

Newsletter - 1928



News Letter No. 54.

January 16, 1928.

## ACTIVITIES AFFECTING WOMEN IN INDUSTRY

Massachusetts

## New England Council Urges Longer Hours in Textiles.

Proposals have been made by Massachusetts members of the New England Council to change the law regulating women's hours of work in textile plants to permit overtime in order to meet seasonal demands of the industry. In a letter to business men in the State, made public January 9, the Council members asked for consideration of these specific items:

1. Establishment of a special commission to study municipal finance and expenditure.
2. Revision of laws governing industry to allow some elasticity in operation relative to the hours of labor in our textile industry, and permitting elimination of discrimination against that industry as compared to other industries in Massachusetts.
3. Better equipment and facilities for the Massachusetts Art School, formed to aid industries of the State in designing and styling their products.

Basing their proposal on parts of Governor Fuller's message at the opening of the present session of the legislature, the letter of the Council members quotes from the message as follows:

"We can not have our industries operated so that employees work fewer hours and earn more money and the employers pay more taxes and at the same time have the products in price with those of other States where the women and children work longer hours, where wages are low and where taxes are much less."

On the subject of local taxes, the Council members assert that the proposed commission could "point out constructive means for meeting a situation, which if allowed to go unchecked, will continue to drive our industries out of the Commonwealth in increasing numbers."

On hours of labor, they declare that "certain modifications can be made in existing laws affecting the textile industry without in any way reducing the standards that the Commonwealth has established for the welfare of our citizens."

The letter says further, according to the New York Times of January 9, that the Massachusetts law, prohibiting the employment of women in any capacity for the purpose of manufacturing in the evening, "or in the manufacture of textile goods after six o'clock in the evening, is an absolute discrimination against the textile industry and has operated to the marked disadvantage of Massachusetts. One of the principal reasons for the passage of this law, upwards of a quarter of a century ago, was the miserable gas-lighting in mills in effect at that time. This and other conditions adverse to the health of operatives, have long since disappeared."

The report of the New York Industrial Survey Commission of last February 15, to the legislature at Albany, is referred to in recommending more "elasticity" in the maximum hours of women's labor. The New York body, it is declared, "recognized the need of the industry for an opportunity to work additional hours in case of seasonal rushes or other conditions that may arise, from time to time, where a straight 48-hour week would work a great hardship."

"We believe that some provision for a reasonable amount of overtime similar to the New York law should be incorporated in our statute, and we are confident that the effect would be of substantial benefit to our textile industries."



The Massachusetts Council members signing the proposals are: Joshua L. Brooks of Springfield, John Chandler of Sterling Junction, Frank J. Fahey, A. Lincoln Filene, and John S. Lawrence of Boston, R. Franklin McElwain of Holyoke, Albert N. Murray of Cambridge, Joseph A. Parks of Boston, Frederick H. Payne of Greenfield, P. F. O'Keefe of Boston, John F. Tinsley of Worcester, and Carl Wurtzbach of Lee.

#### New Wage Board Formed.

A wage board to recommend minimum rates of wages for women and girls employed in the manufacture of electrical equipment and supplies, has been established by the Massachusetts Minimum Wage Commission. The board, which began its work January 12, is composed of fifteen members, six representing employers, six representing the women employees, and three representing the public, one of whom is to act as chairman.

The occupation under consideration—the 20th to be brought within the scope of wage board action—includes the manufacture of such products as incandescent lamps, insulated wire, radio and radio parts, mica, signal and protective systems, and various kinds of electrical equipment and appliances for household and office use.

The investigation into the wages of women and girls in the industry, which led up to the establishment of the wage board, was made by the Minimum Wage Commission in 1925-26, and covered 1,177 women in 29 establishments in the State. The majority of the women it was found, were paid on a time basis, usually a weekly rate, but the piece workers included a large proportion of those with the highest earnings.

As in every study of this kind made by the Massachusetts Minimum Wage Commission there is a conspicuous contrast in the wages of women in the various plants. In one plant, for example, less than 1 per cent of the women were in the highest wage group, nearly nine-tenths had average weekly earnings of less than \$13 and three-fourths less than \$11. Contrasted with this are the earnings in another plant with nine-tenths of the women receiving \$20 a week and over and less than 2 per cent averaging under \$13 a week. In still another plant, however, all of the women were earning less than \$13 a week and more than one-half less than \$11 a week. For all the 29 establishments, average weekly earnings of more than two-fifths were less than \$13 and nearly two-thirds less than \$15.

In respect to potential earnings for full-time employment, including time rate workers and piece rate workers, approximately one-third had maximum possible earnings below \$13 a week, and more than one-half (57.3 per cent), below \$15 a week.

Information regarding hours of employment secured for 995 women employed in 27 establishments, shows more than four-fifths working from 38 to 48 hours a week, the majority from 42 to 48 hours, thus indicating that a large part of the women were working approximately full time. Of this number nearly half are in the group receiving less than \$15 a week.

Considering age in relation to earnings, the investigation shows that a little more than half of the adult workers among 924 women in 27 plants, and nine-tenths of the minors were earning less than \$15 a week. Women 21 to 25 years old included the employees with highest earnings, the girls under 16 and the women 45 and over, coming in the lower wage groups. With these exceptions, age apparently is a minor factor in the matter of earnings.

Excepting that the majority of women with less than one year's experience were found in the lower wage groups, there was no very marked connection between experience of the women and their earnings.

#### Court Decision Regarding Night Work Law.

An interesting opinion has been given recently by the Supreme Judicial Court of Massachusetts regarding the application of the night work law as it applies to girls under 21 used as entertainers in restaurants and cabarets. The case in question grew out of an arrangement made by a restaurant with an entertainment concern whereby the concern supplied girls under 21 for dancing and singing in the



evening. Part of this entertainment program was after 10 o'clock at night. The night work law as it applies to minors provides that boys under 18 and girls under 21 years of age may not be employed or permitted to work in or in connection with any of the establishments mentioned in Section 60 of Chapter 149 of the General Laws. The establishments enumerated include mercantile establishments which in turn include restaurants, according to the definition of the labor laws. The contention of the restaurant proprietor was that the girls were not employed by him, as he had a contract with the entertainment concern.

Following action by the Department of Labor and Industries, the case was carried on appeal to the Supreme Judicial Court which sustained the findings of the Lower Court and the position of the Department. The court held that the activities in which the girls were engaged constituted work and that the employer had permitted them to work in his establishment, which is one of the types of establishments where work after 10 o'clock at night is prohibited in the case of girls under 21 years of age.

### Minnesota

#### No Overtime!

A communication from Miss Louise Schutz, Superintendent of the Division of Women and Children of the Industrial Commission of Minnesota says that the Commission was much interested in statements incorporated in the headings of advertisements of two of the leading Twin City stores during Christmas week. One store advertised as follows: "Our women employees work 8 hours per day only." The other store advertised: "To make Christmas shopping easier this and other stores will be open until 9 p.m. daily, except on Christmas Eve. NO OVERTIME! Clerks who work evenings do not go on duty next day until noon!"

And no overtime was found, according to Miss Schutz, who adds that such a policy certainly indicates "an awakening public conscience."

Work of the Division of Women and Children during 1927.

In the calendar year 1927 the five investigators in the Division of Women and Children, State Industrial Commission, made 3,296 regular inspections and 3,774 special investigations. These special investigations were occasioned by complaints in regard to long hours, child labor, and failure to pay the minimum wage and sanitation difficulties. The Division issued 779 orders to correct existing conditions.

Sixteen prosecutions were instituted during the year, three firms were prosecuted for violating the hour law for women, one for failure to comply with the minimum wage law, and 12 firms for violating the child labor law.

Wage adjustments were paid to the amount of \$2,695.77, 62 firms and 252 employees being involved, 92 of the latter females under 18 and 160 males under 21.

### Great Britain

Immediate financial adjustment of unsound mills, according to the Daily News Record of January 10, is one of the outstanding recommendations in the awaited report from the Federation of Master Cotton Spinners to the trade in the Lancashire district, in the effort being made by that organization to bring about lower production costs. This financial readjustment should be effected without recourse to moratoria, the report says.

The report goes into all phases and recommends drastic changes from present conditions. Among the other recommendations are:

A 25 per cent reduction in wages.

Extension of hours to 52½ from the present 48.

Reduction of Government expense and social services.

Reduction of payments to the municipalities.



Removal of trade union restrictions, such as cleaning and oiling.  
Cooperation among mill-owners in bleaching, dyeing, printing,  
finishing, packing, and in price reduction.  
Cooperation among spinners, manufacturers and merchants.  
Efficient merchandising.

The tenor of the report made by the Spinners' Manufacturing Association is similar to the Federations', but there is a different view on the subject of wages and hours. This report advocates a reduction in wages of operatives not on the piece price list, and a larger reduction for the higher paid operatives.

Abolition of political protection measures is recommended by the Spinners' Manufacturing Association, and an inquiry into freight carriage charges is asked for. The report declares that a 10 per cent reduction would enable the trade materially to increase business.

The Daily News Record states that the 25 per cent reduction referred to in the above is understood to apply to operatives in Class B. Previous dispatches have carried the figure of a 12½ per cent reduction, which the Record thinks probably is correct, as applying to the operatives as a whole.

### New York

#### Governor Smith's Message.

In his annual message to the legislature, Governor Smith, with reference to the new State law regulating the working hours of women, has this to say:

"I have heretofore stated that it was with reluctance that I accepted the form of 48-hour law for women and minors in industry submitted to me at the last session of the legislature. I commend to your consideration the advisability of removing some of the exceptions in the law which makes its administration difficult and which impair, to a considerable extent, its usefulness."

On the subject of wages, the message says:

"It has been a disappointment to me, and one shared with hosts of others, that the legislature did not see fit to adopt the recommendations originally made by the Factory Commission, reiterated by me time and time again, for the establishment of a minimum wage board within the Department of Labor, to make a study of the wages paid to women and minors and to recommend a living wage for such employees. I appreciate that under the decision of the United States Supreme Court such a wage board would only have the power to suggest and to recommend and that an employer who failed to obey its recommendations could not be penalized therefor. But the power to recommend, resorted to after careful scientific investigations with the cooperation of employers, employees, and public-spirited citizens, would be bound to exert a strong, moral, uplifting influence.

"What justification can there be for a policy on the part of the State which permits large numbers of its women workers, themselves helpless, to work for starvation wages, for wages insufficient to maintain themselves in health and in ~~present~~ comfort? Somebody must pay for this, and payment is exacted in the form of charitable institutions, in the form of reduced health, impaired efficiency, human suffering and weakened future generations.

"Let us at least not ignore this problem entirely. Let us go as far as we can under the decision of the United States Supreme Court. Let us make a fair effort to remedy the social injustice which this condition brings about. I, therefore, earnestly renew the recommendation that I have made on many other occasions to your honorable bodies for the creation of such a minimum wage board within the Department of Labor."

Governor Smith also states his belief that "there should be removed from the statute books of the State all laws that unjustly discriminate against women, by specific amendment to existing statutes without endangering the beneficial protective laws."



### New 48-Hour Law Goes Into Effect.

In order to make plain the details of the women's hour laws and the changes involved in 1927 legislation, which became effective the first of January, 1928, Miss Nelle Swartz, Director of the Bureau of Women in Industry, of the New-York State Department of Labor, has issued the following digest of the provisions of the law:

The only section of the labor law relating especially to women which was changed by the passage of the 48-hour measure last winter is that which relates to the employment of women more than 16 years old in factories and mercantile establishments. The 54-hour week, which was enacted in 1912, still exists for a large group of industrial women. The night work law, which was passed in 1914, has not been changed. No more women are prohibited from working at night under the 48-hour law than have been since 1914.

