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## PATERNALISM AND THE PULLMAN STRIKE

THE rapid expansion of industrialism following the Civil War was accompanied by increasingly severe labor disturbances. Despite the enormous gains enjoyed by entrepreneurs the plight of labor during this era was not materially improved. During the sixties and seventies real wages actually declined. Wretchedly housed and subjected to a demoralizing environment, labor became increasingly suspicious and bitter toward capital. In desperation many toilers looked to unions as the only hope of escaping the terrors of poverty. Craft unions multiplied, and in the National Labor Union and subsequently the Noble Order of the Knights of Labor the workers attempted to present a united front. They were grimly determined to improve their living standards which too often bred despair, suffering, and tragedy. Opposed to labor were the capitalists, often unscrupulous in their business methods, who were just as uncompromising in their opposition to unionism. The stage was thus set for the industrial upheavals which shook the United States in the seventies and eighties.

Among the enterprises that played a dominant role in the business world during the latter half of the nineteenth century was the Pullman Palace Car Company. Capitalized in 1867 at ten million dollars,<sup>1</sup> it underwent rapid expansion and by 1893 possessed assets of sixty-two million dollars.<sup>2</sup> The company was so successful in revolutionizing the sleeping car industry and destroying competition that in 1894 its service extended over three fourths of the railroad mileage of the United States.<sup>3</sup> The founder and head of this corporation was George Mortimer Pullman, who, although reared in poverty, developed into a masterful executive. Over the Pullman Company he exercised complete and arbitrary control. Shrewd, calculating, and conservative, he was primarily a hardheaded businessman. His disposition, which was

<sup>1</sup> *Private Laws of the State of Illinois* (2 vols., Springfield, 1867), II, pp. 337-38.

<sup>2</sup> "Fiscal Report of the Pullman Company for the Year ending July 31, 1893", *Pullman Journal*, Oct. 21, 1893, p. 4.

<sup>3</sup> George M. Pullman, *The Strike at Pullman* (Chicago, 1894), p. 36, a pamphlet containing the statements of George Pullman and Second Vice-President T. H. Wickes before the United States Strike Commission, 1894.

not genial, made for personal unpopularity. He refused to brook opposition and was especially bitter toward labor unions.<sup>4</sup>

The rapid growth of the corporation necessitated in 1880 a substantial enlargement of production facilities. In addition to constructing and operating sleeping, parlor, and dining cars, the organization decided to build all types of railroad cars for the general market. To meet the varied needs of the company, it was decided to construct new and elaborate works near Chicago.<sup>5</sup> The site chosen was in a sparsely settled region, and in order to house the thousands of workers a town had to be built. Rather than permit haphazard construction, Pullman decided upon a planned community with beautiful houses and lovely streets, parks, and public buildings. His motive was not entirely philanthropic. He looked upon the venture as a business proposition which would yield dividends of 6 per cent and would create a contented and industrious force of skilled laborers. Desirous of avoiding labor difficulties, Pullman believed that paternalism wisely administered would lull the restless yearnings of the laborer and give to his powerful corporation a stability in labor conditions not hitherto known.<sup>6</sup> The Pullman Experiment was thus launched as a new departure in the approach to the problem of industrial strife.

On the open prairie, twelve miles south of the business district of

<sup>4</sup> Obituaries of Pullman, *Chicago Tribune*, *Chicago Record*, *Inter Ocean*, Oct. 20, 1897; John McLean, *One Hundred Years in Illinois* (Chicago, 1919), pp. 226-27, 253-54; William Carwardine, *The Pullman Strike* (Chicago, 1894), p. 47. Carwardine, who was pastor of the First Methodist Episcopal Church of Pullman prior to and during the strike of 1894, championed vigorously the cause of the workers. In his book he sheds considerable light on the causes and character of this great labor upheaval.

<sup>5</sup> *United States Strike Commission Report, Senate Executive Document*, No. 7, 53 Cong., 3 sess. (Washington, 1895), p. 529. President Grover Cleveland on July 26, 1894, appointed a commission of three members, Carroll D. Wright (chairman), John D. Kerman, and Nicholas E. Worthington, to conduct an investigation of the Pullman strike. On November 14, 1894, the commission submitted to the President its report including testimony, proceedings, and recommendations. This report, the most valuable source available for a study of the strike, is, generally speaking, very fair and impartial. Prior to the construction of the Pullman works, shops existed at Elmira, Detroit, St. Louis, and Wilmington. Joseph Husband, *The Story of the Pullman Car* (Chicago, 1917), p. 89.

<sup>6</sup> Pullman, pp. 1-2; *U. S. Strike Commission Report*, pp. 529-30; Carroll D. Wright and others, "An Attractive Industrial Experiment", *Massachusetts Labor Report* (Boston, 1885), pt. 1, p. 18; *Report of the Commissioners of the State Bureaus of Labor Statistics; The Story of Pullman*, pp. 22-23, a pamphlet distributed at the Pullman exhibit at the World's Columbian Exposition, Chicago, 1893.

Chicago, the Pullman Company purchased four thousand acres of land. Less than five hundred acres, however, were required for the model town, which, completely isolated by a broad belt of uninhabited Pullman property, was laid out on the western shore of Lake Calumet. Under the direction of Solon S. Beman, chief architect, and Nathan Barrett, landscape engineer, the town of Pullman was planned along aesthetic lines.<sup>7</sup> Ground was broken in 1880, and during the ensuing four years construction was pushed rapidly. Simultaneously with the erection of shops, the company established gas, water, and sewer facilities and constructed streets, homes, and public buildings. Economizing wherever possible, it not only established its own carpenter shops but also manufactured from the rich clay deposits underlying Lake Calumet a supply of cream-colored bricks. All buildings save the Green Stone Church and some frame houses at the southern limits of the town were constructed of brick with stone trimmings and slate roofs. The architecture, which tended to be monotonous, was relieved by the beauty of shrubbery and trees. The town was planned so that its most attractive view was visible from the Illinois Central tracks.<sup>8</sup> In 1894 there were eighteen hundred tenements, varying in size from two room flats to luxurious three story houses.<sup>9</sup> Among the public buildings were the Florence Hotel, the Pullman School, the livery stables, the Casino, the Arcade, which housed the library, theater, and all offices and stores, the market building, which accommodated the meat and vegetable markets, and the Green Stone Church, which, constructed from green serpentine rock, was singularly impressive.<sup>10</sup> The parks of Pullman contributed much to the beauty and physical well-being of the town. Lake Vista and Arcade Park were noted for their picturesqueness; the Playground and Athletic Island were uti-

