church opportunities to its help. It is a mill operated, owned and managed by South Carolinians, who have the same sentiments, purposes and feelings as those who do the work. It has lavished money in installing the most thorough sanitary arrangements in the mill and its village. It employs a mill physician, whose services are at the call of employees without cost. The wages are full and the piece work as all other classes permit better incomes than usual because of the improved facilities and new machinery.

The plant is operated throughout with electricity. The expectation is to soon offer electric lights to all of the operatives for their homes. The pictures indicate the neat and attractive homes that are provided for the help.

#### ABOUT THE MILL BUILDING.

Something of the giant mill itself: The mill building of the Olympia Mill is 533 feet 2 inches long and 151 feet 2 inches wide, and contains four floors and a basement, each story being 18 feet high. There are two towers about 24 by 22 feet and 133 feet 6 inches high, containing the stairways and the tanks for the sprinkler system.

Adjoining the rear wall of the mill at the middle is a machine shop and in the rear of this is the engine and boiler rooms. The engine room being 120 by 50 feet, and the boiler house 140 by 40 feet in plan. In the rear of the latter is the building for the mechanical draft plant. The first floor of the building is devoted to opening bales and weaving; the second floor to weaving, slashing, spooling and warping; the third to carding, drawing and lapping, and the

The generating plant consists of three McIntosh & Seymour engines, each of a normal rating of 1,600-horse power, capable of developing a maximum of 2,000-horse power, directly connected to alternating-current generators.

The engines are of the vertical cross-compound condensing type, with cylinders 20 and 48 inches in diameter, and a stroke of 42 inches. The cylinders are steam-jacketed, and a reheating receiver is placed between them.

#### PLENTY OF PURE WATER.

The water supply for the mill comes from a spring-fed reservoir of some 800,000 gallons capacity, which also supplies the mill village with its drinking water.

The mill is heated by two 14-foot electrically driven Sturtevant fans, blowing air through horizontal ducts along the front and rear walls of the mill, as shown in the half plan and section of the mill building.

The mill architecture is imposing and the structure is beautiful. Considerable money was expended in beautifying the building and every possible convenience is provided in and around the mill. The closets and wash rooms are finished in marble and mosaics, and elevators are at hand for the operatives. A 5,000-pound Schane bell is in one of the towers and with beautiful tone strikes the hours, and in the second tower there is a standard time clock.

The officers of the mill company are: President, W. B. Smith Whaley. Vice president, W. A. Clark. General manager, J. S. Moore. Secretary and treasurer, W. H. Rose. Superintendent, F. S. Barnes.

#### A SUBJECT OF PRIDE.

The mill was constructed on the plans of W. B. Smith Whaley & Co, the most successful mill engineers in the South. This firm has left its deep imprint on the industrial development of the South, and especially in South Carolina. In a recent article it was stated that: "The record of the firm is that of 533,676 spindles, 14,560 looms and \$8,500,000 capital in a working period of seven years, unapproached by any mill engineering firm in the South, and should be a subject of pride to South Carolina and to Columbia, as well as to the members of the firm."

When we consider that in 1880 the entire State of South Carolina contained only 26 cotton mills, with 181,743 spindles, 13,418 looms and \$4,084,000 capital, against this aggregate for one young South Carolina firm of 533,676 spindles, 14,560 looms and

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By using electricity the cost of the mill buildings was reduced by 10 per cent on account of the absence of heavy transverse walls through the mill, necessary for the head shafts at the beltway, with the belt and shafting system. Sixty-one per cent of the shafting cost was saved by the use of electricity. Three-inch shafting is the largest in the building. Sixty-six per cent of the cost of the belts and ropes was saved with the electrical system. The saving due to these three items was sufficient, it is said, to more than pay for the cost of the electrical equipment of the mill. Part of the electrical generating plant is used to light the town and also to run a street railway. The maximum power required by the mill is about 3,600-horse power.

\$8,500,000 capital, the extent of its constructive achievements may be better realized.

#### THE GENIUS OF W. B. SMITH WHALEY.

In Columbia alone it has planted 197,000 spindles and 4,840 looms, or more than the whole State had twenty years ago, and the capital employed in these mills—\$3,100,000—is only less than that required for the smaller number of looms and spindles in 1880, because of the greater economy possible now in building the best mills.

It is proper to add that Mr Whaley is the president of all but the smallest of these four Columbia mills which he has planned, and which, with 191,000 spindles, 4,620 looms and \$3,000,000 capital, represents the largest cotton manufacturing investment in the South and one of the largest in the United States.