The new provisions of the labor law which restrict employment of certain women to 8 hours a day for six days a week, a total of 48 hours, apply only to women more than 16 years old in a factory or a mercantile establishment. To make way for a Saturday half-holiday, employment is permitted, however, on five days not to exceed 9 hours, and not more than  $4\frac{1}{2}$  hours on the short day, making a work week which must not exceed  $49\frac{1}{2}$  hours.

Employment is permitted an additional 78 hours in a calendar year, to be distributed in such a way that women may not be employed more than six days or 54 hours in one week.

The 54-hour law still applies to a great many occupations. It provides that the following groups may legally be employed 9 hours a day for six days a week: Women more than 16 years old in restaurants, women more than 18 years old employed as elevator operators, women more than 21 years old employed as conductors or guards on street railroads, or as messengers in telegraph or messenger service.

Neither the 48-hour nor the 54-hour law applies to women over 21 years of age employed as proofreaders, linotypists, and monotypists in newspaper establishments, women writers and reporters in newspaper offices, women employed in stores from December 18 through December 24, and women more than 18 years old in canneries between June 15 and October 15. There are special detailed provisions for women in canneries which it is not possible to go into here.

In order to clarify this understanding it might be wise to outline the law as it stands regarding night work. In a factory women between the ages of 16 and 21 years may not work after 9 p.m. or before 6 a.m. Women more than 21 years old may not work after 10 p.m. or before 6 a.m. In a store no woman more than 16 years old may work after 10 p.m. or before 7 a.m. In a restaurant no woman more than 16 years old may work after 10 p.m. or before 6 a.m. In telegraph or messenger service no woman more than 21 years old may work after 10 p.m. or before 7 a.m. Separate provisions are made for the hours of children.

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Dispatches received from various parts of the State indicate that mercantile stores as a rule are having no great difficulty adjusting their hours to accord with the new law, the principal change in schedule being from an 8.30 to a 9 o'clock opening hour in the morning.

### Married women in Binghamton industries.

In all cities in the United States with a population of 25,000 to 100,000, less than one-fourth (23 per cent) of the women at work are married. But in Binghamton, N. Y., nearly one-half (48.2 per cent) of the working women are married. Compared with four other industrial cities in the country, Binghamton leads, with Passaic, N.J., Butte, Mont., Manchester, N.H., and Wilkes-Barre, Pa. following with percentages of 37.3, 23.7, 23.1 and 17.5, respectively, of their working women married.



In a study made recently, the Bureau of Women in Industry of the New York Department of Labor found the facts regarding the employment of married women in Binghamton Industries almost startling—so large a part did they play in the industrial life of the community. In manufacturing industries 51 per cent of the women employed are married, with the manufacturing of cigars heading the list with 62 per cent of its women employees married; metal and machinery comes next with 58 per cent; wood products and shoes next with 52 and 51 per cent respectively.

In mercantile establishments, where younger women are undoubtedly an asset, 33 per cent are married, and in restaurants 45 per cent.

Because of the large number of married women in industry, it is natural that the predominating age group of the employed women in Binghamton is older than in most industrial cities. Sixty-four per cent of the employed women in Binghamton fall in the middle-age group, that is, 21 to 44 years of age; 23 per cent are young workers, that is, less than 21 years of age, and 13 per cent are over 45 years of age.

The married women in Binghamton show median annual earnings \$22 a year higher than those of single women, the figure for married women being \$877.72. The earnings of single women in Binghamton would naturally be lower than those of married women, because they are younger and less skilled.

Judging from these figures, the indication is that the marital status has not much to do with the size of the pay envelope, and that the married woman is in industry on the same wage basis as her unmarried sister.

As to the relation of the working hours to the marital status, very little difference is seen between the single and married women excepting that the amount of overtime is greater among single women. As with wages, the length of the working day differs very little between the married and unmarried women. In manufacturing, 43 per cent of full time was worked by single women, 49 per cent by married, and 8 per cent by widowed or divorced. Of the undertime, 49 per cent by married women, 4 per cent by the widowed or divorced. Of the overtime, 60 per cent was worked by single women, 37 per cent by married, and 3 per cent by the widowed or divorced.

There was very little difference in the separate industries as to the hours worked by the married and single women, except in laundries, where 42 per cent of the full time was by married women and 17 per cent by single women. As to the undertime work in laundries, 52 per cent was by married women, and 26 per cent by single. In the manufacturing of foods, the overtime work was done largely by single women, 77 per cent as against 23 per cent by married. These variations, however, can be readily accounted for in that the laundry workers, generally speaking, are the older women and the women workers in the manufacturing of food are the younger women.

Here, then, is an industrial city with a total population of approximately 67,000, of which 25,000 are wage earners. About one-third of all the industrial workers are women and 49 per cent of these are married. The length of their working day, their wages, differ but little or not at all from those of their unmarried sisters.

Whether married women go to work because of economic necessity, whether it is from personal preference for work outside the home, or whether it means a desire to be economically independent of their husbands, they are being employed in increasingly large numbers. Their presence in our industries can no longer be ignored or pushed aside because of prejudice or fear. They are to be accepted and reckoned with as any other group of industrial workers. (Industrial Bulletin, November, 1927.)

#### Amalgamated Cooperative Apartments Opened.

December 25, 1927, marked the official opening of the Amalgamated Cooperative Apartments, the first cooperative housing project of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America. The six buildings, located near Van Cortlandt Park, consist of three, four, and five room apartments, with a total of 1,185 rooms, and are available to members of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, and to members of other unions as well.



The buildings cost \$1,825,000, one-third of which was derived from investments by those who occupy the houses. The remainder, amounting to \$1,200,000 was raised on a first mortgage, taken by the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, the interest being 5 per cent a year.

Each tenant-owner of the Amalgamated Cooperative Apartments has invested \$500 for each room, that is, a person desiring a three-room apartment pays in, theoretically, \$1,500; tenants of four-room apartments, \$2,000, and so on.

However, according to Advance for December 30, few tenants paid in the full amount, or even a very large part. Loans have been arranged for most of the tenants by the Amalgamated through the Amalgamated Bank of New York and the Amalgamated Clothing Workers' Credit Union. The Jewish Daily Forward was helpful by offering its credit to the extent of \$325,000.

Because the Amalgamated Cooperative Apartments offer modern apartments at very low rentals, and comply with the State Housing Law, they have been exempt from taxation for a period of 20 years. This exemption makes it possible to fix the rental of \$11 per room per month.

The houses comprising the entire group are heated with oil, and each apartment is furnished with electricity, gas, hot and cold water, bath-tub, shower, gas ranges and ice boxes.

The buildings which are so constructed that each apartment faces at least one street, are surrounded by parks on three sides.

A cooperative bus takes the children of the cooperators to school and back twice a day.

### Pennsylvania

Nearly 40 per cent of the women in selling positions and not quite 10 per cent of the men, were receiving less than \$15 a week, the Bureau of Women and Children of the State Department of Labor and Industry found in a study made in 1926 of personnel policies of Pennsylvania department stores. Three-fourths of the nonselling employees receiving less than \$15 a week were women, while less than one-tenth of the women in this group received \$25 or more.

Not only did the women's wages more generally fall in the lower paid groups, but also very few women were found in the higher paid groups. Nine out of every ten selling positions, where weekly earnings were \$45 or more, were filled by men, while of 102 selling positions reported where the weekly earnings were \$51 or more, only 12 were held by women.

For all selling employees, the median weekly earnings were \$17.13. The median for men was \$26.17, while for women it was \$16.13. That the median earnings for women, so nearly approximated the earnings for both men and women is explained by the fact that there are three times as many women as men employed at selling.

The middle figure for yearly earnings in 1925 for all selling employees was \$1,247—for women \$956, and for men \$1,767.

The nonselling positions on the whole, commanded only slightly better salaries than the selling positions, median weekly earnings for the whole group being \$17.92. For women the median was \$15.45, and for men \$23.84. The median annual earnings for nonselling employees were \$1,198 in 1925—for women \$909, and for men \$1,530.

Thirty-two department stores in 13 cities in Pennsylvania form the basis of this study, the stores ranging in size from 25 employees to approximately 5,000 employees. The 13 cities vary in population from less than 10,000 inhabitants to more than 100,000, and the total number of employees connected with the stores is estimated at 23,000.



On the subject of hours of work, the report points out that although traditionally stores were to be opened at all hours, particularly afternoons and evenings on Saturday, actually much has been done to train the public to shop during certain limited periods, and the established weekly hours in the 32 stores under consideration in no case were found to equal the 54-hour maximum permitted by law for women. The investigation showed that in five stores the women employees worked less than 48 hours. In 15 stores they worked 48 and under 50 hours, and in 12 stores 50 and under 53 hours. In 8 stores the schedule of hours for men was longer than for women, but in only one establishment were the weekly hours of men in excess of the 54-hour legal maximum for women.

Many stores, it was found, not only gave a half-day holiday during the summer months, but also had shorter daily working hours, while some had only the shorter schedule without the half-day holiday. Eleven stores were kept open Saturday evenings. Nearly all of these were in medium sized or small cities. Lunch periods in the 32 stores varied from 45 minutes to 1½ hours, only six having the 45 minute allowance.

As to summer vacations, all but one of the stores had a definite policy providing for vacations with pay, which affected all employees alike.

Discussing opportunities for men and women, the report has this to say:

Although women out-numbered men in both selling and nonselling positions in department stores, it was found that all positions were not open to men and women alike. The variation in practice regarding the positions traditionally closed to women, however, indicates that the times are changing and that gradually women are proving they can make a success in those positions hitherto filled entirely by men.

Women were not found in any of the stores in departments catering wholly to men, such as men's clothing departments. In the past boys' clothing departments had also been closed to women, but women were frequently found in these departments and their managers felt that they were selling very successfully in them.

Another group of positions traditionally closed to women, apparently on the basis of the cost of the merchandise, include carpets and furniture. In a few stores women were found selling carpets and rugs, evidently quite to the satisfaction of the manager. In other stores the merchants said with conviction that women could never make a success in these fields. Furniture was once a field in which men were absolutely in command but as women have become successful in interior decorating lines they have also taken up the selling of furniture. In some stores women were found selling only novelty and summer furniture, but occasionally they were selling all kinds of furniture. Only one establishment had a hard and fast rule against having women in yard goods departments.

Certain unskilled jobs, such as porter and watchman positions, and other jobs requiring both mechanical skill and strength, were always filled by men.

A few stores did not employ women as section managers, or "floor men," though other stores found them of value, especially in intimate wear departments. The window dressers' jobs seemed closed to women as a rule. In the smaller stores the window-dresser was his own carpenter and porter, and had as great a variety of jobs to perform as a man of all work. As long as this custom holds it is hardly probable women will be taken for such positions, though one woman was found in a window-dressing department in one large store. A few store managers said they would hire a woman if the right one could be found. Possibly as women become more interested in this kind of work and when more women have really made their mark in it, managers who now profess consternation at the thought of a woman in such a position may find they will want to readjust their viewpoints.

The report takes up various other matters in the realm of personnel relations, and also discusses at length the physical equipment of the stores studied.



Canada

British Columbia.

During October, 1927, the Minimum Wage Board of British Columbia published Order No. 18 relating to the mercantile industry. This order, which combines Orders, 1, 2, and 3, published in 1919, fixes the same rates as those in the earlier orders. The new Order, effective January, 1928, provides that subject to the other provisions the minimum wage for every employee in the mercantile industry (except women to whom a special license is issued under section 10 of the same act) shall be \$12.75 a week of 48 hours, or 26 9/16 cents per hour. The minimum wage rates for every girl under 18 years of age, range from \$7.50 a week during the first three months of employment, to \$11 a week during the eighth three months, that is, an increase of 50 cents is provided every three months of employment. The minimum rate for every female apprentice 18 years of age or over, begins at \$9 a week for the first three months of employment, and increases \$1 each three months thereafter until a wage of \$12 is reached.