<sup>7</sup> McLean, pp. 224-25; A. T. Andreas, *History of Cook County, Illinois* (Chicago, 1884), pp. 516, 521, 611; Irving K. Pond, "America's First Planned Industrial Town", *Illinois Society of Architects' Monthly Bulletin*, June-July, 1934, pp. 6-8. Pond assisted Beman as a draftsman.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 7; "Report to the State of Illinois on the Status of the Town of Pullman", 1885, pp. 1, 13, Pullman Collection, Pullman Branch Library, Chicago; *Pullman Journal*, Jan. 7, 1893, p. 4; Andreas, pp. 611-12; Richard T. Ely, "Pullman: A Social Study", *Harper's Monthly*, LXX (1885), p. 458.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 458, 461; *U. S. Strike Commission Report*, p. 507.

<sup>10</sup> Mrs. Duane Doty, *The Town of Pullman* (Pullman, 1893), pp. 8-10, 48-49; Duane Doty, "The Market of Pullman", 1883, pp. 1-3, Pullman Collection, John Crerar Library, Chicago. No person was more devoted to the Pullman Experiment than Duane Doty, who filled various important offices in the model town from 1880 until his death in 1902 (see below p. 276).

lized for sports.<sup>11</sup> The beauty of the town profoundly impressed many visitors.<sup>12</sup>

In almost every detail the town was modern. The homes were equipped with commodious basements, were furnished with gas, water, and excellent sewage facilities, and were supplied with an abundance of fresh air and sunlight. Gas manufactured by the company was used in lighting the streets as well as for household purposes. The streets and alleys were macadamized and the sidewalks made from planks and gravel. The front lawns were heavily sodded and frequently terraced. Thousands of shade trees and shrubs adorned the streets and parks, a constant supply being furnished by the company-owned nursery and greenhouses.<sup>13</sup> Steam heat was furnished to the public buildings and better homes. The company established, among other things, a lumber yard, ice houses, and a dairy farm with nearly one hundred cows, which supplied the inhabitants of Pullman with milk, butter, and cream.<sup>14</sup> The most unique of all Pullman institutions was the company-operated sewage truck farm, which disposed of all sewage by land purification. The crops raised on this highly fertilized soil supplied Pullman and some Chicago markets with vegetables, the profits yielding as much as 8 per cent on the investment.<sup>15</sup> Such institutions as a hospital, cemetery, jail, orphanage, and infirmary were absent from the experiment, due largely to their availability in the village of Hyde Park.<sup>16</sup>

Since the model town was in reality an adjunct to the Pullman works, the size of the population fluctuated with employment conditions. From the inauguration of the experiment until 1893 the Pull-

<sup>11</sup> Mrs. Doty, pp. 109-10; *Arcade Journal*, Dec. 7, 1889, p. 5. This paper was published in Pullman from 1889 to 1892 and was a semi-official organ of the company. In 1892 it was renamed the *Pullman Journal*. Perhaps the most unique feature in the model town was the five-acre Athletic Island, which was located in Lake Calumet and was made accessible to the mainland by means of a bridge. Constructed on this island were boat houses, a large grandstand, and a small race course.

<sup>12</sup> *Inter Ocean*, Jan. 17, 1885, p. 12; *Arcade Journal*, Dec. 5, 1891, p. 5.

<sup>13</sup> Andreas, p. 620; *Chicago Tribune*, Aug. 14, 1882, p. 6; "Report to the State of Illinois", pp. 10-11, 13-14; *Arcade Journal*, June 14, 1890, p. 1.

<sup>14</sup> Mrs. Doty, pp. 162-63; Ely, *Harper's*, LXX, 455; *Arcade Journal*, Oct. 11, 1890, p. 1.

<sup>15</sup> Oscar C. DeWolf, *Pullman from a State Medicine Point of View*, p. 12, reprinted from the *American Public Health Association Proceedings* (Concord, 1884), IX, 290 ff.; Mrs. Doty, pp. 165-67; *Chicago Times*, Aug. 6, 1882, p. 6, and Apr. 25, 1885, p. 8.

<sup>16</sup> *Municipal Code of the Village of Hyde Park together with General Laws* (Hyde Park, 1887), pp. 72-73, 94, 149.

man shops enjoyed, with few interruptions, a remarkable expansion in production. The high peak for the town was reached shortly before the panic of 1893, when the population reached twelve and one-half thousand. Due to the ensuing depression the number by 1895 had fallen to eight thousand.<sup>17</sup> Although unbounded prosperity eventually returned to the shops,<sup>18</sup> the town of Pullman, for reasons to be treated subsequently, never recovered its buoyancy. The largest percentage of inhabitants was foreign born, the most important nationalities being Scandinavian, British, German, Dutch, and Irish.<sup>19</sup> There is, however, no evidence that the history of the experiment would have been materially different with a population exclusively American born.

George Pullman, having faith in arbitrary control, managed the town with rigid paternalism. Although a part of the village of Hyde Park, the town in most matters was subject to the authority of the Pullman corporation. By resorting from the outset to domination over municipal functions, such as maintenance of streets, parks, fire department, sewerage, and sanitary inspection, and by virtue of its wealth, influence, and ownership of the entire town, the company, through George Pullman, conducted the experiment without interference. All of the town officials were appointed by the corporation except the members of the school board, who, although elective, were still in the employ of the company and hence subject to the influence of George Pullman.<sup>20</sup> The chief administrator was the town agent, who co-ordinated the work of eleven municipal departments and operated the town in a commercial manner. During the period covered by the experiment, 1880 to 1907, there were six town agents, the most distinguished being Duane Doty, who served twice in this capacity (1880-1883, 1901-1902) and also as civil engineer, statistician, and editor of the *Pullman Journal* (1883-1901).<sup>21</sup>

<sup>17</sup> "Annual Report of the Pullman Company to the Stockholders, Oct. 11, 1888", *Chicago Tribune*, Oct. 12, 1888, p. 2; "Fiscal Report of the Pullman Company for the Year ending July 31, 1893", *Pullman Journal*, Oct. 21, 1893, p. 4, and Feb. 1, 1896, p. 12.

