

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

JAMES J. DAVIS, Secretary

WOMEN'S BUREAU

THIRD ANNUAL REPORT OF THE
DIRECTOR OF THE
WOMEN'S BUREAU

FOR

THE FISCAL YEAR
ENDED JUNE 30

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U. S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR,
WOMEN'S BUREAU,
Washington, August 17, 1921.

SIR: The third annual report of the Women's Bureau, for the fiscal year ended June 30, 1921, is submitted herewith.

The Women's Bureau was established in July, 1918, as the Woman in Industry Service, and in June, 1920, it was made permanent under its present name. Thus July, 1921, saw the completion of its third year of work but its first year as a statutory bureau in the Department of Labor. Although during these three years the bureau has changed from a temporary war service, created to meet the emergencies of war conditions, to a permanent bureau, its functions have not altered.

The duty of the Women's Bureau as stated in the act by which it was created is "to formulate standards and policies which shall promote the welfare of wage-earning women, improve their working conditions, increase their efficiency, and advance their opportunities for profitable employment." To accomplish this duty the bureau at the same time was given authority to investigate and report to the Department of Labor upon all matters pertaining to the welfare of women in industry.

If standards and policies for the employment of women in industry are to be arrived at in a satisfactory manner, original information must be drawn from a very broad field and information which has already been collected by other agencies must be interpreted for its special significance toward the problems under consideration. In the course of its investigations, therefore, a large amount of detailed data is gathered by the Women's Bureau, but this work is in no way a duplication of the work of any other agency whose function it is to gather statistical information. In planning its investigations and special studies the first effort of the bureau is to find out whether available material can be reorganized or amplified so as to give the necessary information. Where this is not possible it is necessary to get original data. In every case all available material is studied before a special investigation is inaugurated, so that the most important points to take up may be decided upon. All of the studies made by the Women's Bureau are conducted on this basis, with the idea constantly in mind of using all available material and eliminating duplication of work.

For the two years of the Woman in Industry Service the annual appropriation was \$40,000. This was increased to \$75,000 for the fiscal year ended June 30, 1921, and the same amount has been appropriated for the Women's Bureau for the present fiscal year, ending June 30, 1922.

The field of work for an agency such as the Women's Bureau is very large. Conservatively estimated there are at least 12,000,000 women in the industries of the country. Their activities are manifold and are daily becoming more varied. Conditions vary from State to State and from industry to industry, so that blanket recommendations are not always applicable, and each problem must be studied separately and qualifying factors carefully investigated before recommendations are made or standards promulgated. With an appropriation of \$75,000 it is obvious that the Women's Bureau can touch only some of the significant conditions affecting the employment of women in the industries of the United States. In selecting its field of activity the policy is to study the questions most in need of immediate action, or those which would disclose the most significant and important information to guide in the formation of those standards which the bureau was created to establish. This selective policy of considering only the most significant phases of industrial conditions as they affect women is followed throughout the investigations and studies conducted by the bureau. In no other way could the field be covered with economy and with satisfactory results. When a survey is made of wages and working conditions of women in one locality or State, no attempt is made to secure data for all of the women included in the field of the study. Representative figures are secured from a sufficiently large field to insure validity, and recommendations and policies are based on these figures. The original material gathered, therefore, does not compare in scope or in nature with census material. The latter is used wherever available in planning investigations, as a guide to the most important matters for consideration and as an index of the significance of the figures gathered by the bureau.

During the past year, from July, 1920, to July, 1921, the Women's Bureau has investigated wages, hours, and working conditions for more than 24,000 women in three States and hours and working conditions for more than 20,000 women in two other States. It has made studies of the working conditions of the women employed in two departments of the Federal Government. Among other important activities have been: An investigation of wages of women in the candy industry, a study of Negro women in industry, the compilation of a working woman's budget, the tabulation of wage schedules for the State of Minnesota, and the continuation of a study, begun in 1920, of the home responsibilities of wage-earning women.

In cooperation with State departments of labor, since February, 1921, the Women's Bureau has issued a monthly news-letter telling of the activities of the States and the Federal Government which affect women in industry. It has circulated an educational exhibit and prepared and circulated a motion picture illustrating standards for women in industry.