Licenses must be obtained from the board before apprentices 18 years of age or over may be employed at these rates.

No woman or girl shall be employed longer than 48 hours in any one week unless a special permit in writing has been obtained from the chairman or secretary of the board. Every woman or girl employed for longer than 48 hours in any week shall be paid pro rata for such excess time according to the legal rate to which she is entitled. For a lesser number of hours than 48 in any one week every woman or girl may be paid pro rata according to the legal rate to which she is entitled.

Quebec.

The Women's Minimum Wage Board of the Province of Quebec recently approved Order No. 3, governing female employees in printing, bookbinding, lithographing and envelope making establishments in the City and Island of Montreal, and a radius of ten miles around and beyond Montreal. The order, effective January 1, provides a wage for experienced workers of \$12.50. For apprentices, the rates are \$7 for the first 6 months, \$8 for the second 6 months, \$9.50 for the third 6 months, and \$11 for the fourth 6 months.

The number of inexperienced workers having less than 24 months of apprenticeship shall not exceed one-half of the total female working force.

Any woman working in excess of the regular recognized working period of the establishment shall be paid at not less than the regular rates, but in all cases according to the prevailing custom of the trade. Any woman losing time during the regular recognized working period will be paid proportionately for the actual number of hours worked. No deduction below the minimum wage line for absence shall exceed the value of the time lost reckoned proportionately to the regular recognized working period of the establishment. An employee required to wait on the premises shall be paid for the time thus spent.

The board may issue permits for lower wages on behalf of aged or handicapped workers. It may also grant permits of variation or suspension of any of these regulations in case of exceptional conditions.

Great Britain

The attitude of the Standing Joint Committee of Industrial Women's Organizations in regard to protective legislation for women is clearly defined in a pamphlet published recently by the Labor Party. The statement in part is as follows:

In the present state of public opinion it is often easier to secure protection for women than for men, while conditions which men's stronger organization can gain for them can only be won for women by legislative enactment.



Protective legislation for women can be divided into three classes:

1. Provisions that would be good for men as well as women, but which can be obtained for women and not for men at the present time.

Legislation regarding hours of work comes under this heading. We can in factory legislation secure regulation of women's hours, and even the present Government (a year ago at least) was willing to enact a 48-hour week for women. Not all the efforts of Labor, and of agreements at the International Labor Conferences, have been sufficient to secure 48-hour legislation for all workers. We prefer to take what regulation we can get rather than to delay it.

2. Regulations that are more needed for women than for men, because women are less fitted than men for certain dangerous and specially heavy muscular work.

Under this heading comes the exemption of women from all forms of active service; their prohibition in dangerous industrial processes, such as work in underground mines, outside window-cleaning, the cleaning of dangerous machinery; also regulations as to the lifting of heavy weights, exposure to excessive heat, and the handling of poisonous substances which may be especially injurious to women. The prohibition of night work, in so far as night work is necessary, may be placed in the same category. The experience in munition factories during the war brought once more into evidence the half-forgotten facts of unregulated night work—"deterioration in health caused by the difficulty of securing sufficient rest by day; disturbance of home life with its injurious effects upon the children; and diminished value of work done." (Report on Women's Employment by the Health of Munition Workers' Committee.) If women could be relieved of domestic duties, it may be that their resistance to industrial fatigue would approximate more nearly to that of men, but legislation has to deal with things as they are.

3. Some forms of protection are necessary for women because of their functions as mothers.

Under this heading come the provisions proposed by the Maternity Convention adopted by the International Labor Conference in 1919. This Convention, which has not yet been ratified by our country, declares that women workers should be prohibited from working for six weeks after childbirth, have the option of not doing so six weeks before, and should have adequate maintenance during the whole period.

Our position, therefore, is that we take whatever we can get under all three heads, and if we can not get it for men, or it is not necessary for them, we endeavor to secure it for women alone.

Does such provision worsen the position of industrial women workers? In our opinion the facts all point in the other direction. The position of women in the industrial world during the last 100 years has been strengthened by every regulation for their protection which has been adopted.

We can not believe it possible that anybody would desire to go back to the time when women were employed in coal mines, or when the hours of their work in factories were wholly unregulated. Without regulation those who are weakest get the worst jobs at the worst pay, and that means that women get them. It is, however, quite a mistake to think that when the hours in factories and workshops employing women are regulated, women are at a disadvantage in comparison with men.

An employer does not substitute men in such a case, but all workers share in the improvement. As to the prohibition of night work, it has certainly not been injurious to women, and it has been an influence toward its abolition.



A comparison of the numbers of men and women employed in the engineering and metal trades is especially interesting. Allowing for slight differences in methods of compilation the following numbers indicate the trend of women's employment in these trades:

	Numbers	
1881	38,000	(Censuses figures, Great Britain)
1911	110,000	(Census figures, Great Britain)
1926	252,000	(Ministry of Labor estimates, Great Britain and Northern Ireland—where the number is very small.)

Expressed in the form of an index number there were 252 women employed in 1911 for every 100 employed in 1881, and 340 women employed in 1926, for every 100 in 1881.

On the other hand, the numbers of men have not increased so greatly. For every 100 employed in 1881 there were 189 in 1911, and there was no increase on these figures in 1926.

The worker who can not be exploited at the employers' will because the law does not permit it, gains a stronger and not a weaker position in the industrial world. Legislation has had to step in to give women a chance of achieving a more equal footing with men. Without such protection it is not equality that the woman achieves but far greater inequality.

#### NOTES.

Describing its own work and objects, and giving facts about the status of working women in the United States, the Women's Bureau of the United States Department of Labor has recently issued a new folder under the title "The Women's Bureau—What it is, What it does, What it publishes."

The folder lists the standards advocated by the bureau for the employment of women, and illustrates good working conditions in five pictures with explanatory titles. All publications issued by the bureau to date and all its popular exhibits, which are lent upon request, without charge, to responsible organizations, are listed. The folder may be had in single copies for reference, or in larger numbers for distribution at industrial study groups.



News Letter No. 55.

March 10, 1928.

## ACTIVITIES AFFECTING WOMEN IN INDUSTRY

Massachusetts

Hearings before the committee on labor and industry of the legislature have been held during the past month on two bills affecting the hours of employment of women. One of these measures, sponsored by the Associated Industries of the State, whose representative is B. Loring Young, former speaker of the Massachusetts House of Representatives, proposes amending the law relative to the employment of women in the textile industry after 6 p.m. to permit their employment, as in other manufacturing industries, until 10 p.m.

The other bill, recommended by the New England Council, would amend the 48-hour law so that women over 16 years of age may be employed an additional 78 hours in any calendar year. In the distribution of such overtime, no woman would be permitted to work more than 10 hours in any day, nor more than 6 days or 54 hours in any week. For women over 21 years of age, night work would be prohibited between 10 p.m. and 6 a.m., and for women under 21, between 9 p.m. and 6 a.m.

Minnesota

The Industrial Commission of Minnesota has just secured conviction in the Municipal Court of St. Paul of the firm of Brown & Bigelow for violating the hour law for women, i.e., for employing females more than 54 hours a week. The case brought alleged employment 79 1/3 hours a week. Evidence was secured through visits by the agents of the Division of Women and Children to women employees of Brown & Bigelow at their homes, as the factory records were kept in such a way that the regular hours the women worked were posted in the record book and paid for in check. All overtime hours were paid for in cash, and no record open to the Industrial Commission was kept of this overtime. Although the fine involved was only \$25, the Industrial Commission feels that the case is one of importance.

New Jersey

Early in February the State Senate passed a bill to add a penalty clause to the 1923 legislation prohibiting night work for women between 10 p.m. and 6 a.m., thus making the law enforceable. A similar bill passed the upper house last year but was killed in the assembly.

New York

## New Efforts to Amend Hour Law.

Bills both to repeal and to amend the 48-hour law which was passed in 1927 and became effective January 1 of this year, have been introduced in the present session of the legislature. One bill would amend the law by establishing a straight 48-hour week, while another would amend it to permit 50 hours a week, to be worked in 5 days of 10 hours each. No amendment has been offered to change the present provision for 78 hours overtime during one year.



### Shall Waitresses Work All Night?

The bill introduced by Assemblyman Boyle to amend the Labor Law so as to permit owners of restaurants to require waitresses to work all night has been reported favorably by the Labor and Industry Committee. Since, according to the New York State Federation of Labor Bulletin for March 10, requests made to the committee by the Federation and the Waitresses' Unions of New York, Syracuse, Rochester, and Buffalo for a hearing on the bill were disregarded, these organizations, the Women's Trade Union League, the League of Women Voters, and other women's organizations, are presenting their opposition to this bill to the members of the legislature.

### Tax on Earnings of Married Women Proposed.

Assemblyman Breitenbach is the introducer of a bill which would tax, in addition to any income tax now provided by law, the earnings of any married woman in industry or in professional work whose husband earns in excess of \$2,000 a year. A tax of 2 per cent of the net earnings would be required, an exemption of \$500 being made for each minor child. Mr. Breitenbach is reported to have said in support of his bill that "there are 150,000 men and women unemployed and on the other hand there are 175,000 married women employed in the State to-day." This bill met the unanimous disapproval of the 992 delegates to the Annual Convention of the New York City Federation of Women's Clubs, held early in February.

### Rest Pauses Found Infrequently.

Reporting in the 'Industrial Bulletin for December, 1927, on the subject of rest pauses in industrial plants, Miss Nelle Swartz, Director of the Bureau of Women in Industry of the New York State Department of Labor, says "The Bureau of Women in Industry has received many inquiries regarding the extent to which organized rest pauses have been adopted by manufacturers. From a brief survey of the field it is apparent that the idea as yet has taken but slight hold of industry in general. Every effort was made through commercial and trade organizations and management associations to ascertain the firms which had organized rest pauses, but of all those suggested it was found that only five had provided some relief from the pressure and drive of industry by breaking hours."

Following a detailed report on the five firms referred to, Miss Swartz continued: "As to the desirability of rest pauses there can be no doubt. The extensive experimental investigations which have been carried on in America and Great Britain as well as on the continent, have clearly demonstrated the mutual benefit to employer and employee which has resulted from their adoption. The usual work day is divided by a lunch recess only, and the periods of work are thus of four or five hours' duration. The average worker can not maintain his highest efficiency for so long a shift and further short breaks, interpolated at definite intervals, offset the fatigue which lowers the vitality of the worker and results in a diminution of his working capacity."

### Pennsylvania

A recent decision of the Attorney-General of Pennsylvania has declared that laundries are not to be classified as manufacturing establishments within the meaning of the night work law. The informal opinion of the Deputy Attorney General reads as follows:

Dear Mr. Waters:

According to your letter of January 24th, the owners of a laundry in Philadelphia have decided to employ their women operators in three shifts which would require some of the women to work after 10 p.m. and before 6 a.m.



Section 4 of the Act of June 25, 1913, P.L. 1024 provides:

"No female shall be employed or permitted to work in any manufacturing establishment before the hour of six o'clock in the morning, or after the hour of ten o'clock in the evening of any day; Provided, That this section shall not apply to managers, superintendents or persons doing clerical or stenographic work."

In view of the foregoing provisions, your inquiry is whether a laundry is a manufacturing establishment within the meaning of the said section.