<sup>18</sup> "Annual Report of the Pullman Company, Oct. 1903", *Calumet Record*, Oct. 22, 1903, p. 1. This newspaper, published weekly in South Chicago, was in certain respects the successor of the *Pullman Journal*, which ceased publication in 1898.

<sup>19</sup> Wright, p. 9; Joseph Kirkland, *Story of Chicago* (Chicago, 1892), p. 395; *Pullman Journal*, Feb. 25, 1893, p. 4.

<sup>20</sup> "Report to the State of Illinois", p. 24; Ely, *Harper's*, LXX, 461-64; *Chicago Tribune*, July 7, 1885, p. 8; *Chicago Evening Journal*, July 10, 1885, p. 3; *Arcade Journal*, Dec. 28, 1889, p. 5; McLean, pp. 239-43.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 253-54; Andreas, pp. 625-26; *Calumet Record*, Mar. 8, 1901, p. 5; "Town of Pullman Pay Rolls, March 15, 1886, to March 31, 1887", pp. 1-19, Pullman Company records.

Virtually the only enterprises not operated by the corporation were retail stores. Among the institutions in which the company took special pride was the fire department, which developed such efficiency that the village of Hyde Park in 1886 decided to pay the maintenance cost in return for the extension of the service to surrounding communities.<sup>22</sup> The library was incorporated and managed by a board of directors controlled by George Pullman, who was himself a member.<sup>23</sup> The hotel, theater, and bank were operated by the corporation as business enterprises. In charge of the Florence Hotel was a superintendent, and in control of the Arcade Theater was a business manager. The theater was beautifully decorated, and the plays were of excellent quality, but the admission prices were usually too high for ordinary laborers.<sup>24</sup> The Pullman Loan and Savings Bank, whose president was George Pullman, encouraged thrift, served the company commercially, and paid dividends of 6 per cent.<sup>25</sup> Vegetables and dairy products were produced by the company for the Pullman market, but peddlers who held Hyde Park licenses could not be prohibited from selling such commodities in the town. They were, however, denied such conveniences as sheds and stands.<sup>26</sup> It can be reasonably concluded that rigid paternalism was the more completely realized by virtue of so many enterprises, business and otherwise, being managed by the corporation.

In maintaining absolute control over the town and protecting the interests of his company, George Pullman deemed it necessary to wield considerable influence in the village of Hyde Park, to which the model town belonged politically. Participating actively in the election of Hyde Park officials, he was able to maintain on the board of trustees and the board of review a majority sympathetic toward his policies.<sup>27</sup> Pullman tax assessments and water rates were reduced to the lowest possible level, and the extraordinary municipal prerogatives of the cor-

<sup>22</sup> *Annual Report of the Village of Hyde Park* (Chicago, 1887), p. 18; *Inter Ocean*, Apr. 13, 1886, p. 7; *Chicago Evening Journal*, May 4, 1886, p. 5.

<sup>23</sup> "Charter of Incorporation for the Pullman Public Library, Oct. 14, 1882", and "Minutes of the First Meeting of the Pullman Library Directors, Apr. 10, 1883", pp. 1-4, Pullman Collection, Pullman Branch Library.

<sup>24</sup> McLean, p. 243; Ely, *Harper's*, LXX, 458; *Pullman Journal*, Aug. 10, 1893, p. 9.

<sup>25</sup> *U. S. Strike Commission Report*, pp. 508-509, 514; *Pullman Journal*, Oct. 16, 1885, p. 3.

<sup>26</sup> "Report to the State of Illinois", p. 19.

<sup>27</sup> Andreas, pp. 516, 627; *Chicago Times*, Mar. 13, 1883, p. 8, and May 10, 1885, p. 19; *Chicago Tribune*, Apr. 10, 1885, p. 8, and Apr. 4, 1888, p. 2.

poration were never seriously challenged.<sup>28</sup> The relationship between Hyde Park and the model town was so satisfactory to George Pullman that despite the obsolete and inadequate features of the village government he frowned on all proposed changes.<sup>29</sup> In 1889, however, the annexation of Hyde Park to Chicago became an issue which George Pullman fought vigorously on the ground that it would endanger the success of the experiment. Tremendous pressure was applied, but notwithstanding, the proposition carried, and Hyde Park was absorbed by Chicago.<sup>30</sup> In actual effect the course of the experiment was not essentially changed, although taxes, schools, wholesale water rates, and the fire department were henceforth subject to the control of the city of Chicago.<sup>31</sup>

Political coercion was frequently employed by the Pullman Company. The employees were expected to vote for the party or candidates most satisfactory to George Pullman. Although threats and intimidation were frequently used, there is no evidence that very many employees were discharged for voting contrary to his wishes. Political opposition was keenly resented and suppressed whenever possible.<sup>32</sup> John P. Hopkins, paymaster of the shops, led a revolt against the political domination of the corporation and as a result was discharged and compelled to leave the town.<sup>33</sup> The overwhelming vote of the town against annexation to Chicago in 1889 revealed the extent to which Pullman was able to control the ballot.<sup>34</sup> In national elections, however, the Democrats occasionally carried the town in spite of Pullman's

<sup>28</sup> *Annual Report of the Village of Hyde Park* (Hyde Park, 1886), p. 90; *ibid.*, 1888, pp. 23-24; *Chicago Times*, Aug. 19, 1882, p. 8, and July 12, 1885, p. 17.

<sup>29</sup> *Chicago Tribune*, Aug. 16, 1881, p. 8; *Chicago Herald*, June 30, 1889, p. 10; *Chicago Times*, Oct. 29, 1887, p. 10.

<sup>30</sup> *Chicago Herald*, May 14, 1889, p. 2, and June 30, 1889, pp. 9, 10; *Chicago Tribune*, June 15, 1889, p. 7; *Inter Ocean*, June 30, 1889, p. 15.

<sup>31</sup> *Arcade Journal*, Aug. 30, 1890, p. 1; *Pullman Journal*, Feb. 1, 1896, p. 12; Carwardine, p. 99.

