

LIFE IN A LARGE MANUFACTURING PLANT

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Life in a Large Manufacturing Plant by Charles M. Ripley

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CHARLES M. RIPLEY

**LIFE IN A LARGE
MANUFACTURING
PLANT**

LIFE
IN A LARGE
MANUFACTURING PLANT

By
CHARLES M. RIPLEY
Author of
"Romance of a Great Factory"



With Introduction by
E. W. RICE, Jr.
President of General Electric Company

GENERAL ELECTRIC COMPANY
PUBLICATION BUREAU
SCHENECTADY, N. Y., 1919

BUSINESS IS BUSINESS

*"Business is business," but men are men,
Loving and working, dreaming,
Toiling with pencil or spade or pen,
Roistering, planning, scheming.*

*"Business is business," but he's a fool
Whose business has grown to smother
His faith in men and the golden rule,
His love for a friend and brother.*

*"Business is business," but life is life;
Though we're all in the game to win it,
Let's rest sometime from the heat and strife
And try to be friends for a minute.*

*Let's seek to be comrades now and then,
And slip from our golden tether;*

*"Business is business," but men are men,
And we're all good pals together!*

BERTON BRALEY.

Through Courtesy of George H. Doran Co.

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TO VIEW
AIRBORNE



SCHENECTADY WORKS OF GENERAL ELECTRIC COMPANY

INTRODUCTION

By E. W. RICE, Jr.

President of General Electric Company

THE series of articles brought together in this book were first prepared by the author for the GENERAL ELECTRIC REVIEW and appeared, during the year 1917, in that journal. They were so full of matters of human interest that they were widely copied by magazines and papers throughout this country and in many foreign lands. The demand for copies became so great that it was considered desirable to reprint the entire series in the more compact and permanent form of this modest volume.

The title of the book is most expressive, as it strikes the key-note of the author's message. The fitness of the word "Life" is evident, when one realizes that, after deducting Sundays, holidays and hours spent in sleep, about one half of what remains for those engaged in industry is spent in the workshop. As labor occupies so large a portion of the time, happiness and success are largely dependent upon their work and their attitude towards it. Health, education, and mental and spiritual development are all strongly influenced, for good or ill, by our environment, and conditions which make for moral, physical and mental betterment are bound to add to the zest of our interest and enjoyment in our work and in our play alike.

The various activities described in this book have not sprung into existence at one time, but have grown in a natural manner to meet the conditions of a changing and expanding enterprise. None of them are perfect, none of them are finished, but have been and will continue to be subject to growth, change and adaptation, with changing times and circumstances.

As the writer of this introduction has been associated with this enterprise since its beginning, and has seen the start and growth of all the activities described, he was urged to say something about them.

We always like to know the reason why anything is done. This question is often asked concerning the activities described in this book: "What is the motive; what was the spirit which actuated the management?" Whatever it was, it was not philanthropy or paternalism!

It did not require much intelligence to realize that workers in industry were more important than tools or buildings. It was natural, therefore, to do everything possible to increase their value by improving