Section 4 was construed by Deputy Attorney General Collins in an opinion rendered May 16, 1921, (ID & C. 98) to forbid women to operate linotype machines in printing establishments between 10 p.m. and 6 a.m. Mr. Collins prefaced his conclusion on the fact that the Commonwealth treated printing establishments as manufacturing establishments for the purpose of taxation and that it could not logically treat them otherwise in regard to the laws regulating labor. Exactly the same reasoning may be well applied to the case under consideration, although it leads us to reach a different conclusion regarding laundries than was reached in the opinion cited regarding printing establishments.

In the case of Commonwealth vs. Keystone Laundry Company, Appellant, 203 Pa. 289, it was held that a laundry was not a manufacturing corporation and was, therefore, not exempt from capital stock tax. Subsequent to the rendition of this opinion by the Supreme Court, the legislature passed the Act of July 22, 1913, P.L. 903, which was an amendment of section 21 of the Act of June 1, 1889, as amended, by excepting from the provisions of said section corporations, limited partnerships, and joint stock associations organized for laundering or manufacturing purposes. This act having been passed three days before the act first above cited, clearly indicates that the legislature not only recognized the laundering business as not a manufacturing business in the early act, but eliminated the laundering business in drafting and passing section 4 of the Act of July 25, 1913, P.L. 1024. The courts of other States have held to the same effect, one judge actually saying that a laundry is not a place where they make clean clothes but where they make clothes clean.

Therefore, you are advised that the restrictions imposed by section 4 of the Act of July 25, 1913, P.L. 1024, can not be construed to apply to laundries.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) ROSCOE R. KOCH,

Deputy Attorney General, Department of Justice.

#### South Carolina

A despatch of February 24 reported that there had been introduced in the lower house of the legislature a bill to establish a 48-hour week in "textile and similar industries" in South Carolina, and that the bill was referred without comment to the judiciary committee.

#### Canada

The annual report on Labor Legislation in Canada for 1926 shows that the Factories Act of the province of Alberta was revised and amended and now contains a clause providing that, wherever a minimum wage has been fixed for female workers in any class of employment, no male worker may be employed in such class at a lower wage. In Saskatchewan and Quebec, the minimum wage laws for women were amended. The amendment to the Saskatchewan Act provides that a magistrate convicting an employer of



paying wages at a lower rate than that fixed by the Minimum Wage Board, shall order him to pay to the employee the difference between the amount actually paid her and that to which she is entitled. Formerly it was necessary for the employee to bring a civil action to recover the amount due her. The amendment to the Quebec Minimum Wage Act increases the number of commissioners from three to four.

In addition to the amendments to minimum wage laws for women in the provinces of Quebec and Saskatchewan, the report notes a number of measures relating to women. The Female Employment Act of Saskatchewan passed by the legislature at the session of 1918-19, was replaced by a new law bearing the same title and applying not only to restaurants and laundries, but also to public hotels, boarding, lodging and rooming houses and cafes. No person may employ a woman or girl in any capacity requiring her to lodge, reside or work in such an establishment without first obtaining a special license from the municipality in which the establishment is situated. The license, for which the fee may not exceed one dollar, must be renewed annually. The report recalls the fact that the first legislation of this character in the province of Saskatchewan was enacted in 1912 and forbade the employment of white women or girls in businesses owned or managed by a Japanese, Chinaman, or other Oriental. The constitutionality of this act was challenged in the courts and was upheld by the Supreme Court of Saskatchewan in a judgment rendered in the case of Rex vs. Quong Wing.

The revised and amended Factories Act of Alberta contains a new clause providing that, where the whole or a part of the work in which female employees are engaged can be efficiently performed while they are seated, the employer must provide chairs or seats. The act omits the clause forbidding night employment of women, but the Minimum Wage Act of this province gives the Minimum Wage Board authority to determine periods of employment and shifts, such determination to supersede any provision of the Factories Act on this subject. (Report, Canada Department of Labor, 1926-27.)

#### British Columbia.

Leave to appeal to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council against a recent decision of the British Columbia Court of Appeal under the Male Minimum Wage Act of the province is being sought by the defendant, Allen Thrasher, a logging operator in the Prince George District. Thrasher was sued by Cecil Compton, a cook in a lumber camp, for payment at the rate of 40 cents an hour, this being the minimum rate fixed for the lumber industry by the Board of Adjustment administering the act. The County Court Judge at Fort George held that the occupation of a cook was not incidental to the lumbering industry and was not covered by the board's order. On appeal by the plaintiff the Court of Appeal decided that cooks were included and refused to the defendant permission to appeal to a higher court. Thrasher then took steps to obtain from the Privy Council leave to appeal to them. The Board of Adjustment will oppose the application, which will be considered early in the present year.

Another case involving the interpretation of the board's order, governing the lumber industry, was heard at Vancouver, in December, when Mr. Justice Cayley, held that the order did not apply to cooks' "flunkies" (dish-washers, etc.), though it might be held to apply to the cooks themselves. It is stated that the board will take any action that may be necessary to secure the application of the act to all workers connected with the lumbering industry. (Labor Gazette, Canada, February, 1928.)

#### Quebec.

Order No. 4 of the Women's Minimum Wage Commission, effective March 1, 1928, like Order No. 3, governs women employees in printing, bookbinding, lithographing and envelope-making establishments, but applies only to such employees outside the city and Island of Montreal, and a radius of ten miles around and beyond the island. While the minimum rate set by Order No. 3 for experienced women within this district was



\$12.50, and for apprentices \$7, \$8, \$9.50 and \$11 respectively for each of four periods of apprenticeship of six months' duration, the learning period lasting for two years, the minimum set by Order No. 4 for experienced women is \$9, and for apprentices \$6, \$6.50, \$7, and \$8 respectively for each of four periods of apprenticeship of six months' duration, the learning period lasting for two years. In other respects the two orders are alike. (Labor Gazette, Canada, January, 1928.)

#### Saskatchewan.

The Minimum Wage Board of Saskatchewan gave a ruling in January that no deductions are to be made from the minimum wages fixed by various orders for girls and women in the province. The question had been raised whether employers could make deductions to cover the cost of uniforms supplied by the employing firm. (Labor Gazette, Canada, February, 1928.)

#### India

In reply to a question in the House of Commons November 24, 1927, it was stated by the Under Secretary of State for India (Earl Winterton) that proposals were under consideration for the withdrawal of women in coal and salt mines in India, but that at the present time there were employed under ground in coal mines in Bengal 8,010 women, in Bihar and Orissa, 18,910 women, in the Central Provinces 1,472 women, and in salt mines in the Punjab, 223 women. Above ground in the coal mines there were, he said, 4,961 women employed in Bengal, 12,828 in Bihar and Orissa, and 827 in the Central Provinces. (Industrial and Labor Information, February 6, 1928.)

#### Japan

##### Employment Conditions of Women.

The 14th meeting of the Commission on Women's Labor Problems of the Japanese Association for International Labor Legislation was held in Tokyo on October 12, 1927. Discussion took place on the subject of first hand investigation of the conditions of work underground of women miners in the Kyushu district, and those of maidservants employed in the city of Tokyo and its suburbs. It was decided to undertake these two investigations, the first to take place in the latter part of October.

The following resolution was adopted, urging improvement of the dormitories of women workers in the textile industry:

The system of boarding women workers in dormitories attached to factories is peculiar to Japan. At present about 500,000 women workers, or about 66 per cent of the 750,000 women workers employed in the textile industry, live in dormitories maintained for the most part by their employers.

Needless to say not only does the condition of the dormitories to a great extent affect the private life of women workers, but the fact that the majority of the women workers employed in the same factory live in the same dormitory hinders the development of the spirit of independence and self-help and places them in a disadvantageous position in bargaining with their employers. It goes without saying that the amelioration of the dormitory life of women workers must begin by improvements in basic conditions, such as the prohibition of night work, prolongation of leisure hours, increase of holidays and wages, etc., yet much is left to be desired in the method of management and equipment of the dormitories themselves.

In view of this, the Commission on Women's Labor Problems of the Japanese Association for International Labor Legislation, having investigated the actual conditions in dormitories attached to factories in the textile industry in Japan, has come to the conclusion that the adoption of the following reforms is most urgently needed, and demands their introduction by the Government authorities and employers concerned.



(1) Instead of deducting a part of the wages towards the expenses for the management of the dormitories, a reasonable amount of wages should be paid to the workers and the actual cost of boarding collected from the boarders themselves.

Women workers should be represented on the staff for the supervision and management of the dormitories. Furthermore, supervision and management of dormitories should be entrusted as much as possible to organizations not established for purposes of gain.

(2) Women should be appointed as superintendents of dormitories; conveniences should be provided for the use of men and women separately.

(3) Harmful or unsuitable food should not be served in dormitories; adequate regulations penalizing any infringement should be provided.

(4) The size of rooms in dormitories should be smaller and the number of persons accommodated therein accordingly decreased. The lighting and heating arrangements should be improved, and at the same time facilities should be provided which would contribute towards the domestic happiness of women workers. In addition adequate provision should be made for the comfort of night workers to insure their getting undisturbed sleep in the day time.

(5) In matters relating to the establishment of educational or recreational facilities for women workers, their welfare should above all be considered as a primary object. Special attention should be paid to educational facilities so as to arrange the curriculum or subject matter to fit in with the normal practical daily life of these women workers.

(6) Freedom of correspondence should be allowed women workers, together with free access to the dormitory at any time.

With regard to the methods of carrying out these reforms, the commission considers that it is most expedient to revise the existing regulation concerning the supervision of dormitories and at the same time to initiate a policy of appointing women as factory inspectors, so that they may be able to supervise the strict enforcement of acts and regulations and promote the introduction of better conditions in dormitories. (Industrial and Labor Information, December 12, 1927.)

#### Work of Women in Mines.

The Third Annual General Meeting of the Japanese Association for International Labor Legislation was held in Tokyo on December 10, 1927. The following resolutions were adopted:

##### Underground Work of Women in Mines.

In view of the necessity of health and sanitation, and the protection of motherhood, as well as of the general situation in foreign countries, the Japanese Association for International Labor Legislation has recognized the necessity of prohibiting the underground work of women even at the cost of a certain amount of sacrifice on the part of industry. It has, therefore, already adopted a resolution to the effect that legislative principles should be laid down for the prohibition of underground work for women;

It appears very likely to be due to the absence of a convention concerning the prohibition of underground work for women, laying down international standards, that the question has so far been neglected;

On these grounds the Japanese Association for International Labor Legislation demands that the Japanese workers' delegate to the next session of the International Labor Conference take adequate measures for the purpose of drawing the attention of the International Labor Conference to this question.



### Night Work of Women in Mines.

That night work is harmful for women needs no further explanation;

The convention concerning the employment of women during the night adopted at the First Session of the International Labor Conference, held at Washington, prohibits such employment. And since that part of the Factory Act which was amended in pursuance of this convention became law as from July 1, 1926, with a three-year period of postponement, night work for women in factories would be prohibited at the latest as from July 1, 1929. But no legislative action has yet been taken for the prohibition of night work of women in mines;

It can not escape censure that in the matter of legislation the treatment of factory workers differs without any specific reason from that of mine workers. Moreover, it must be deeply regretted, from the standpoint of international cooperation, that owing to such defective legislation, serious obstacles will still exist in the way of the ratification of the Washington Convention referred to, even when, in the near future, the night work of women in factories comes to be prohibited;

For these reasons, the Japanese Association for International Labor Legislation expresses its earnest desire that the Government authorities concerned, and the commission for the investigation of labor conditions in mines, should take measures so urgently needed for prohibiting night work, as well as underground work for women in mines. (Industrial and Labor Information, February 6, 1928.)