<sup>32</sup> *Chicago Times*, May 1, 1890, p. 1, and May 7, 1890, p. 2; *Chicago Tribune*, Apr. 6, 1887, p. 1, and May 3, 1890, p. 1; *Chicago Herald*, Apr. 10, 1887, p. 4, Mar. 31, 1889, p. 11, May 14, 1889, p. 3, and June 30, 1889, p. 10; *U. S. Strike Commission Report*, p. 430; Carwardine, p. 109.

<sup>33</sup> William Stead, *If Christ came to Chicago* (Chicago, 1894), pp. 294-95; Graham Taylor, *Satellite Cities* (New York, 1915), p. 62; *Chicago Times*, Nov. 7, 1888, p. 1, and Apr. 4, 1889, p. 4. This rift between George Pullman and John Hopkins helps to explain why Hopkins, as mayor of Chicago during the great strike of 1894, entertained little sympathy for the Pullman Corporation. The Second-Hopkins firm gave generously to the support of the strikers. Carwardine, pp. 41-44.

<sup>34</sup> *Inter Ocean*, June 30, 1889, p. 15.



efforts in behalf of the Republican Party.<sup>35</sup> The absence of genuine democracy was perhaps the most characteristic defect of the Pullman Experiment.

It is difficult to appraise fully and accurately the means by which George Pullman attempted to dominate the inhabitants. Influencing voters and resisting unionization were among the more obvious methods. During the Pullman Strike of 1894, according to one authority, a system of espionage was employed to keep check on the inhabitants.<sup>36</sup> A very subtle influence was the *Pullman Journal*, a semi-official organ of the corporation, published weekly. Ably edited, it gave unflinching support to all the policies of George Pullman.<sup>37</sup> Radical speakers were successfully excluded from the town by being denied the right to use public halls. The greatest caution was taken in granting applications to use the theater for lectures, and a close censorship was maintained over the type of plays produced.<sup>38</sup> In order to assure the immediate elimination of undesirables, it was provided that the lease which every tenant was compelled to sign could be voided within ten days by either party. Although such arbitrary expulsion was seldom employed, the potential effectiveness of the weapon served as a powerful threat to deter the inhabitants from criticizing or opposing the policies of the company.<sup>39</sup>

It was the fixed policy of George Pullman to oppose the sale of any part of the town so as not to disturb unified control over the experiment or permit the entrance of baleful influences. In order to sell sites it would have been necessary to subdivide the acre property, a move which would have led to heavier taxes.<sup>40</sup> The rapidly increasing land values<sup>41</sup> doubtless fortified the corporation in its determination that no property should be thrown on the market. Without complete ownership, effective domination would indeed have been imperiled, but, on the other hand, the refusal to permit home ownership became the basis for deep dissatisfaction. There is no evidence that

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, Nov. 14, 1888, p. 7; Thomas B. Grant, "Pullman and Its Lessons", *American Journal of Politics*, V (1894), 194.

<sup>36</sup> Carwardine, p. 51.

<sup>37</sup> See notes 11 and 18.

<sup>38</sup> Ely, *Harper's*, LXX, 458; *Chicago Herald*, Apr. 2, 1886, p. 4; anonymous, "The Arcadian City of Pullman", *Agricultural Review*, Jan., 1883, p. 72.

<sup>39</sup> *U. S. Strike Commission Report*, pp. 532-34; Graham R. Taylor, *Pioneering on Social Frontiers* (Chicago, 1930), p. 115; *Chicago Times*, 1885, Sept. 30, p. 6, Oct. 3, p. 6, Oct. 7, p. 8.

<sup>40</sup> *U. S. Strike Commission Report*, pp. 503-505, 529-30, 542.

<sup>41</sup> *Pullman Journal*, Jan. 7, 1893, p. 3.

local attachment and civic pride were ever engendered among the citizens, and, according to the United States Strike Commission of 1894, the absence of home ownership embittered relations during the great strike.<sup>42</sup> Although the company did nothing to discourage home ownership in nearby towns, it discriminated against non-Pullman renters when work was scarce. During the prosperous era prior to the panic of 1893 one sixth of the workers were home owners, but the company then experienced little trouble in renting its homes. During the depression, however, decided preference was shown to Pullman renters in the matter of employment.<sup>43</sup> Whereas in 1893 one half of the employees were residents of Pullman, in April, 1894, the number had increased to more than two thirds.<sup>44</sup>

The basis of the Pullman Experiment was commercial. Substantial profits were realized from the sale of utilities. Gas was sold for \$2.25 per thousand cubic feet as compared with the charge in Chicago of only \$1.25.<sup>45</sup> The actual cost of manufacturing this amount in Pullman was variously estimated at thirty-three and at sixty-three and one fourth cents.<sup>46</sup> Although denied by the corporation, it was estimated that water which cost the company four cents per thousand gallons was retailed to the inhabitants for ten cents.<sup>47</sup> The library, equipped with over eight thousand volumes and luxuriously furnished, was accessible only to those who were willing to pay the annual membership fee of three dollars.<sup>48</sup> Although George Pullman explained that the charge was "not for profit" but to give subscribers "a sense of ownership", at no time did the membership exceed two hundred and fifty.<sup>49</sup>

<sup>42</sup> *Chicago Tribune*, Sept. 21, 1888, p. 9; *Chicago Herald*, Feb. 17, 1883, p. 2; *U. S. Strike Commission Report*, pp. xxii-xxiii, 504.

<sup>43</sup> Pullman, p. 21; *U. S. Strike Commission Report*, pp. xxxv-xxxvi, 499; Carwardine, pp. 96-97.

<sup>44</sup> *U. S. Strike Commission Report*, p. 499; Pullman, p. 21.

<sup>45</sup> "Report to the State of Illinois", p. 15; *Inter Ocean*, Dec. 17, 1881, p. 3; Carwardine, p. 98.

<sup>46</sup> William T. Stead, "How Pullman was Built", *Socialist Economist*, VII (1894), 86; *Chicago Herald*, Mar. 31, 1889, p. 11.

<sup>47</sup> *Annual Report of the Village of Hyde Park*, 1886, p. 90; Stead, p. 86; Carwardine, p. 98. Since there were no meters in the homes, it was difficult to compute the actual rate charged. Each tenant was assessed monthly seventy-one cents, regardless of the amount of water consumed. Until 1894 the only water meters in the town were those registering the amount of water entering Pullman from Hyde Park. Pullman, p. 22.

