

A Famous Industrial Library.

THE above title would naturally apply to any library devoted to industrial art, but it is intended here to refer to one connected with a great spinning and weaving factory—the Pacific Mills, Lawrence, Massachusetts. It was in the year 1879 that the writer visited those mills, and he was struck by the arrangements which existed for the intellectual and moral advancement of the workers, who number about 5,000 men and girls. In addition to the usual means of instruction and amusement in the shape of lectures, &c., he found a remarkable library to which a few words may be usefully devoted, for it should serve as a model to other similar establishments. The library has existed since 1853, when the directors of the Pacific Mills devoted \$1000 to its establishment. It has gradually grown until it contains, according to this year's report, about 9,000 volumes. To secure this increase, and the permanence of the library, the contribution of one cent per week to its funds was for many years made a condition of employment in the mills. The library was open at suitable hours, and in connection therewith there was a convenient reading room for men, and another for girls, in which were placed most of the leading newspapers and periodicals. Of late, complaints were made by many of the hands that as they did not use the library it was unfair to compel them to subscribe for its maintenance, and therefore the directors assumed the whole charge, including the salary of a librarian. The library, of which the total cost has been about \$15,000, is now used regularly by about 800 persons in the company's employ, who may either read on the premises or take the books home.

The printed catalogue consists of an 8vo. volume of 418 pages, with a supplement of 46 pages, and an idea may be formed of the diversified character of the contents by the following titles, taken at random from the beginning and end of the catalogue:—*The Old Distillery ; Tried and True ; Abbeokuta ;*

The Abbot ; Zina, or Morning Mists ; Principles of Agassiz ; Zschokke's History of Switzerland, and his Tales from the German ; Zurich's Spectacles for Young Eyes.

The works are only printed alphabetically, and there is no classification of the different branches of Art, Science, and Literature, which is a serious drawback, but it is noticeable that great prominence is given to works by American authors, and that a considerable proportion are suitable for juvenile reading, the latter feature being an admirable one where so many girls and youths are employed. It must not be thought, however, that the scope of the library is limited to any great extent in these two directions ; for example we find, on p. 6 of the supplement, works by Robert Chambers, James Boswell, A. K. H. Boyd, Hjalmar, H. Boyesen, Lady Brassey, David Bremner, Stopford Brooke, and James Bryce ; and this is a fair representation of the diversified reading provided by the library.

There are other industrial establishments in the United States to which good libraries are attached, and probably there may be some in this country worthy of mention ; but there can be no doubt that there is a vast field for philanthropic effort in this direction ; and that in the rapidly changing relations between capital and labour, the encouragement of reading—provided no attempt is made to subserve thereby the interests of the employers—cannot fail to exercise a pacific and conciliatory influence.

JAMES SAMUELSON.

*Claughton, Birkenhead,
June 8, 1892.*