### Palestine

An ordinance dealing with the industrial employment of women and children, recently published by the Government of Palestine, enables the High Commissioner in Executive Council to make regulations prescribing the conditions under which women and children may be employed in industrial undertakings, fixing the minimum age at which children may be employed in particular trades and occupations, imposing conditions upon persons who employ children in industry, specifying the trades and occupations which are to be deemed to be dangerous trades, exempting any industrial undertaking from the operation of the ordinance, and, in general, for carrying the provisions of the ordinance into effect. The right of inspection and search of industrial premises is also provided for.

A schedule is appended to the draft ordinance which prescribes regulations on certain of the above-mentioned points. These prohibit the employment of women and children on the work of cleaning machinery in motion or in dangerous trades, among which are included the making and finishing of mirrors, the manufacture of asphalt and bitumen and those trades in which white lead is employed.

Women may not be employed in industry between 10 p.m. and 5 a.m., or during a period of eleven consecutive hours including the aforementioned hours. An exception is made in cases in which an interruption of work which it was impossible to foresee is brought about by a cause beyond control, or in which the work has to do with raw materials subject to rapid deterioration and in which therefore such work is needed to preserve the materials from certain loss.

It is expected that the new provisions will shortly come into force, as in reply to a question in the House of Commons on November 14 last, the Under Secretary of State for the colonies stated that he had already authorized the High Commissioner to proceed with the enactment of the draft ordinance. (Industrial and Labor Information, January 23, 1928.)

### Portugal

The legislation governing the work of women and young persons in industry in Portugal, which dates from February 10, 1890, was amended by a decree of October 20, 1927.



The new decree provides that all young persons must be medically examined before being admitted to industrial employment. They are also required to prove literacy. The health of women and young persons will be supervised by the industrial health inspectors and the physicians attached to that service. The physicians are required to examine and vaccinate women and young persons, to see that the work done by pregnant women is not too strenuous and is suspended during the months following childbirth; to prohibit the employment of young persons at work exceeding their physical strength; to issue prophylactic regulations in cases of contagious disease. In order to carry out these duties they will visit industrial establishments regularly.

The decree also defines in detail the industries in which the employment of women and young persons is forbidden. Breaches of the regulations will be punished by fines, the amount of which will be distributed as follows: 50 per cent to the State; 30 per cent to the workers' fund, and 20 per cent to the fund of the authorities responsible for the collection of fines. (O Seculo, November 4, 1927; Industrial and Labor Information, February 6, 1928.)

### South Africa

The bulletin of the International Council of Women for December 1927, reports that Mrs. Tonkin, South Africa's first woman factory inspector, has been responsible for the opening of the Working Girls' Club at Port Elizabeth, which has done splendid work on behalf of the hundreds of young girls employed in the factories there. This Club has been so successful that a new hostel at a cost of £10,000 is now being built in connection with it. So far it is the only one of its kind in the Union, but we hear that it is proposed to erect similar industrial hostels in all large towns, where welfare work for women is receiving attention.

### Turkey

The administration of the Turkish tobacco monopoly recently acquired near the Djoubali factory an apartment containing 15 rooms, in which the children of women working in the factory are to be taken care of at the expense of the administration.

A recent regulation also provides that the children shall be fed at the expense of the administration.

Women who have served for six months or more will receive 30 days' leave with full pay in the event of childbirth. They will also receive free medical attendance.

Every male worker with three years' service will receive a gratuity equal to one month's wages in the event of marriage. (La Republique, January 16, 1928, Industrial and Labor Information, February 6, 1928.)

### NOTES

#### "The Common Cold" and Absenteeism.

In an article entitled "'The Common Cold', Etiology, Prevention and Treatment," in the American Journal of Public Health for January 1928, Volney S. Cheney, M.D., Medical Director, Armour & Co., Chicago, Ill., has this to say:

In all industries absenteeism on account of sickness is a serious economic problem. In a recent report of the Boston Edison Company, covering a period of 10 years, the absences per year on account of sickness were 8.9 calendar days for males and 14 days for females. Among males, sickness caused 12 times as much absenteeism as accidents and the ratio for females was 171 to 1. Respiratory diseases, caused nearly one-half of the total number of days lost by men. Out of every 10 men, 4 lost time during the year on account of "common colds". Out of every 10 women, 7 lost



time on account of the same cause. Males lost 1.4 days per year and females 2.1 days per year because of colds. Based upon this average, the economic loss caused by "colds", in wages alone, in all the industries of the United States is several millions of dollars and when we also consider the losses due to decrease in efficiency, decrease in production, and the extra expenditures of the invalid, the total is enormous.

#### Pregnancy and Labor of Women in the Textile Industry.

An article by M. Hirsch—Industrial Pathology of Pregnancy and Labor—appearing in the January 15, 1927 issue of *Zentralblatt für Gynäkologie*, Leipzig, is reviewed briefly in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* for June 18, 1927. "This study" says the review, "comprises 3,165 completed pregnancies of women employed in the textile industry. The course of labor was pathologic in 34.4 per cent. Pathologic labors were 18 per cent more frequent in women who worked standing than in those who sat at their work. Premature births, stillbirths, forceps deliveries and cesarean sections were about 50 per cent more frequent in these women than in the general population; they were much more frequent in the women who stood than in those who sat at their work. Varicose veins occurred nearly three times as often in the women who stood as in those who sat."

#### College Women Earning Over \$3,000 Exceptional.

The single college woman in a full-time job who makes more than \$3,000 a year belongs to the exceptional minority, declared Mrs. Chase G. Woodhouse of the United States Bureau of Home Economics, in a speech to the National Association of Deans of Women and the National Bureau of Occupations. Mrs. Woodhouse was reviewing the collection of occupational histories of 7,000 members of the American Association of University Women, which the committee on the economic and legal status of women of the association has made as a contribution to the current discussions on the employment of college women.

Out of the 3,039 single women in full-time jobs, 2,321 are in educational work, and only 718 in all other fields, and of those in educational work, the majority, 2,127, are teachers, with only 194 in administrative work.

The best-paid women in the group are three college presidents with an average salary of \$8,200, followed by nine junior high school principals with an average salary of \$3,859, four normal school principals averaging \$3,800, and 52 college deans with \$3,426. In teaching, the highest average salary is \$2,457 for the colleges, and the lowest is an average of \$1,632 in the grade schools.

Apart from educational work, 52 occupations were reported in which the best-paid woman is an executive in a commercial organization who makes \$34,000 a year in addition to stock dividends. She had entered a family-owned business, which Mrs. Woodhouse asserted is "a practice which we ought to encourage, a step so usual for men, and so exceptional for women."

The usual assumption that business pays better than a profession is contradicted by the returns from the women of this group. The managers of cafeterias and tea rooms averaged \$3,300, interior decorators, \$3,146, but all other women less than \$3,000. In the professional groups, statisticians averaged \$3,730, lawyers \$3,587, physicians, \$3,551, research workers, \$3,271.

"To a librarian, an M.A. Degree is worth on the average \$193 a year, and a Ph. D. \$600," said Mrs. Woodhouse, adding "This is good interest on the investment." (*Christian Science Monitor*, February 27, 1928.)



### An Experiment in Budgets.

In order to have some "real data" on the cost of living for industrial girls, 45 girls of the industrial club of the Young Women's Christian Association of Denver, Colo., have decided to keep accounts of their daily expenditures. "Because we believe" they say, "that the problem of wages is one of the most fundamental as well as most difficult of all the problems confronting industrial girls and women to-day, and that the amount of the industrial girl's earnings determines quite largely her opportunities for balanced, normal, 'abundant' living, we have chosen to think together about some phases of that problem, and to do something definite which might help a little toward its solution, at least locally."

Since such a project requiring the united action of a number of persons, could never be successful without some enthusiasm and interest, the plan was launched in the industrial club groups by giving the play "The Budget Ghost" and this has been used as a basis for "playing the game" and stimulating interest. The play was produced by the dramatics class of the club. On following club nights, talks were made on the value of keeping expense accounts and budget books were distributed to the girls who filled out confidential questionnaires and promised to keep accounts of their expenditures.

As it was not possible to find printed books to fill the need, and impossible to have books printed to order, household budget books were obtained from one of the local banks and remade to suit. Near the close of each month, "Budget Ghost" sends a letter to each participant, inclosing a report blank which each girl returns to the office. The girl's name does not appear on this report blank. She is given a number when she fills out her questionnaire, and her report blank is numbered for her each time before it is sent out from the office.

Of the total of 45 girls, 31 are classes as industrial, nine are in business, two are domestic workers, and three housewives; seven are married, and 38 single; 19 are between 17 and 20 years of age, and 25 are between 20 and 25 years; 13 have one or more dependents.



U. S. Department of Labor  
WOMEN'S BUREAU  
Washington

News Letter No. 56.

July 20, 1928.

ACTIVITIES AFFECTING WOMEN IN INDUSTRY

Massachusetts

The Department of Labor and Industries reports that the minimum wage for the electrical equipment and supplies occupation became effective on June 1st, 1928. This decree provides:

1. For employees of ordinary ability, irrespective of age, not less than \$14 a week.
2. For beginners, irrespective of age, not less than \$12 a week.
3. An employee shall be considered of ordinary ability, irrespective of age, who has worked in the industry six months, three months of which was in a particular factory; provided that an employee who has not been employed in the industry eight months or more and who returns to work in a factory where she has been previously employed may be rated as a beginner for a period of not more than one month.
4. An employee of less than ordinary ability, by reason of physical defect, may be paid less than the prescribed minimum rate, provided that a special license is obtained from the Commission in accordance with the law.
5. These rates are based on full-time work, by which is meant the full number of hours of work per week required by employers and permitted by the laws of the Commonwealth.
6. These determinations shall take effect on June 1, 1928, and shall apply to all females then or thereafter employed.

New York

Attorney General Rules on 48-Hour Law.

"When the New York legislature passed its present law limiting the hours that women are permitted to work in mercantile stores and in factories, it provided for an 8-hour day and 48-hour week but it also permitted certain other arrangements of hours. The law stated that in order to make one or more shorter work days in the week "she may be employed on 5 days of the week at not to exceed 9 hours on each of such days and not more than  $4\frac{1}{2}$  hours on such shorter work day and not in excess altogether of  $49\frac{1}{2}$  hours in each week." In addition the law provided for "an additional 78 hours" of overtime in any calendar year provided the woman is not employed more than 54 hours or 6 days weekly.

These two provisions were interpreted by some employers to mean that a woman could work on the 9-hour:  $49\frac{1}{2}$ -hour schedule and in addition work an hour and a half overtime on her  $4\frac{1}{2}$ -hour day, thus using up the 78 hours of overtime permitted annually at the rate of an hour and a half a week.

The State's Attorney General has just ruled that this is illegal. His statement follows:

It seems \*\*\* that certain employers desire to use this overtime by adding 1 and  $1\frac{1}{2}$  hours to the short day, making a day of six hours, and at the same time desire to work the employees 9 hours on each of the other 5 days and still not regard the work beyond 8 hours on the other days as overtime.



This we conclude is not the meaning of the law, and that the hours beyond 8 and on the other days must be counted as overtime work if the employees are worked more than 4 and 1/2 hours on the short day.

There is no such thing as an "authorized" regular 9-hour day for 5 days. The authorized regular working day for women is 8 hours and she can be worked 9 hours a day regularly for 5 days only so that she may be given a 4 and 1/2-hour short day. If she is not to have the short day of 4 and 1/2 hours, all hours beyond 8 on the other days are overtime.

This decision has justified New York's claim to have an 8-hour and not a 9-hour law.

#### Women Pharmacists Exempt from Labor Law.

The 1928 session of the New York legislature amended the labor law by exempting duly licensed female pharmacists over 16 years of age from its hour regulations.