<sup>48</sup> Bertha S. Ludlam, "History of the Pullman Library", p. 2, Pullman Collection, Pullman Branch Library; *Pullman Journal*, Aug. 10, 1895, p. 4.

<sup>49</sup> Pullman, p. 23; *U. S. Strike Commission Report*, pp. xxi-xxii.

The company was determined that the entire cost of the town, exclusive of the shops, should be borne by the inhabitants, and, hence, included in the basis for computing rent were such matters as street, park, and sewer expenses. Dividends of no less than 6 per cent were demanded from the experiment, but the actual profits fell short of expectations. From the shabby frame cottages at the brickyards, however, the rent yielded 40 per cent on the investment.<sup>50</sup> The level of rent was extraordinarily high, averaging from 20 to 25 per cent more than rent in Chicago or surrounding communities for similar accommodations, excluding, however, sanitary and aesthetic features.<sup>51</sup> Utilizing every means for prompt collection, the company at first deducted rent from wages but later was compelled by law to pay wages in full.<sup>52</sup> Each employee was then given two checks, one of which covered the exact amount of the rent. The tenant was expected to sign this over immediately to the Pullman Bank, the collecting agent of the Pullman Company. Threats of eviction and dismissal were used against delinquent renters.<sup>53</sup>

Paternalism was most evident in the policy governing renting. Through the lease and by numerous regulations the renter was left little freedom of action. All pernicious influences, such as saloons and brothels, were strictly forbidden, although a small bar, designed only for guests and charging exorbitant prices, was permitted at the Florence Hotel. No control, however, was exercised over the saloons in nearby communities, and from them the Pullman inhabitants purchased their liquor. The amount of drunkenness was never large.<sup>54</sup> The lease prohibited even the slightest alteration of any premises without written permission and obliged the tenant to pay for all repairs whether caused from carelessness or not—a clause which was never enforced.<sup>55</sup> Supplementary to the lease were numerous rules which all tenants were compelled to respect. Pigs and chickens were strictly prohibited because of their offensive odor, and the ownership of horses was permissible only by keeping them in the livery stables. Calcimin-

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. xxxv, 495-501, 522-30; *Chicago Times*, May 23, 1882, p. 6.

<sup>51</sup> *U. S. Strike Commission Report*, pp. xxxv, 462, 467-68, 492-93.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 515, 533; "Pay Rolls of the Pullman Company, 1-B, Oct. 1882 to Jan. 1883", p. 40, Pullman Company records; *Revised Statutes of the State of Illinois* (Chicago, 1898), pp. 1530<sup>a</sup> to 1530<sup>b</sup>.

<sup>53</sup> *U. S. Strike Commission Report*, pp. xxxvi, 515-17, 520-22.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 431, 463; Taylor, *Satellite Cities*, p. 51; "Report to the State of Illinois", pp. 24-25.

<sup>55</sup> *U. S. Strike Commission Report*, pp. 531-33, 635-37.

ing, painting, and mechanical work were forbidden without official consent. Among other rules were those prescribing minutely such matters as the care to be given lamps and stoves, and how tenants in general should conduct themselves.<sup>56</sup> From the enforced orderliness and cleanliness, the tenants derived benefits, but the restrictions represented an irritating infringement upon their personal rights. There was little to foster the spirit of self-reliance or develop the initiative of the renter. Among the services rendered by the company were the following: keeping the front lawns mowed, sprinkled, and free of refuse; removing daily all rubbish, ashes, and garbage; and maintaining the homes in an excellent state of repair. Meat and vegetable markets were daily inspected and all tenants urged to present a tidy appearance.<sup>57</sup>

Virtually no provision was made to secure the inhabitants against the hazards of life. In the framework of the experiment there was no place for paupers, orphans, and the unemployed. The town was designed only for industrious, self-sustaining people. When an individual lost his job and could no longer pay rent, he was expected to depart.<sup>58</sup> The creation of relief organizations was not encouraged by Pullman officials, with the result that during the depression of 1893 the nonexistence of a public charity system was keenly felt. Although medical aid was furnished to injured employees, it became the fixed policy of the company in 1886 not to pay them any wages while disabled.<sup>59</sup> Against the possibility of damage suits the corporation took the greatest precaution.<sup>60</sup> In refusing to give employees any security against the misfortunes of life, the Pullman Company was no different from any other corporation of this period.

The town was supplied with an adequate program designed to meet all recreational and social needs. The Arcade Theater during the winter months averaged one play per week in addition to occasional concerts and other specialties.<sup>61</sup> No organization was more successful than the Pullman Band which won the Illinois State Championship

<sup>56</sup> *Chicago Herald*, Feb. 7, 1886, p. 2; "Report to the State of Illinois", pp. 16-19.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 18, 27, 38; "Town of Pullman Pay Rolls, March 15, 1886, to March 31, 1887", pp. 3-10, Pullman Company records; *Calumet Record*, June 13, 1901, p. 2; Ely, *Harper's*, LXX, 462.

<sup>58</sup> *Pullman Journal*, July 21, 1894, p. 8.

<sup>59</sup> Ely, *Harper's*, LXX, 465; John P. Altgeld, *Live Questions* (Chicago, 1899), p. 424; Carwardine, pp. 41-44; *U. S. Strike Commission Report*, pp. 483-84, 488, 639-40.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. xxii, 487, 591; Carwardine, p. 112.

<sup>61</sup> McLean, p. 243; *Arcade Journal*, Dec. 17, 1889, p. 4; *Pullman Journal*, Feb. 9, 1895, p. 8.

in 1890 and subsequently toured the South. Its weekly concerts in the Arcade Park were widely appreciated.<sup>62</sup> Few social organizations enjoyed more prestige than the Men's Society of Pullman, which endeavored to promote the physical, mental, and spiritual well-being of the community.<sup>63</sup> In the field of athletics the model town stood out pre-eminently. The Pullman Athletic Association promoted numerous sports and sponsored such major events as the annual spring games, professional regattas, and the annual road race, in which as many as four hundred cyclists participated before crowds numbering as high as fifteen thousand people.<sup>64</sup> George Pullman doubtless believed that the contentment of laborers depended in large measure upon the profitable utilization of their leisure hours.