The following bulletins have been published:

- No. 11. Women street car conductors and ticket agents.
- No. 12. The new position of women in American industry.
- No. 13. Industrial opportunities and training for women and girls.
- No. 14. A physiological basis of the shorter working day for women.
- No. 15. Some effects of special legislation limiting hours of work for women.

The following bulletins are in press:

Iowa women in industry.
Women's wages in Kansas.
Negro women in industry.

Reports are now being prepared on the results of investigations of—

Wages, hours, and working conditions for women in industry in Georgia.
Wages, hours, and working conditions for women in industry in Rhode Island.
Hours and working conditions for women in industry in Maryland.
Home responsibilities of men and women.

There have also been published during the year a set of five maps and the following charts showing legislation affecting women in industry:

- No. I. Eight-hour and eight-and-a-half-hour laws for women workers.
- No. II. Nine-hour laws for women workers.
- No. III. Ten-hour laws for women workers.
- No. IV. Ten-and-a-quarter-hour, ten-and-a-half-hour, eleven-hour, and twelve-hour laws for women workers.
- No. V. Weekly hour laws for women workers.
- No. VI. Laws providing for a day of rest, one shorter work day, time for meals, and rest periods for women workers.
- No. VII. Night-work laws for women workers.
- No. VIII. Homework laws for women.
- No. IX. Minimum wage legislation in the United States. 3 sections.
- No. X. Mothers' pension laws in the United States. 4 sections.

WAGES, HOURS, AND WORKING CONDITIONS.

The Women's Bureau was established to serve the country in an advisory capacity, and as a natural result of this function very close contact is maintained with the State departments of labor. Equipped primarily to enforce labor laws, the State departments are not, in the majority of cases, also equipped to make extensive studies of industrial conditions. For this reason it has been the policy of the Women's Bureau to cooperate with the State departments in making intensive investigations in States where special information was needed and was not available. With the mass of information thus gathered the bureau is able to make definite reports and recommendations to the State authorities at whose request the investigations are made.

Investigations of hours, wages, and working conditions for women in industry in the various States have been among the most important activities of the Women's Bureau during the past year. There is every indication that interest in industrial conditions is becoming thoroughly aroused among women throughout the country, and that with their new power of suffrage they are seeking very definite information upon which to base their actions. The establishment of adequate and satisfactory standards as a goal for this new interest is of vital significance to the future well-being of all women. For this reason it has seemed that, wherever possible, requests for information and guidance should be met with the fullest and most recent figures. In some instances State labor officials, in others influential women's organizations, have appealed to the Women's Bureau for assistance in securing representative facts upon which to base recommendations for higher standards in the employment of women. Whether or not the request for an investigation originates with the State departments

of labor, the Women's Bureau does not go into any State without the cooperation of the State labor officials. In all of the State investigations which the bureau has made the work has been done at the request of the governor of the State and with the cooperation of the State officials.

The vital need for definite information on the subject of the wage rate paid to women is illustrated by some of the findings which were the result of the Women's Bureau surveys. July, 1920, saw a high peak of wages in the United States. The decline in wages began soon after, but did not become general throughout the country for several months. In wage studies made by the Women's Bureau during the past year annual earnings and average weekly earnings (based on 52 weeks) were taken for the previous year, thus including the period of high wages. The figures in these reports show wage figures at their very best; better than they had ever been before and better than they will be for some time to come. Yet the situation revealed indicates a very serious condition as far as the well-being of women in industry is concerned; for the facts reported indicate that to-day, contrary to public impression, less than a living wage, by almost any standard, is being paid to very large groups of women in industry.

In nine States minimum wage commissions to regulate the wages of women have been established, but their activities are hampered in many cases by difficulties in securing adequate awards, in administering the awards, and in covering the large number of industries which come within their jurisdiction. Awards have been made as high as \$16 a week for women in all manufacturing industries in California, \$16.50 for women in mercantile establishments in the District of Columbia, and \$18 for women employed in hotels and restaurants in the State of Washington. On the other hand, awards in Kansas of \$8.50 a week for women in mercantile establishments, and in Minnesota of \$12 for women in all occupations, indicate that even with minimum wage commissions women in industry are not always assured of an adequate living wage. That the public should be informed of these facts through the publication of accurate figures showing existing conditions has seemed of greatest moment. For this reason the collection of wage material has assumed first importance in the year's work of the bureau.

Kansas.

