

MANUFACTURE R

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649230433

Manufacturer by Frederic Lee

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FREDERIC LEE

**MANUFACTURE
R**

MANUFACTURER

by

FREDERIC LEE

HUTCHINSON & CO.

(Publishers) Ltd.

LONDON

TO
MY FATHER

'And of every true Knight in the Chivalric ages, the first thing history tells you is, that he never kept treasure for himself.'

RUSKIN.

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INTRODUCTION

EXCESSIVE modesty is quite as depressing as too much self-esteem. Though I do not wish to embarrass the reader by an attitude of humility that suggests an exhibition of the art of angling, I must in all honesty affirm that no critic can be more conscious of the faults of this book than its author. It is, however, my first-born, and though deformed I have the parents' illogical belief in the possibility of its usefulness.

I can imagine the professional writer saying: 'This man has no qualifications for Authorship, his work is faulty and his thoughts confused.' 'He would be far better employed minding his own business.' It may be so, but should we not lose something of value if we refused to listen to those who were unable to claim expert knowledge of the subjects under general discussion?

The intelligent workman has often something to say that is interesting and instructive. There is a freshness in the point of view gained from long contact with the realities of life.

In this little island millions of Englishmen live side by side with every facility for social contact, and yet, how little we know of each other's lives. As you pass through the ever-growing built-up areas have you not wondered how and where people who inhabit them earn their livings?

One of the undesirable and perhaps dangerous results of this modern development is this tendency to shut up the various classes of society in watertight compartments.

With the decay of village life in which all classes met frequently and naturally, we have lost a valuable means of

social contact. The modern system of housing which segregates the professional and working classes is wholly bad and anti-social.

This development has accelerated alarmingly since Disraeli wrote: 'We want to put an end to that political and social exclusiveness which we believe to be the bane of this country. It is not so much to the action of laws as to the influence of manners that we must look—but how are manners to influence men if they are divided into classes—if the population of a country becomes a body of sections, a group of hostile garrisons?'

It seems that as the theory of democracy becomes more generally accepted and understood in this country, its practice is becoming more difficult.

The object of this book is to bridge the widening gap between the different groups of our people by presenting a picture of one at least of the types that play a part in our social structure. I have tried to draw as faithfully as I can a picture of a normal manufacturer. I have attempted to present in a simple form the difficulties, hopes, and possible compensations that go to make up such a life. I have dwelt on the human side of the picture because there is more than enough already written about the science of production.

It seems to me that the success of democratic government depends on the understanding that exists between the various classes that make up the nation as a whole.

Sympathy and friendliness generally come with a knowledge of the other fellow's life and difficulties.

There is something too artificial and un-English in the Statutory familiarity which expresses itself in addressing one another as Comrade. When we really are comrades there is no need to talk about it. In the meantime let us stay by the way and have a chat with our neighbours, for there is no doubt that if we do so we shall learn a great deal.

If the reader derives any pleasure from the following