The town of Pullman possessed numerous church organizations, but the religious situation was not always satisfactory. George Pullman, desirous of having the various religious denominations merge and form one large community church, built only one church edifice, the Green Stone Church.<sup>65</sup> The people, contrary to plans, organized their own churches and, prohibited from purchasing sites in Pullman, were obliged to rent undesirable quarters in the Arcade, the Casino, and the Market Building.<sup>66</sup> The Presbyterians alone were able to rent the Green Stone Church, but not until it had remained idle for several years and the annual rent had been reduced from \$3600 to \$1200. The parsonage, renting monthly for \$65, was never occupied by a minister, the rental being deemed too burdensome.<sup>67</sup> The religious groups became increasingly dissatisfied, objecting particularly to high rentals and the commercial treatment to which they were subjected.<sup>68</sup> Between John Waldron, a popular Catholic priest, and George Pullman there developed a bitter, personal feud which culminated finally in the resignation of Waldron from his pastorate. In his last sermon he denounced

<sup>62</sup> *Arcade Journal*, Dec. 28, 1889, p. 5, and Oct. 10, 1891, p. 1; *Pullman Journal*, Nov. 23, 1895, p. 5.

<sup>63</sup> "Articles of Association and By-Laws of the Men's Society of Pullman, Dec. 16, 1895", pp. 1-15, Pullman Branch Library; *Pullman Journal*, Nov. 9, 1895, p. 4.

<sup>64</sup> *Chicago Times*, Jan. 30, 1883, p. 6; Mrs. Doty, pp. 109-110; *Arcade Journal*, May 10, 1890, p. 4; *Pullman Journal*, May 6, 1893, p. 9.

<sup>65</sup> Carwardine, p. 20; John Waldron, "History of the Parish of the Holy Rosary Church", 1883, p. 1, archives of the church, Roseland, Chicago.

<sup>66</sup> *Pullman Journal*, Dec. 28, 1895, p. 4; Mrs. Doty, pp. 46-47.

<sup>67</sup> *Chicago Herald*, Jan. 13, 1886, p. 2; Ely, *Harper's*, LXX, 464; Carwardine, pp. 20-21.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 22; *Chicago Herald*, Feb. 4, 1885, p. 2, and Jan. 13, 1886, p. 2; *Pullman Journal*, Dec. 28, 1895, p. 9; *U. S. Strike Commission Report*, p. 451.

his enemy in sharp, caustic language, characterizing him as a “capitalistic czar; a man who ruled, crushed and oppressed by the force of money”.<sup>69</sup> The Catholics and Swedish Lutherans were finally permitted to secure some Pullman property for the erection of their own churches, but outside of the town.<sup>70</sup>

During its heyday the model town was inspected by thousands of distinguished visitors. By fostering and conducting tours of the town, George Pullman revealed his profound pride in the venture.<sup>71</sup> Although the experiment was studied by many manufacturers, engineers, and economists, it was imitated only vaguely and never became a genuine pattern for any industrial community.<sup>72</sup> The Pullman Strike was largely instrumental in destroying whatever revolutionary effect the experiment was believed to have upon industrialism.

The inherent weaknesses in the paternalistic venture were evident to few people prior to the strike of 1894. The terrible force of this upheaval revealed that underneath the apparent calm and contentment of the citizenry there existed basic grievances. Among these, which have already been treated, were political domination and the absence of democracy, rigid paternalistic control over the tenants, exorbitant rentals, excessive gas and water rates, and the refusal to permit home ownership among the inhabitants. Equally important was the despotic policy of George Pullman toward labor. Numerous alleged grievances developed, including blacklisting, nepotism, favoritism, arbitrary dismissal, and tyranny on the part of foremen.<sup>73</sup> Regardless of Pullman’s apparent interest in his workers, he shared with other industrialists the conviction that labor was only one of several commodities and that the wage scale should be rigorously governed by the condition of the labor market. A slump in business was invariably reflected in a wage

<sup>69</sup> *Chicago Daily News*, Feb. 11, 1887, p. 1; *Chicago Herald*, Feb. 12, 1887, p. 8.

<sup>70</sup> *Pullman Journal*, Nov. 5, 1892, p. 4, and May 20, 1893, p. 8; *Chicago Herald*, Aug. 10, 1886, p. 2.

<sup>71</sup> *Inter Ocean*, Nov. 2, 1881, p. 6, and July 11, 1887, p. 16; *Pullman Journal*, Feb. 1, 1895, p. 14; “Visitors’ Register for the Town of Pullman”, Pullman Collection, Pullman Branch Library.

<sup>72</sup> *Arcade Journal*, Dec. 5, 1891, p. 5; *Pullman Journal*, 1893, Nov. 2, 1895, p. 8, and Jan. 18, 1896, p. 8; *Calumet Record*, Jan. 25, 1906, p. 1; Budgett Meakin, *Model Factories and Villages: Ideal Conditions of Labor and Housing* (London, 1905), pp. 382-85; Graham R. Taylor, “Creating the New Steel City”, *The Survey*, XX (1909), 22-36.

<sup>73</sup> Jane Addams, *Twenty Years at Hull House* (New York, 1917), p. 218; *Chicago Herald*, Jan. 9, 1888, p. 8; *Chicago Times*, Jan. 21, 1888, p. 2; *U. S. Strike Commission Report*, pp. xxxvi, 441, 453, 481.

slash, irrespective of company earnings.<sup>74</sup> Against labor unions Pullman fought uncompromisingly, and prior to 1894 unionism was of slight importance in the model town. From the very outset of the experiment there were labor difficulties, but in every strike, great or small, the Pullman corporation emerged victorious.<sup>75</sup>

Few matters rankled in the minds of the inhabitants as much as the question of rentals. Extraordinarily high in comparison with the level elsewhere, the rents of Pullman imposed a severe burden upon the inhabitants during the panic of 1893. The company as paymaster slashed wages drastically while as landlord it declined to tamper in any way with the rentals. Refusing to recognize that the same conditions which depressed wages should also reduce rents, George Pullman boldly contended that the two were in no wise related. The claim that any laborer who was dissatisfied with the rent policy could live elsewhere was contrary to all evidence. Pressure was applied on non-Pullman renters, forcing many of them to become Pullman tenants. In spite of all the company could do, the arrearage in rent mounted rapidly, reaching seventy thousand dollars at the time of the strike. Under the drastic wage slashes and irregular working conditions of 1894 the wages of many laborers were so small that every cent was needed for the purchase of food and clothing.<sup>76</sup> The Pullman Bank was inclined to ignore this situation, using every means to induce the renter to pay the maximum amount.<sup>77</sup> In the face of such widespread rent delinquency, the company could not very expediently resort to eviction; nor was it necessary as numerous unemployed tenants soon made their exit from the town.<sup>78</sup>