An example of his far-sightedness and quick business perception may be noted in connection with the electrical installation of the Olympia Mills. As soon as the electrical transmission of power had been definitely determined upon for that mill and its location determined, he at once purchased the existing electric car lines of the city, also the electrical lighting business, and will furnish the power and current from the Olympia; also provide electricity for the other mills. The resultant economies will not only be factors in the net earnings of the railway and lighting systems, but will also add an appreciable net income to credit of the mill.

#### OLYMPIA'S GREATNESS ACKNOWLEDGED.

Last April, when the great Olympia Mill was started up, it was examined by a number of the leading cotton mill officers in the country, men who lead in the cotton industrial movement. One of these was Capt Manning, of the Amoskeag Company, who said: "The Olympia was the finest structure of the sort he had ever seen. He was glad the Olympia was not a competitor of the Amoskeag Company."

Mr Richardson, of Massachusetts, said that the Olympia Mill was, in his opinion, the finest cotton mill in the world—the finest in architecture and equipment—and he said this with a full realization of what he was saying, as he was connected with New England mills.

Not long ago Mr H. E. C. Bryant made a trip through the mill territory and made disinterested and impartial inquiries and wrote a series of articles on the result of his inquiries in the various mills in this State and North Carolina,



ONE OF THE OLYMPIA HOMES.

and here is an interesting summary in one of his letters:

"In passing through a mill settlement some weeks ago I stopped at the home of a middle-aged man who had five children working in the mill. He lives in a six-room, two-story house. I met him some distance from his house; I said: 'I want to see how you people live. I would like to go in some home where several children live.' He started in a jiffy and said as he walked: 'Come and go in my house. I have five children, but they are in the mill.' Entering the house from the rear we went through the dining room into a bedroom, and then into the parlor. The old gentleman was proud of the parlor. He threw back the window curtains and pointed to the large pictures on the wall. They were paintings from photographs of his children. The floor of the room was carpeted and in one corner was an organ. From kitchen to garret the house was clean. When mine host had seen me to the door he said: 'I farmed on rented land before I came here, but I could not feed my family there now. I like the life here. I like my employers. They treat us well if we behave in like manner toward them. If we misbehave they turn us out and get others in our stead. When I moved here the superintendent warned me against drinking. He said that he would have none but sober help. He meant what he said, for I have not seen a drunken man on the hill since I came here two years ago. My children are in good health and seem satisfied. We are all contented. All of us belong to the Church and attend regularly.'

"I went from house to house and heard the same story. Indeed, there is no problem at the best mills between capital and labor, for the mill owners and operatives dwell in harmony.

The various religious denominations in the mill sections are doing a great deal for the factory element in the South. Preachers call on the operatives and their families at their homes. Churches are built and preaching and Sunday-school conducted at nearly every mill. Within the last five years in the South much has been done for the betterment of the condition of the cotton mill help. The work is still going on.

"No one who knows the facts, as any one can learn by going to the mills, can doubt that the people who work in the cotton mills of the South are far better off in every way than ever before.

"Such are the conditions in all the Carolina mills."

Mr E. G. Dunnell, an experienced news-

paper man on the editorial staff of the New York Times, visited the South and made a careful study of the mill situation, and in one of his letters recently to his paper this New York writer had this to say, among other things:

"While the owners and stockholders are making money they are conferring permanent blessings upon the people. As in other towns where new mills have demanded increasing numbers of operatives shops have started to supply the needs of operatives or those who were employed in new industries called forth because of the coming of a laboring population. Stores have been obliged to carry large and more varied stocks. There is more travelling by rail. It is a matter of daily occurrence that among the passengers who overcrowd the trains of the Southern Railway there are inquirers arriving at various points to look over the land with the view of settling, either as persons already concerned in cotton manufacturing or hoping to be, or tradesmen seeking a new market.

"The country is beautiful. It is charming to the eye; it is naturally healthful, and in the towns will be more healthful with a little criticism and sanitation. The summers are long and the winters brief and unusually mild.

"There is no healthier community than that at the Olympia Mill. The company has an exceptional sewerage and drainage system; all garbage is carried away by the garbage carts owned by the mill. The company has employed a competent, well-known physician, whose business and



HOME OFFERED OLYMPIA'S HELP.

"But it is not alone in the coming of the trolley, the expansion of the shops, the paving of streets in towns, the sanitation of all places of large population, the sensation of earning money with a regularity and certainty never before enjoyed in the section, that occasion for rejoicing is found in South Carolina. Attention is directed by a thoughtful and observant citizen to a sociological phase of the industrial development that is most satisfactory, and that it seems a pity could not be extended in some way to the State of Kentucky.