#### "Behind the Scenes in Candy Factories."

"Behind the Scenes in Candy Factories", an investigation made by the Consumers' League of New York in 25 factories in Manhattan, Brooklyn, and Long Island City during the spring and autumn of 1927, found 61 per cent of all candy workers in these plants to be women, who perform practically all the operations except the cooking and the work in the "hot rooms" where the gum candies are dried. The chocolate dippers' hands are continually coated with chocolate and they sit all day in a temperature of 55 to 65 degrees. The strokers work in a temperature above normal, sometimes as high as 85 degrees.

The New York City Health Department requires that the proprietor of every candy factory shall have in his possession for each employee a medical certificate of not more than one year's standing, which certifies that the employee is free from "such contagious, communicable or skin diseases as the Public Health Council may deem necessary for the safe-guarding of the public health". Every "food handler" in New York City is supposed to have filed with his employer a "food handler's card" issued by the Board of Health. In only two out of the 25 factories covered, however, did regular part-time physicians examine the worker before she started working. Three-fifths of the workers are unskilled and under 21 years of age. Many nationalities are included.

The median wage for a single week in March for the 25 factories, shows \$13.75 for all workers; for undertime, \$11.75. The best-paid worker, the chocolate dipper, must have great skill and in the peak season can average \$35 and \$40 a week.

Forty-five per cent of the women worked undertime. Only 4 per cent of the total number surveyed earned more than \$25 per week. Irregular hours due to the seasonal nature of the business were common, and one of the largest and best known plants worked its employees, contrary to law, up to 65 and 70 hours a week, even including Sunday. This, however, was before the modified 8-hour law, which went into effect January 1, 1928.

Health hazards to both plant workers and consumers were found to be wide spread. Only 2 of the 25 factories could be called "model" plants. Others were clean but allowed lack of enforcement of sanitary regulations, and the conditions in some plants were appalling.

Following publication of the report, the Consumers' League announced that it would prepare a white list of those plants which met the minimum requirements as to fair wages, hours, and working conditions. The New York State Confectioners' Association appointed a committee to confer with the League on the



proposed white list, and as a result of the conference the manufacturers' committee agreed to the entire list of requirements, with certain important modifications in procedure, and, although presenting some arguments against the inclusion of wages in the list, finally agreed to recommend \$14 as a minimum to the candy manufacturers of the State and to urge them to do all in their power to establish this minimum. Nearly 60 factories thus far are included in the white list, issued by the Consumers' League.



#### Accidents to Women Not Increased.

In a speech before the 11th Annual Safety Conference of the New York State Department of Labor, John S. Kennedy, Secretary, Employees Benefit Committee, New York Telephone Company, New York City, said that his company employs approximately 54,000 people, of whom practically two-thirds are women. He stated that the greatest number of accidents to women employees were due to falls. Out of 93 accidents to women in the third quarter of 1927, 63 were caused by falls, most of them, according to Mr. Kennedy, coming from the prevalence of high heels on the shoes worn.

Mrs. Maud Swartz, Compensation Adviser, New York Women's Trade Union League, speaking at the same conference, said: "There has been little change in the proportion of accidents to women from 1917-1925. The proportion has not risen above 7 per cent in those years, although the 1920 census gives 25 per cent of those gainfully employed in the State as women. I believe that this is a matter for congratulation, as in all probability women have increased in industry from 1920-1925, although the census figures are not yet available. The largest number of accidents (to women) occurred in the manufacturing trade, the second largest in clerical and personal service. Eighty per cent of those in personal service happened to janitresses and cleaners...In causes of accidents to women, falls rank first, machinery second \*\*\* Machine accidents decrease as the age of the worker rises, whereas falls increase as the age level rises. Fifty per cent of all falls compensated for were on level ground." (New York State Department of Labor, Proceedings of the 11th Annual New York State Industrial Safety Conference, Buffalo, 1927, p. 197-201.)

#### Medical Service in Department Stores.

Because of the keen interest evidenced by the public in the subject of health supervision among industrial workers, the Bureau of Women in Industry of the New York State Department of Labor has investigated the extent to which medical service or supervision exists in certain department stores in New York City and Brooklyn. Establishments employing from 600 to 10,000 workers were visited and 19 stores reported upon in the February, 1928, Industrial Bulletin. The range of equipment found led all the way from no regular medical service or supervision at all to well organized hospital departments and sick and death benefit societies. The remarkably low figures for time lost by store employees was one of the points ascertained in the survey, the men averaging 4.3 days per year and the women 4.7 days per year.

The more elaborately organized services included such things as pre-employment examinations of applicants, and it was found in one store that 90 per cent of the employees who were found to be poor physical risks were discharged as inefficient during the first three months of employment. Much time which otherwise would be lost from work was saved where treatment in the store, followed by a short rest period, was given for minor ailments. Periodic physical examinations were found to be of especial value in detecting wrong conditions in their early stages. The general feeling among the employers interviewed seemed to be that a well equipped and staffed medical department was a good investment, and only the firms which were spending too little money on their medical service were making complaints of ineffectiveness.

#### Ohio

In a decision handed down by the Court of Common Pleas of Franklin County, Ohio, the right of an adult woman to drive a taxicab for eight hours a



day was maintained, overruling a denial of license by the city government of Columbus. The Judge of the Court of Common Pleas, in a long opinion rendered March 2, 1928, concludes that the statute upon which the denial has been based, and which prohibits the employment of women in a number of occupations, "so far as it prohibits adult females from driving a taxicab is not a valid exercise of the police power and therefore unconstitutional to that extent."

### China

A study of "Women in Tientsin Industries", made by the National Committee of the Young Women's Christian Association in China, between October, 1927, and February, 1928, found a total of 10,450 women employed in 36 establishments visited (exclusive of home industries). These establishments included cotton spinning and weaving, export industries (cotton, walnuts, peanuts, wool), tobacco, matches, war work (military uniforms), smaller shops (knitting, sewing, mat-making, etc.), and retail stores. Fifty-nine hundred of these women - nearly two-thirds - worked 11 1/2 hours or more each day, and 2,296 had no regular rest day. Of the latter the great majority were in the seasonal industries. Wages were very low, 1,753 workers making under 20 cents Mex. per day; 2,582, 20 cents to 40 cents; and 3,022, 40 cents to 50 cents. Only exceptionally skilled workers or forewomen could make more than 50 cents Mex. per day. The National Conference on Christianizing Economic Relations, held at Shanghai from August 18 to 28, 1927, in its recently published "Findings" reports endorsement of protection for women workers, with prohibition of night work and work in dangerous trades, and absence allowed from work with payment for a period of at least one month at the time of childbirth, on a long list of principles to be supported.

### France

The French Parliament adopted on March 19, 1928, an act on social insurance, with compulsory provisions for sickness, maternity, invalidity, old age, death and family responsibilities. The act, which will apply, it is estimated by the International Labor Office, to 8,500,000 insured persons and 13,000,000 beneficiaries and will entail an annual expenditure of 5,000,000,000 francs, will cover all wage earners of, either sex whose total annual earnings do not exceed 15,000 francs, or 18,000 in the case of wage earners having dependent a child, with an increase of 2,000 francs for each child thereafter. (Industrial and Labour Information, April 30, 1928.)

### India

The Annual Statistics of Factories for the year 1926 gives the hours of work of women who come under the Indian Factories Act of 1911 as: less than 48 hours per week, 31.22 per cent; above 48 but not above 54, 12.75 per cent; above 54, 56.03 per cent. In none of the factories of the Punjab, North West Frontier Province and Ajmer-Merwara did women work for less than 54 hours a week, while in the Bombay Presidency, nearly 75 per cent of the factories employing women worked 54 hours weekly. (Industrial and Labour Information, May 28, 1928).

### Japan

In view of the fact that night work for women and young persons will be brought to an end on the first of July, 1929, in Japanese industries, some cotton spinning mills have already abolished it and others are laying plans for the best way to do away with it gradually before the new act becomes effective. (Industrial and Labour Information, May 28, 1928).



## Philippines

The Philippine Bureau of Labor, under date of March, 1927, reports a grand total of 619,290 women wage earners out of a total of 2,857,401 persons gainfully employed in all Island industries. Of this number, all but 12,114 are in agriculture. The employment of women and children on manual labor in mines or in places where explosives are used or manufactured is prohibited by law. The interesting comment is made that before the American occupation wage-earning employment was comparatively infrequent; much of the work was carried on under a semi-paternal system with low living costs, and the work of women and children was confined to home industries. The change has come in the last 25 years. (International Labour Review, March 1928).

## Switzerland

The Swiss Central Office for Women's Employment (Schweiz, Zentralstelle für Frauenberufe) issues from time to time pamphlets which it calls occupation pictures (Berufsbilder), dealing with the physical, mental, and financial requirements for success in various woman-employing industries. Such factors as training necessary, and places where it may be obtained; cost and length of time of such training; opportunities for such employment, either as employee or as independent worker, with the approximate amount of capital required in the latter case; wage scales; hours of employment; industrial hazards in the different occupations; and organizations of employers and employees and trade journals in the industries. Between March, 1924, and November, 1927, these occupation pictures were issued for 21 occupations.

## NOTES

The Southern Summer School for Women Workers in Industry is holding its second session from July 12 to August 24 at Carolina New College, Burnsville, N. C. Last summer's session was held at Sweet Briar, Va. with an attendance of women workers from typical southern industries in six States. Accommodations for 40 students have been provided at Burnsville, the total cost of the course, including tuition and living expenses being \$125, which is provided in the form of scholarships. Workers' education committees throughout the South have helped in the recruiting of the students, and Miss Matilda Lindsay, head of the National Women's Trade Union League Southern Educational Committee, arranged pre-summer-school evening classes for those girls selected to go to the school.



U. S. Department of Labor  
WOMEN'S BUREAU  
Washington

News Letter No. 57.

November 1, 1928.

ACTIVITIES AFFECTING WOMEN IN INDUSTRY

Colorado

A study of 1,308 women who applied for work at the employment department of the Y.W.C.A., and 433 who registered at the Collegiate Bureau of Occupations in Denver from January to May, 1928, inclusive, shows that 598 (46 per cent) of the first group and 139 (32 per cent) of the second group were married. Of the 598 married women registered at the Y.W.C.A., 266 were over 40 years of age, and of that number 23 were over 60 and two over 70. Half of these women had no children, while of the other 299 who were mothers, 147 each had 1 child under 18 years of age, 77 had 2 children each, 41 had 3, 22 had 4, 6 had 5, 4 had 6, and 2 had 7 children each.

All but 19 of the 139 married women who applied to the Collegiate Bureau of Occupations for employment, were less than 40 years old. They included only 36 mothers, 26 of whom each had 1 child under 18 years of age, 8 had 2 children, 1 had 3 children, and 1 had 4 children.

Kentucky

A bill for further reorganization of the State Labor Department, which was sponsored by the Consumers' League of Kentucky in the last session of the legislature, was passed by the House but defeated in the Senate on the last day of the session.

Massachusetts

Fish Canning a Seasonal Industry.

The Department of Labor and Industries has declared the canning of fresh mackerel a seasonal occupation. This permits the employment of women for 52 hours a week during part of the year, provided the average number of hours worked, exclusive of Sundays and holidays, does not exceed 48. This action was taken on petition of representatives of the fish canning industry after a public hearing on April 25, 1928.

Seasonal Exemption Requested for Felt Hat Industry.

A petition has been received by the Department of Labor and Industries from the manufacturers of ladies' straw and felt hats, that the manufacture of felt hats be declared seasonal. A public hearing on the petition was held before the five commissioners of the Department on September 6, 1928.

The manufacture of straw hats was declared seasonal by the former State Board of Labor and Industries. Since that time two occupations have been granted seasonal exemption—the sorting and packing of tobacco in tobacco sorting shops and the canning of fresh mackerel.