The principal cause of the strike of 1894 was a radical reduction of wages fostered by a depression in business conditions. During the year ending on July 31, 1893, the corporation enjoyed a period of exceptional prosperity, earning profits of over six million dollars and employing in the Pullman shops 5500 men.<sup>79</sup> Unexpectedly, in the fall of 1893,

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, p. xxxiii; *Chicago Times*, Sept. 30, 1885, p. 6; *Chicago Evening Journal*, Mar. 6, 1884, p. 3.

<sup>75</sup> Kirkland, pp. 398-400; *Chicago Tribune*, Feb. 17, 1882, p. 8; *Chicago Times*, Mar. 6, 1884, p. 8, Oct. 7, 1885, p. 8, May 18, 1886, p. 8; *Chicago Herald*, Jan. 9, 1888, p. 8.

<sup>76</sup> Pullman, p. 28; *U. S. Strike Commission Report*, p. xxxv, xxxvi, 426, 462-63, 516, 611; Carwardine, p. 69.

<sup>77</sup> *U. S. Strike Commission Report*, pp. 515-17, 520-22.

<sup>78</sup> *Pullman Journal*, 1894, July 21, p. 8, Oct. 20, p. 4.

<sup>79</sup> "Annual Report of the Pullman Company", *ibid.*, Oct. 21, 1893, p. 4.

business slumped tremendously. Retrenchment was ordered in every department, and hundreds of men were dismissed. The car manufacturing division sustained losses, but not the more important operating division, which continued to yield large revenue. Convinced that the profits of the latter should not be used to cushion the losses of the former, Pullman compelled labor in both divisions to shoulder a relatively large percentage of the losses. The share which labor was forced to bear, during the seven and one half months prior to the strike, was over sixty thousand dollars as compared with the fifty-two thousand dollar loss borne by the corporation in the manufacturing division during the same period. According to the United States Strike Commission, a fairer distribution of the losses would have been one fourth for labor and the remainder for the company. The wage reduction, which in some cases reached 35 per cent, averaged 25 per cent. Reduced hours decreased further the laborer's income until many received a bare pittance. Interestingly enough, the salaries of Pullman officials were left undisturbed by the drastic retrenchment policy.<sup>80</sup>

In defending the wage policy, George Pullman explained that he could not see the wisdom of utilizing profits which belonged to shareholders for the purpose of paying men higher wages than were justified by business conditions.<sup>81</sup> To an impartial observer, however, the financial strength of the company was in strange contrast to the pitiful plight of the employees. In 1893 the corporation possessed assets worth \$62,000,000 of which \$26,000,000 represented undivided profits. After the dividends of 8 per cent were paid in that year, a surplus of \$4,000,000 remained from the profits of the year, which was enough for the company to have declared additional dividends of 10 per cent. Pullman stock, never watered, was then quoted at twice its par value.<sup>82</sup> In spite of the losses sustained in the construction department in 1894, the earnings of the corporation in that year were sufficient to warrant the regular 8 per cent dividends which actually exceeded those of 1893 by \$300,000.<sup>83</sup> Had the corporation dipped but lightly into the huge surplus of 1893, there would have been no need for a drastic wage re-

<sup>80</sup> *U. S. Strike Commission Report*, pp. xxxii-xxxiv, 547, 551, 554-57, 596, 597. Thomas Heathcoate, one of the strike leaders, affirmed that prior to the strike skilled mechanics received daily \$1.50, and the ordinary laborer \$1.30. Duane Doty, however, estimated the average daily rate of pay at \$1.85, assuming the worker toiled the full ten and three fourths hours. *Ibid.*, pp. 429, 506.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 554.

<sup>82</sup> "Annual Report of the Pullman Company", *Pullman Journal*, 1893, Jan. 7, p. 3, and Oct. 21, p. 4.

<sup>83</sup> *U. S. Strike Commission Report*, p. xxi.



duction, and the suffering of the employees would have been alleviated.

Convinced that their grievances could be redressed only through united effort, four thousand workers organized under the protecting wing of the American Railway Union. The company was presented with the following demands: investigation of shop abuses, reduction of rent, and restoration of wages to the predepression level. The rejection of these terms precipitated the strike on May 11. The poverty-stricken laborers issued an immediate appeal for relief and received from the public and labor unions a gratifying amount of aid.<sup>84</sup> Numerous attempts were made by the strikers and others to arbitrate the differences, but to each plea for arbitration George Pullman either ignored the offer or replied tersely, "nothing to arbitrate". He was grimly determined to eradicate all unionism from the shops and to operate his company, as always, without any dictation from labor.<sup>85</sup> The American Railway Union, snubbed on every attempt at arbitration, rallied to the support of the strikers by refusing to handle Pullman cars. This drew the opposition of the General Managers' Association, and the strike immediately assumed national significance. The fast moving drama of this titanic struggle quickly shifted to Chicago, where rioting, pillage, and bloodshed reached menacing proportions.<sup>86</sup> The military was ordered into the model town, as elsewhere, despite the peaceful, law-abiding character of the Pullman inhabitants.<sup>87</sup> By virtue of troops, court action, and the strategy of the General Managers' Association, the strike was crushed. The Pullman shops, after twelve weeks of idleness, reopened in August on the terms of the company: the low wage scale, the same rentals, and surrender of membership in the American Railway Union.<sup>88</sup>

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. xxiii, xxvii, xxxvii, 417; Carwardine, pp. 41-44.