"When Columbia began to build mills, and the operation of the mills had made a perceptible drain upon the most convenient and willing class of the population that was fitted to work in the mills, that drain was felt a little at points more or less remote from Columbia. Men and women who had yearned for opportunity to get money without digging or hoeing for it, moved from the foothills into town, first into places vacated by the people who moved earliest, and afterward, as the mills began to rise nearer to the hills, into the manufacturing centers elsewhere.

#### EFFECT OF PROSPERITY.

"Most of these people were of the real hardy mountaineer sort, with the same soft, deliberate courteous address that is characteristic of all the mountaineers in the Virginias, the Carolinas, Tennessee or Kentucky. They brought with them sturdiness of frame, simple appetites and ignorance of letters. But they were not all alike, and they were not all alike together at fault for that. They had not been treated as wards of the State. There was a moving down from the mountain districts into a region where there were schools and stores and churches of a proud but earnest and ambitious multi-

tude that had gotten along without these things simply because all their neighbors had done likewise for years. But the pride that had been satisfied in the mountains and back country made them ambitious to keep up with the order of things in the region to which they had migrated. The children must be clothed like other children; the wife must not be compelled to live in a sun bonnet.

**SCHOOLS FOR ALL.**  
"The public schools were at once patronized by children who might have developed like their parents if it had not been for the building of new cotton mills. New needs demanded money to gratify them. The sun of civilization was rising.

"In many respects this is the very best result of the industrial awakening in South Carolina. The mill towns are bound to become centres of intelligence, taste, developing appetite for necessary and luxurious surroundings, and, with the passing of years and the accumulation of means, groups of the owned homes of thousands who came to the towns, farmers and laborers, and have been by industry and thrift converted into law-abiding, temperate, independent and self-respecting Americans."

All that Mr Dunnell has to say is correct, but more so here, as the mill owners realize that the best help is that which is best paid and given the greatest of home comforts, and that is the purpose of the Olympia's management.

**WORK ALL THE YEAR ROUND.**  
Operatives in the South can and do work all the year round if they wish to, and it is not because of the New England States, that the cold weather interferes with work for several months in each year.

#### THE BEST OF OFFICERS.

The Olympia Cotton Mill has collected all the best things that are to be had. It has the finest mill building, the finest machinery, the latest looms, spindles and other machinery, but the policy of the mill has been and is to put the most experienced men at the head of the various departments. President W. B. Smith Whaley knows the mill business from the ground floor up. He worked his way from the bottom to the top, most rung of the ladder, and so General Manager J. S. Moore has been brought up in the mill business, and knows its every detail, and so on down the line, and that is why its management is anxious to secure unskilled help and train the workers with the skilled and competent help now needed. It is a matter of but a short time, a very short time before the new help can, and does earn as well as any in the mills. At Olympia there will be room for all.

#### THE BEST PEOPLE AT WORK.

There are to-day thousands of the best people in South Carolina who are working in the mills, and who are delighted that they change. Families who had been mere idlers and eked out an existence are to-day living comfortably in mill communities; their children have the best of school facilities; they have the best of church opportunities; and when pay-day comes around they and their working family receive their pay and can and do put aside money. Families who worked under the lien system and were constantly in debt, and that debt growing month by month and year by year, finally abandoned farming and the debt basis, and went into the mills with their grown children, and soon enjoyed comfortable and regular incomes.

It is the constant aim of such corporations as the Olympia to have competent and happy help, and to have a healthy and satisfied community, and to that end everything possible has been, and is being, done for the health and pleasure of the operatives.

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HOME OFFERED OLYMPIA'S HELP.

pleasure it is to attend to every medical want of the operatives at the expense of the mill company.

The management is desirous of having the very best class of operatives to live in their village and to work in the mill. As the mills are just starting up this enormous plant, the company will require several hundred families to give it the full number of operatives. The mill, therefore, is offering to receive "green" help and to teach them to work in the factory.

Anyone desiring to investigate with a view of accepting this offer, can get all the information, such as regards to wages of the different kinds of work, etc., by writing to the superintendent of the Olympia Mills, or any of the mill officials, at Columbia, S. C. Columbia offers a great many advantages to people moving into the city. Its fine churches and fine schools give to those persons living in Columbia advantages not possessed by a good many other localities. The mills are all located on the street car line, making them very accessible to any part of the city. A good many families in the past have moved in from their farms to work in the factories here. They seem to be perfectly satisfied and in many instances have bettered their condition considerably. The mill officials will be glad to communicate with any parties desiring to come to the mills for the purpose of working in them, and are satisfied that the opportunities are such as to satisfy them. The story of the Olympia Cotton Mill is one of intense interest to every Carolinian, and when one thinks it will be realized how very intimately the cotton mills of the State are associated with the industrial development of the State.