New York

Hour Law not Applicable to Office Workers in Factories and Stores.

An opinion recently rendered by the Attorney General places office workers in manufacturing and mercantile establishments outside the jurisdiction of the 48-hour law. The Attorney General's opinion reads in part as follows:



Examining the statute with a view to ascertaining what reason the legislature had in mind for putting women who work in factories and in mercantile establishments in one class, women who work in restaurants, operate elevators or work on street railways in another class, and leaving all other women employees of like age in an exempt class, two possible bases are discoverable, viz; The nature of the employment and the place of employment. Either, if carried out by the statute, would doubtless form a proper basis.

The strict letter of the language employed "in a factory" and "in or in connection with a mercantile establishment" supports the idea that the place was the basis adopted. On the other hand, the results flowing from such a construction are, it seems to me, so unreasonable and absurd as to completely negative the idea. As I have said, the only limitations upon the hours of labor for women over 16 years of age relate to those who are employed in factories, mercantile establishments, restaurants, on elevators and on street railway trains. A stenographer or other office assistant working in a bank or professional office may be employed for as many hours as she and her employer may agree upon. This is also true of stenographers and assistants employed in the office of a manufacturer or a proprietor of a mercantile establishment if the office be located at a different place than the factory or the mercantile establishment. Again, a stenographer or other office assistant may be employed, without limitation as to time, in a professional office located in the same building as the factory or mercantile establishment and under working conditions identical with those of the office of the manufacturer or the proprietor of the mercantile establishment. To state it differently, a stenographer over 16 years of age may work in a lawyer's office located in the same building as the factory or store as many hours a day or week as she pleases; she may work in the office of a manufacturing concern or merchant located away from the plant or store for as many hours as she pleases; but she may not, if this construction is to obtain, work more than 8 hours a day or 48 hours a week in a manufacturer's or merchant's office if such office be located in the same building as the factory or store. Such a statute would be hardly fair to the woman who prior to its passage had employment under the conditions last described. Doing the same work as the others, working under the same conditions, she might easily lose her position to a man not thus limited as to hours of labor, while her sisters in the profession would be able to retain theirs. Such a result clearly was not intended and I think plainly refutes the idea that the place of employment was the basis of the classification. If that had been the basis, the classification should have been carried out to its logical conclusion to avoid such absurdities as I have indicated, and a failure to so carry it out would render the statute, to say the least, of doubtful constitutional validity.

On the other hand, a classification on the basis of the nature of the employment fits in well with the other provisions of the statute, avoids unreasonable and possible unconstitutional results and, I am fully convinced, was, in spite of the letter of the statute, the basis which the legislature intended to adopt. . .

For the reasons stated, I have no hesitancy in advising you that it was not the legislative intent to limit the hours of labor of women office workers over 16 years of age employed by manufacturers and mercantile dealers, whether their duties are performed in the factory or mercantile establishment, or elsewhere.

#### Analysis of Medical Records in Cosmetic Factories.

Because medical literature has much to say on the injurious effects produced by the use of cosmetics, the Bureau of Women in Industry of the New York State Department of Labor, attempted to find out, if possible, whether any complaint which might be truly considered occupational was prevalent among workers in this industry. The 18 factories visited, some of which manufactured a few very select products, others a full line of cosmetics, employed from one to 708 women. Three of the



factories, which employed the largest number of women, kept medical records, and a detailed analysis was made by the Bureau of Women in Industry of these records with the idea of giving a cross section of the medical aspects of the industry.

In summarizing, the report made by the bureau says:

The analysis of the factory records of these three factories shows that the main causes for the visits to the dispensary were upper respiratory infections, headache, dysmenorrhoea and indigestion. These complaints seem to be those which rank first in any group of factory workers. A previous analysis of the records of a candy factory shows these same complaints leading but with upper respiratory conditions occupying third place. The constant irritation of the mucosa of the upper respiratory tract by powder and perfume may account for these complaints being most numerous. This condition is also an argument greatly in favor of physical examination of applicants for employment, as many of these cases of upper respiratory infections are due to diseased tonsils, which not only cause disability due to sore throat itself, but also predispose to coryza, chest colds and bronchitis. Where physical examination is required and employment given only on the condition that correctable defects are eliminated, the incidence of avoidable illness is greatly curtailed.

One of the avoidable causes of dispensary visits is constipation. In "C" where there was a particularly large percentage of women affected, 23.2 per cent, as against 1.8 per cent and 6.4 per cent in the other factories, the futility of mere medication is shown. If this condition was corrected by diet and exercise instead of drugs, the incidence would in all probability be much less.

Eye conditions form a much larger group among the cosmetic workers than among workers in candy factories and the reason is quite apparent--small particles of powder blown into the eyes if not discovered as a foreign substance, usually set up a conjunctivitis. Conjunctivitis in this case may also be due to irritation by alcohol and essential oils in the perfume.

The incidence of skin conditions was slightly greater among cosmetic workers than candy workers, and greater than most of the figures on occupational dermatitis in general clinic records. Infection of the skin such as boils, although included under "Surgical Conditions," are really due to agencies affecting the skin, and where the employee handles powder, the mouth of the hair follicles may become plugged with powder thus giving a good starting point for the development of an infection which ultimately results in a boil.

Backache was of about the same incidence here as in most groups of workers where there is not some outstanding factor to cause it. In the case of factory "A" there was not a single recorded case of backache.

All surgical conditions had a greater incidence in "C" than in the other two factories. In factory "C" the women worked on machines, which always raises the percentage of surgical conditions. Infections also are much more frequent in "C" and most of these were boils on the face, hands and neck, over 90 per cent being on the hands. The incidence of infections in the cosmetic factory was very small as compared to any of the candy factories, showing that the constant handling of powder and perfume does lead to an increase in skin infections.

The miscellaneous conditions were particularly high in "C" probably due to two reasons: (1) indefinite diagnosis which prevents their being classed in the proper group; (2) the much greater incidence of toothache in "C". (Industrial Bulletin, August, 1928.)

#### Courses on Women in Industry.

Courses on women in industry are now being given at Columbia University by Miss Mary D. Hopkins. It is planned also to have occasional lectures by industrial experts, including Miss Mary Van Kleeck, Director, Department of Industrial Studies, Russell Sage Foundation, Miss Frances Perkins, Chairman, Industrial Board, New York



State Department of Labor, Miss Nelle Swartz, Director, Bureau of Women in Industry, New York State Department of Labor, Mrs. Florence Kelley, Secretary National Consumers' League, Miss Josephine Goldmark, author of "Fatigue and Efficiency" and Miss Mary V. Dewson, President Consumers' League of New York.

#### Canada

##### Alberta.

The Women's Bureau Act passed at the last session of the Alberta Legislature, took effect on July 1. The purpose of the bureau is to collect and tabulate information and statistics relating to women, probably including such subjects as wages, hours, working conditions, legislation, health and accident problems, the extent of the contributions made by women to the support of their families, etc. (Labor Gazette, Canada, July, 1928.)

##### British Columbia.

The report of the Minimum Wage Board of British Columbia for 1927 contains the following statement:

Having in mind one of the oft-quoted objections to minimum wage regulations raised by opponents to this form of social legislation—namely, that eventually the minimum would tend to become the maximum for experienced workers—it is illuminating to note that, after a period of nine years' testing in this Province, out of 17,507 employees only 3,056, or 17.46 per cent, were reported as receiving the actual minimum for their respective classes of work. Turning to the higher scales of pay, we note that 10,748 women and girls, or 61.39 per cent of all those reported, were listed as being in receipt of wages in excess of the legal minimum. This leaves a balance of 3,703, or 21.15 per cent to be paid below the minimum. This latter class of course includes young girls and inexperienced workers, for whom lower rates are set, and employees of experience whose working-week was shorter than 48 hours, with a pro rata reduction in their remuneration.

##### Quebec.

The Minimum Wage Commission of Quebec has issued Orders Nos. 5 and 6, governing female employees in the textile trades, which include weaving, knitting, spinning and allied processes. For experienced workers (those having over 24 months' experience in the trade) a minimum wage rate of \$12 is fixed for the city and island of Montreal and a radius of 10 miles around and beyond the island, <sup>and</sup> of \$10 for the remainder of the province. In the first-named territory, apprentice rates begin at \$7 and increase \$1 each six months for a period of 24 months; in the remainder of the province such rates range from \$6 to \$9. Inexperienced workers must not exceed in number one-half of the total female working force. Work done in excess of the regular recognized working period of the establishment must be paid for at not less than the regular rates, but in all cases according to the prevailing custom of the trade. Women losing time during the regular working period must be paid proportionately for the actual number of hours worked. Any employee required to wait on the premises must be paid for the time thus spent. (Labor Gazette, Canada, July, 1928.)

##### Saskatchewan.

Revised orders of the Minimum Wage Board of Saskatchewan governing the employment of women workers became effective September 1. Some important changes have been made regarding hours of work and duration of the "inexperienced" periods.

The earlier order for shops and stores fixed the maximum hours of work at 50 a week, irrespective of locality, with 56 hours allowed by special permit. The new order, however, allows only 49 hours a week in Moose Jaw, Regina, and Saskatoon, and 51 hours in North Battleford, Prince Albert, Swift Current, Weyburn, and Yorkton.



By special written permit from the Secretary of the Minimum Wage Board, 56 hours may be worked in any one week, or 59 hours in any one week during the period between December 15 and December 31. The minimum wage rate remains at \$15. Three new sections are added relating to minor learners, which require that an inexperienced employee when leaving an employment shall be given a certificate showing her length of time and experience in that employment, and that seats shall be provided in the proportion of at least one for every four women or fraction thereof.

The order for laundries and factories is extended to cover wearing apparel manufactories and the rate for learners is reduced from \$8 to \$7.50. As in shops and stores, a certificate is required for an inexperienced employee showing length of time and experience in the employment which she is leaving.

For hotels, restaurants and refreshment rooms the revised order no longer specifies a daily maximum of 10 hours. The weekly limits are 50 hours for six days, and 56 for seven days a week. A former subsection which prohibited any arrangement of hours by which any work period should end between 12.30 a.m. and 7 a.m. is omitted, and instead provision is made for a 20-minute meal allowance, where meals are provided as part of the remuneration.

The definition of an "experienced" woman in beauty parlors and barber shops is now one of fifteen instead of six months' standing, as formerly. The three months' probation period without pay remains, after which a minimum of \$10 a week must be paid for the first six months, and \$12 a week for the next six months. Thereafter the minimum of \$15 for experienced workers is required. (Labor Gazette, Canada, August, 1928.)

### Argentina

On March 1, 1928, the Patriotic League of Argentina, opened free schools for working women in various parts of Buenos Aires, where the following subjects are taught: Reading, writing, arithmetic, Argentine history, grammar, geography, typing, care of children, first aid, domestic science, ethics, the catechism, deportment, hygiene, sewing, embroidery, linen work, mending, darning, cutting and fitting, machine embroidery, and weaving of rugs and cloth. During 1927 over 3,000 women attended the League's free schools. (Bulletin, Pan-American Union, June, 1928.)

### Belgium

The fifth Congress of Belgian Christian Women's Social Work Organizations was held in Liege from 21 to 23 July, 1928. According to the annual report presented to the Congress, this body, which concerns itself exclusively with women and young girls of the working class, included, in its Women Workers' Leagues and Young Christian Women Workers, 114,138 members in 1928, as compared with 26,733 in 1920.