<sup>85</sup> Pullman, p. 3; Eugene Debs, *The Great Strike of 1894 and Its Features* (New York, 1894), p. 9; *U. S. Strike Commission Report*, pp. xxxix, 424, 645-48; Thomas Beer, *Hanna* (New York, 1929), pp. 132-33. Convinced that Pullman's policy toward labor was anything but judicious, Mark Hanna on one occasion exploded: "The damned idiot ought to arbitrate, arbitrate, arbitrate. . . . A man who won't meet his men half way is a . . . fool." *Ibid.*

<sup>86</sup> *U. S. Strike Commission Report*, pp. xxix-xxxii, xxxiv-xl, xlii-xliii; McAlister Coleman, *Eugene V. Debs* (New York, 1930), pp. 125-29. The American Railway Union was organized in Chicago in June, 1893, and shortly afterwards engaged in a strike on the Great Northern Railroad from which the union emerged victorious. Aably led by Eugene Debs, the organization decided to boycott all Pullman cars only after all overtures for arbitration had failed. *Ibid.*

<sup>87</sup> *Pullman Journal*, 1894, May 19, p. 8, and July 7, p. 8; *U. S. Strike Commission Report*, pp. xxxvii, 452, 505.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. xxvii, xliii, 422, 438, 562.

The Pullman Strike left the workers in a demoralized condition. Despite the scarcity of work, six hundred new men were given employment. With public charity exhausted and work available only to a portion of the old population, nearly six thousand people were confronted with starvation. In their distress they appealed to Governor John P. Altgeld, who made a personal inspection of conditions in the town and found them to be alarming. Turning to George Pullman for aid, Governor Altgeld alluded to the ironic fact that men who had worked in the Pullman shops for more than ten years were compelled to apply for relief two weeks after work stopped. Without mincing words, Pullman declined to render any assistance, and the governor was thereupon obliged to issue a proclamation appealing to the people of Illinois for relief.<sup>89</sup> Normal times eventually returned, but the spirit of the people toward the motives of George Pullman could never be the same.

The Pullman Experiment did not long survive this disastrous labor upheaval. On October 19, 1897, at the age of sixty-six years, the builder and guardian of the model town died, thereby removing an influence which would have resisted the forces bent upon destroying the experiment.<sup>90</sup> Even more significant, perhaps, was the decision of the State Supreme Court, October 24, 1898, which condemned paternalism and declared the establishment and operation of the model town to be in violation of the corporate privileges of the Pullman charter.<sup>91</sup> The proceedings, which apparently had their origin in the Pullman Strike, were started in August, 1894, by Maurice T. Moloney, attorney general of Illinois. The Pullman Corporation contested the suit vigorously but accepted the final decision without any apparent resentment.<sup>92</sup> With the defender of the town no longer at the helm, the company bowed to the inevitable and permitted its paternalistic venture to perish.

The dissolution of the experiment was ordered within five years, but upon petition it was extended for five years more.<sup>93</sup> The Pullman

<sup>89</sup> Altgeld, pp. 421-24; *Chicago Tribune*, 1894, Aug. 21, p. 1, Aug. 22, pp. 1, 13, and Aug. 23, p. 1. John P. Altgeld, governor of Illinois during this period, was very friendly to the cause of labor. It was against his protests that President Cleveland sent federal troops to Chicago. Harry Barnard, *Eagle Forgotten: The Life of John Peter Altgeld* (Indianapolis, 1938), pp. 295-307.

<sup>90</sup> *Inter Ocean*, Oct. 20, 1897, p. 2.

<sup>91</sup> *Reports of Cases at Law and in Chancery Argued and Determined in the Supreme Court of Illinois* (Springfield, 1899), CLXXV, 143-49.

<sup>92</sup> *Chicago Chronicles*, Jan. 7, 1899, p. 2; *Chicago Tribune*, Apr. 12, 1894, p. 7, Aug. 12, 1894, p. 7, Oct. 25, 1898, p. 7, and Jan. 8, 1899, p. 14.

<sup>93</sup> *Calumet Record*, Feb. 18, 1894, p. 1.

Company lost all interest in the aesthetic features of the town and permitted it to degenerate into an ugly shell. Lake Vista was destroyed, and the Playground and Athletic Island were appropriated for industrial purposes. The Arcade Theater was closed, the sewage farm abandoned, and various other institutions and functions discontinued. The library survived, but with different support and under different management.<sup>94</sup> During the summer of 1907 the public buildings and homes were thrown on the market, the terms being easy and preference being shown to the inhabitants.<sup>95</sup> On July 9, 1907, a plat of the town was submitted to the City Commissioner of Public Works, thereby terminating officially the existence of the model town as a separate community in Chicago.<sup>96</sup>

The ending of the "noble experiment" did not occasion among the writers and editors any expression of regret.<sup>97</sup> The logic of circumstances had convinced the idealists and theorists that they would have to search elsewhere for a solution of industrial problems. Paternalism, instead of promoting better relations between employees and employer, had actually provided the laborer with new grievances and placed in the path of industrial peace an insuperable barrier. Improved living conditions and a favorable environment contributed only in part to the contentment of labor. Freedom of action and the right of self-expression were equally important. The strike of 1894, more than anything else, stamped indelibly on the mind of the laborer the true character of the experiment. Convinced that the Pullman corporation had no genuine interest in his fate, the worker became cynical toward the whole venture. The model town thus became a source of bitter disillusionment and finally, exposed with all of its frailties and contradictions, collapsed, joining many other social experiments designed to promote the well-being of the human race.

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<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*, June 13, 1901, p. 9; *Inter Ocean*, Apr. 29, 1909, p. 5; *Chicago Chronicles*, Jan. 7, 1899, p. 2; Taylor, *Satellite Cities*, pp. 37-38, 57; Correspondence of Mrs. George Pullman to Bertha S. Ludlum, Dec. 12, 1907, Pullman Collection, Pullman Branch Library.

<sup>95</sup> *Calumet Record*, May 9 to Nov. 12, 1907.

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.*, July 11, 1907, pp. 1, 5.

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*, Nov. 26, 1903, p. 10; *Chicago Evening Post*, Oct. 25, 1899, p. 4; *New York Times*, Oct. 20, 1897, p. 6; *Chicago Record*, Jan. 9, 1899, p. 5; *Chicago Journal*, Oct. 26, 1898, p. 4; *Inter Ocean*, Jan. 9, 1899, p. 5; *Chicago Times Herald*, Oct. 20, 1897, p. 6; Taylor, *Satellite Cities*, p. 74, ch. III being Jane Addams's, "A Modern Lear".