The present work entitled "A CASE STUDY OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT IN THE COTTON TEXTILE INDUSTRY OF KANPUR" makes a critical and analytical study of the problems of workers employed in the cotton textile units of Kanpur and suggests measures for bringing about improvement in the industrial relations in the industry.

Cotton textile industry has the distinction of being the oldest large scale industry in India. The industry occupies a very important place in the national economy of the country. It is the only large scale industry of the country whose origin, growth and advancement can be attributed to indigenous entrepreneurship. It is one of the few matured industries of the country which not only meets the internal demand of the people but also caters to the needs of our foreign markets. Its continuous progress has made India one of the leading textile countries and is a source of enormous foreign exchange.

In its capacity for yarn and cloth, based on
the number of spindles and looms installed, the industry holds third place amongst the countries of the world and second place on the basis of consumption of raw cotton. The cotton textiles rank first amongst the factory industries in India in terms of total capital invested, number of workers employed by the industry, gross value of output and payment to workers - in most of these the contribution of cotton textile industry comes to one-fourth or more of the total for all factory industries. Of the total workers employed in registered factories 8,81 lakhs work in the cotton textile industry.

At the same time, the cotton textile industry is one of those industries in which personnel management functions are still not developed on scientific lines. The industry, in view of its national importance, has, therefore, attracted attention of a number of research scholars. Besides, Enquiry Committees and Rationalisation Committees proved the industrial relations in the industry. The recommendations of these scholars and committees have, no doubt, brought improvement in the labour-management relations. But, of late, there has been recurrence of industrial disputes in the industry which have resulted in the
agitations and strikes leading to loss of person and property. The Bombay Textile Mills Workers strike which lasted for over nine months in 1983 is a current commentary on the social health of this industry. In a number of cases deterioration in the human relations in textile mills has led to the sickness of mills and their ultimate closure or take over by the Government. These recent manifestations of unhealthy relations between labour and management offer fresh ground for investigation. The present study is a re-thinking on the matter and has examined the various problems of the industry afresh. Also, to rationalise and rehabilitate this industry various workable measures have been recommended by the author who has reasons to believe that if the recommendations are firmly implemented the cotton textile industry of Kanpur shall be on firm footing and shall bring about the desired socio-economic change in the country. The sick mills shall be revitalised. It will result in higher profits and greater industrial peace. Modernisation of machinery and large scale employment shall be the ultimate goals which would strengthen our national fabric and enhance the standard of living of the workers. Needless to mention that if the cotton textile
industry of Kanpur fails there would fail the best hope of India.

The analysis has revealed that the textile industry of Kanpur has been working under heavy odds as a result of which its performance is disappointing. There are numerous factors responsible for this situation. Increasing cost of production, under-utilisation of installed capacity, outmoded machines, changes in consumption pattern and sectoral rivalry are some of the problems which the industry is facing. Other retarding factors are low yield and inadequate supply of raw materials, defective plant layout, worn out and outmoded equipment and inefficiency and uncooperative attitude of workers. But the most vital of all the factors is the widespread labour unrest which has badly affected most of the textile mills of Kanpur. Some of the important causes which are retarding labour relations are the result of unscientific methods being still practised in the labour management processes. It has been noted that traditional, out-dated methods of recruitment, selection, promotion and training of manpower are among the major causes of grievances of workers which have depressed the working of the industry.

The sources of recruitment continue to remain
mostly conventional and the jobber wields, though eroded, influence on the recruitment and selection of workers. As a result there are malpractices and abuses in the overall employment system with their ultimate impact on the labour management relations. The decasualisation scheme enforced has yielded not as much as it was planned and expected to benefit in the recruitment process. Partly the modus operandi of the scheme itself leaves gaps in having a well channelised and fair recruitment, and partly the unscrupulous management avails the slightest opportunity to scuttle the scheme at the vulnerable phases of its operation and turn to make recruitment and selection in the manner that suits them most. The avenues of promotion for unskilled and skilled workers are far and few. The industry follows no scientific and clear-cut procedure of promotion. No merit-rating records and procedures are maintained in any unit of the industry. Even the clerical staff has been found harbouring ill-will towards management because of their indifference attitude towards their welfare. Most of them continue to draw the initial salaries in spite of their long service for years and keep on to tread the same rut of their pay-grade day in and day out. Any
promotional or higher posts of their cadre are based on considerations other than merit-rating. This has sapped initiative of the majority of workers and has depressed the industrial production and consequent inefficiency.