In addition to their educational work, carried out by means of social schools, courses, study circles, "social weeks," (for the first time in March, 1927, a "colonial week" was held for preparation for colonization work), 10 reviews and newspapers (with a monthly circulation of 128,750 copies), the women's social organizations work for the improvement of the living conditions of the woman worker by means of mutual benefit associations, conferences on hygiene, offices for legal consultations, thrift societies (of which there are 80), cooperative organizations, close collaboration with trade unions, and by relations with international trade union federations, the International Labor Office and the League of Nations.

The Congress decided to strengthen its administrative work by a greater decentralization of the secretariats, and thus to extend the influence of organized women in the working classes. In particular, the Christian women's social work organizations intend to devote more attention to workers' housing, domestic science teaching and married women workers. (Industrial and Labour Information, October 8, 1928.)



### Ecuador

Early in May, 1928, two new evening schools for workers were opened in thickly populated sections of Quito. (Bulletin, Pan American Union, August, 1928.)

### Greece

Some particulars of the conditions of work of women and children in Greece are given in a recent article in *La Française* by Madame Maria Svolo, a prominent Greek social worker and feminist leader. All Greek industries, she states, employ women, but it is in the spinning and weaving mills, the tobacco industry, and the making of carpets that they are most found, as well as in agriculture and in the needle trades, whether carried on in the workshop or in the home.

In the carpet industry, women are paid by the piece, their wages being particularly low, skilled workers in Athens receiving the equivalent of 1s.8d. to 2s. for a working day of 10 to 12 hours. The principle of equal pay for equal work is far from being realized, even for skilled workers.

Children under 14 years of age are often found in factories and workshops of all kinds; they are often of refugee parentage and orphans.

The wages of women in commercial undertakings, especially small undertakings, are low, ranging from 19s. to 29s. monthly, with a working day sometimes as long as 10 hours.

Trade unionism among women is most developed in industry, where women belong to mixed unions, but do not take a part in their management proportionate to their numbers. Unions are particularly strong in the tobacco industry, where they have been successful in securing improved conditions for women workers. In the carpet industry, where the women are mostly illiterate refugees from Asia Minor, unionism is still in its infancy. The home work industry has a union composed exclusively of women members.

Speaking generally, the organization of women in Greece leaves much to be desired, as until recently their employment was never regarded as more than temporary and it ceased with marriage. But, with changing conditions, the position of women workers is also changing, and they are acquiring a freedom and independence to which they have hitherto been strangers. (Industrial and Labor Information, October 8, 1928.)

### India

The Government of India recently published draft regulations prohibiting the employment of women underground in mines.

It is proposed that in the exempted areas (Bengal, Bihar, and Orissa, the Central Provinces, and the salt mines of the Punjab) the number of women employed should not exceed, from April, 1929, the number employed in 1926; thereafter a 10 per cent reduction in the number permissible would be made annually, so that all women would be excluded from 1 April 1939. In all other mines, it is proposed to prohibit the employment of women underground as from 1 April 1929. The regulations relate only to underground workings, and do not interfere with the employment of women in quarries or other surface workings. (The Hindu (weekly edition), 28 June, 1928; Industrial and Labor Information, August 20, 1928.)

### Peru

In view of the report of the Inspector General of Labor showing that laborers in textile factories suffer from industrial disease due to the dust and lint in the air, and that the old method of protection by masks is impractical and insanitary, the Ministry of Labor has issued a regulation dated April 27, 1928, giving



textile factories six months in which to install in their carding rooms pneumatic suction pumps to eliminate dust and particles from the air. This system has already been tested in the local factories and found to give good results. (Bulletin, Pan American Union, August, 1928.)

#### NOTES

##### First Pan-Pacific Women's Conference Held.

In August of this year, after four years of preparation, the first Pan-Pacific Women's Conference was held in Honolulu, at the invitation of the Pan-Pacific Union. Women leaders went from many countries to meet and discuss problems of health, education, social service, industry and government. There were delegates from nearly all except Latin-American countries—13 from Australia, 18 from New Zealand, 2 from China, 21 from Japan, 2 from the Philippines, 25 from the United States, 25 from Hawaii, 2 from Samoa, 1 from Fiji, 1 from Java, 1 from India. Miss Jane Addams was international chairman and Miss Mary Anderson, Director of the Women's Bureau of the United States Department of Labor, was chairman of the section on women in industry and professions.

Among resolutions unanimously adopted by the conference were the following:

- (1) That the following projects be promoted:
  - (a) A correlated inquiry into costs and standards of living in Pacific countries with special reference to diet content.
  - (b) A study of standards of living and wages in Pacific countries which will make comparison possible.
  - (c) A survey of the health of women in industry in Pacific countries through an expert committee with Pan-Pacific links forged through this conference.
  - (d) Formation of a committee of experts for the initiation of health research projects of value to Pacific women.
  - (e) Research regarding electoral systems, women's place in political parties, effect of compulsory votings, and legislation relating to women and children.
- (2) That the interests of existing research bodies in Pacific countries be enlisted in consultation with national groups, toward best policies to be pursued toward improvement of industrial standards in Pacific countries.
- (3) That committees be set up in accordance with the desires of the sections of Industry and Education, for the purpose of acting as clearing-house.

The second Pan-Pacific Women's Conference will be held again in Honolulu in 1930. An invitation came from the Pan-Pacific Association of China to hold the next conference in that country, but the Chinese delegation reporting that the women of China probably were not prepared to entertain the next conference in 1930, suggested that this be held in Honolulu and that the 1932 conference might be invited by the women of China to convene in the new Republic.

##### National Committee on Employer-Employee Relationships in the Home.

The strengthening of the American home through the adjustment of relationships between the home-maker and her employees was the subject of a two-day conference of national experts and representatives of interested organizations at the Bureau of Home Economics of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, October 16 to 17, which resulted in the formation of a national committee on employer-employee relationships in the home. The conference was called by the National Young Women's Christian Association, with Miss Lucy P. Carner, Industrial Secretary, Miss Mary Anderson, Director of the



Women's Bureau of the U. S. Department of Labor, Dr. Louise Stanley, Chief of the Bureau of Home Economics, and Mrs. Amey Watson of the Philadelphia Committee on Household Occupations acting as a committee on arrangements.

The many and varied problems of the woman who needs to employ helpers outside her own family and of the worker who sells her services for wages to the home occupied the center of interest in the course of the conference. Although approximately only 5 per cent of American homes actually are employing such helpers to-day, according to the statement of Professor Benjamin R. Andrews of Columbia University, the fact that more than a million workers are involved, and the difficulties of the housewife in getting helpers in competition with inducements offered by industrial and business organizations makes the matter one of national importance. Such experts as Mrs. Lillian Gilbreth, efficiency engineer representing the American Taylor Society, and Miss Helen Atwater of the American Home Economics Association, declared that the education of the home-maker to an appreciation of the contributions to family life when service is of a high character and of the household employee to the responsibilities of her position, would tend to bring about a new sense of cooperation between them.

The conference recommended the use of the term household employee in place of the term servant or maid and voted to request the Bureau of the Census to substitute the term household employee for domestic worker.

The conference also declared in favor of organization of employers and employees and the formulation of working contracts by groups of employers and employees which shall include minimum standards and of individual contracts between employers and employees which would not undercut these standards. It was further agreed that employer-employee relationship in the household should supplant the mistress-maid relationship; and that this relationship should include agreements as to limitation of working hours, with additional compensation for overtime, either through pay or through additional hours off. It was also the consensus of opinion that at present the 48-hour week should be recognized as the ultimate objective towards which time adjustments should tend.

The membership of the national committee on employer-employee relationships in the home is to consist of about ten persons, including representatives of the Bureau of Home Economics, U.S. Department of Agriculture; of the Women's Bureau, U.S. Department of Labor; of the Federal Board for Vocational Education; of placement, research, educational, and other agencies that work in this field, and of actual employers and employees.

The work of the national committee will be to learn what is being done now and has been done in this field and to evaluate the experience thus gathered, considering such problems as standards of employment, education, placement and follow up legislation and organization; to formulate a program of research and experimentation; to seek the cooperation of agencies working in this field in carrying out this program; and to consider the desirability and possibility of securing funds for conducting this work, and for carrying on additional study and experimentation.

#### New Jobs for Women.

Although the U.S. Census of Occupations for 1920 reported no women employed as railway mail clerks, New York now has a number of women so employed, according to a letter to the Women's Bureau from the New York City Branch of the Railway Mail Association.

In France there are at least two women working as airplane mechanics. A despatch to the New York Times says:

There are two women mechanics at Le Bourget field. They are very proud of their jobs. In fact they assert that women mechanics have an advantage over men, for they can often reach with deft fingers parts of the motor where a man's hands could not penetrate without taking everything to pieces.



NEW PUBLICATIONS

Two publications by Miss Grace Coyle of the National Board of the Young Women's Christian Associations have recently been issued—"Jobs and Marriage?" and "Present Trends in Clerical Occupations." The first comprises outlines on the married woman in business, prepared at the request of a commission of the National Business and Professional Women's Department, and in response to a demand from groups of business women and girls for some material on this subject for use in discussion groups. "There seem to be two reasons," Miss Coyle says in her introduction, "why this subject is of so much interest. Many business girls are personally facing the question, 'Shall I go on with my job after I am married?' and all business girls are facing the more general problem 'What do I think about the employment of married women?' The second question is one that is often answered without any careful consideration or any regard to the facts in the case.

"While the outlines aim to be of service in answering both the personal and the general question, they must, since they are prepared for group use and for a varied constituency scattered all over the country, of necessity be directed primarily to the second more generalized question of 'What am I to think about it?'

"The importance of the answer to this question is not always understood by those who make it so glibly out of the experience of a few personal incidents, or accept it ready-made from their friends. Out of many individual answers is formed that public opinion which will be a large factor in determining how many women will answer it in its personal form. The pressure of public opinion makes itself felt in all the antagonisms and approvals which mean so much in the daily lives of us all. What husband can not be moved by the obvious disapproval of his fellow workers when they discover that he 'lets his wife work?' What woman is not tempted to apply as 'Miss' rather than 'Mrs.' when she knows that the boss does not approve of married women in the office?

"When we recognize its potency, we can not take casually the discussion out of which a sound opinion may emerge, one based on facts and formed out of clear thinking.

"This does not, of course, mean that an opinion can be reached which can be applied to every case within the experience of the group. It is very necessary to realize that any such generalization is but a rough approximation, to which there will be many exceptions. Great injustice will be done to individual married women unless it is recognized that the merits of each case require individual attention, and that no generalization can be used as a blanket judgment to be applied to all women.

"Making up one's mind on such a subject always involves the scrutiny of personal experience if it has brought one into touch with the problem. Throughout these outlines, therefore, questions are asked which are designed to use whatever personal experience of the various phases of the problem there may be present in the group. The discussion, however, if it is valuable, will put that experience in a new light, encourage comparison with the experience of others, and make clear the need for further information in many cases."

In the second of the two pamphlets Miss Coyle points out that "conditions within any occupation at a particular period are the result of an extremely complex set of factors. The personnel of the workers, their background, skill, training and standard of living, their habitual relationships with their employers, will have an important bearing on the situation. The financial condition of the business, the equipment and material used for the work and the total economic setting all play their part. Many of the factors are constantly in process of transformation. The



clerical occupation is at present undergoing striking alterations as a result of changes in all these factors and their interactions, both economic and psychological. Information on such complex and varying conditions can not be secured directly. Most of it must be gathered indirectly from the reflected results which appear in correlated activities, such as scientific management or vocational education. Some further facts can be found in government reports and occasional studies, or in interviews with office managers, social workers or the manufacturers of office machinery. In many cases no satisfactory data of a quantitative kind have been collected. Conclusions, therefore, have to be in the nature of an interpretation of tendencies that seem to be corroborated from many indirect sources."