Favouritism and nepotism in the absence of any scientific promotional policy are rampant and the workers sting the management with this stigma. Training facilities hardly exist in any unit of the Kanpur cotton textile industry. The conventional methods of assigning the apprentice worker to an old and experienced worker so that he may learn with him through observation and trial and error still persist. Well-organised training programmes based on scientific methods of imparting the training for the mental and skill development of the workers have so far been introduced. As a result, the workers are found unable to cope and adapt to the fast-changing development in textile technology and this accounts for one of the reasons for these mills not coming up to introduce technological changes in the methods and process of production of textiles or to turn out synthetic fibres of the grade produced by advanced countries.

Low wages in the wake of unabated spiral in the
cost of living further aggravates the human relations in the industry. The Wage Boards recommendations have not been fully implemented in the mills and the workers have in a number of cases chosen to strike work in order to press their demand for need-based wage. In fact, no need-based wage could so far be determined for the textile workers even by the Wage Boards. The quantum of basic wage continues to be a single digit figure and more or less the same as obtaining in the pre-independence period half a century ago. Increments in the wage of the workers are not provided by the industry and some workers knocked the doors of the court to get it done in their cases. Besides, there are disparities both intra-mill and extra-mill in the amount of wages paid to workers performing jobs of the identical nature as well as holding uniform designations. This disparity is contributing to frequent labour turnover in the industry. Moreover, the wage structure is devoid of incentives for higher productivity. A guaranteed minimum of about 96 per cent of the total wage is the entitlement of every worker payable simply against his attendance. The remaining flea-bite portion of 4 per cent is linked to efficiency whose quantum works out to so negligible an amount that it fails to
stir any motivation in the efficient workers for higher production. The wage structure in fact is passive in nature, besides being a constant source of disturbing human relations in the industry.

Working conditions are the other factors responsible for disenchantment of labour with the management and impinging upon industrial relations, efficiency of workers and their productivity. Both the intra-mural and extra-mural welfare activities lack in quantity as well as quality to instil a sense in workers of their care-taking by the industry. The welfare activities mainly confine to those obligatory under the force of the Factories Act. Poor renderence of these activities have been the cause of frequent squabbles between the workers and management. The Welfare Officer appointed by each mill in pursuance of the Factories Act is helpless to conduct welfare activities according to the genuine aspirations and needs of the workers, or to plan anything for the wellbeing of the workers, for his office is entirely dependent upon the mill management. He is to toe the line directed by the management, and, hence, his sphere of welfare action is circumscribed by the managerial policies of the mills concerned.

Working conditions which include broadly the
sanitary conditions, illumination, maintenance of relative humidity and temperature in sheds and frequency of air changes do not conform to the standard prescribed by the Kanpur Cotton Textile Mills Rationalisation Enquiry Committee. The ill-occupational health of the workers on account of unsatisfactory working conditions has in fact been a major cause of absenteeism in the mills. The problem relating to the occupational health of the workers are the making of an unenlightened attitude on the part of the management to the fact that good working conditions are salubrious to the workers. Also, that a healthy team of workers yield a healthy output for the organisation. A judicious management action can provide the necessary remedy to the occupational health of the workers which will positively contribute to improving labour productivity and industrial relations.

Thus, the state of relations between the management and workers are strained. It is no wonder that strikes take place and working days are lost. There is need to put the industry on even keel through improved human relations. Personnel problems, therefore, require immediate attention and wider outlook. Organisation of industries is an organisation of men, material and
Proper coordination between these three and continuous review of labour management relations is essential for the efficient working of the industry. Unless there are cordial human relations exuding a spirit of cooperation between persons working in different capacities in the Kanpur cotton textile industry, it is difficult to keep the industry working at its optimum efficiency.