In the summer of 1920 an investigation of women's wages in the industries of Kansas was made by the Women's Bureau at the request of the governor and in cooperation with the Kansas Industrial Commission. The preliminary report of this investigation was sent to the Industrial Commission of Kansas in December and the final report is now in press.

After a study of the wage records of more than 4,300 women it was found that nearly 20 per cent of them were receiving average weekly earnings of less than \$9, and more than 50 per cent were receiving less than \$12 a week. The women in the meat-packing industry, a very completely organized group, were receiving the highest wages, one-half of them receiving an average weekly wage of more than \$17.50. This median was practically \$4 higher than any other, the second in rank being the \$13.55 of office workers. More usual wages

were \$10 and \$11 a week, while one-half of the women in the 5-and-10-cent stores received less than \$8.10 a week. Annual earnings of less than \$600 were received by 28.6 per cent of the 1,077 women for whom a year's record was obtained.

While wages such as these can be considered totally inadequate for the support of one person, their menace to the well-being of the community becomes more striking when it is realized that in many cases they are used for the support of more than one person, and that in numerous instances the woman who earns a wage of \$11 or \$12 a week is taking a necessary part in the support of her family. It was found in Kansas that of the 5,651 women who were interviewed, 37.3 per cent contributed all of their earnings to their families and only 27.6 per cent contributed nothing at all. As more than one-half of the women who made no contribution were not living at home, the per cent who contributed nothing, though members of family groups, becomes a very small proportion—approximately 12 per cent. These figures throw a new light on the old theory that a low wage paid to the girl who lives with her family is justified by the fact that she works only for her own support or to make a little extra money. The responsibility of wage-earning women is discussed in later pages of this report, but no wage study conducted by the Women's Bureau fails to contribute such testimony to support the plea for a living wage rate for women.

Rhode Island.

A similar investigation made in Rhode Island showed a better situation than was found in Kansas, but disclosed wages, hours, and working conditions in many industries which emphasized the need for better regulation. This study was made in October, November, and December, 1920, at the request of the governor and with the cooperation of the State department of labor and the Rhode Island Consumers' League. It included about 70 establishments, employing nearly 10,000 women. It was found that the women in Rhode Island were earning considerably higher wages than the women in Kansas, one-half of them receiving more than \$16.85 a week. The inclusion of a large number of women employed in one or two manufacturing industries which paid a higher wage was responsible to some extent for this high median rate, for among certain groups of women it was found that the wage paid was very much lower than the average for all groups. In department stores one-half of the women earned less than \$13.20, in laundries less than \$12.15, and in 5-and-10-cent stores less than \$11.90 a week. The low earnings in these industries were in strong contrast to the earnings in the rubber industry where half the women earned more than \$20.80, the metal industry where half the women earned more than \$18.95, and the electrical industry where half the women earned more than \$17.15. These industries were paying a fair living wage to a large majority of their women employees, and were apparently finding the investment a profitable one, for they employed large groups of women, in many cases under excellent working conditions.

The prevailing hours in the establishments visited were found to be considerably shorter than the legal maximum of 54 a week and 10 a day, although many women were working more than the 48-hour week and 8-hour day which is becoming accepted throughout

the country as a reasonable standard. Forty-eight hours or less was the normal week of 33 firms, employing 53.6 per cent of the total number of women, and 33 firms, employing 39.7 per cent of the total number of women, had a normal working week of more than 48 but less than 52 hours.

The normal daily hours for 91.8 per cent of the women were nine or less. Working conditions were found in many instances to be satisfactory, but recommendations were made for regulations which would eliminate the undesirable conditions which did exist, and which would establish a more definite and satisfactory standard for the State.

The final report on this investigation is now being prepared. In accordance with the usual policy followed by the Women's Bureau, of sending out a preliminary memorandum as soon as the main figures are compiled, a summary of the most conspicuous findings was submitted to the commissioner of labor of Rhode Island in February, 1921. On the basis of this summary the Local Council of Women of Rhode Island has inaugurated a campaign to educate and arouse interest in improving conditions in industry for the women of the State.

Georgia.

In May, 1920, a request came from certain prominent men and women of Atlanta, Ga., for a survey of women in industry in their city. Several months later a similar request was received from the Federation of Women's Clubs and the League of Women Voters of Chatham County, Ga. As any action taken by these groups would affect women workers throughout the State it seemed advisable to include the entire State in the survey. Therefore a survey was made in Atlanta in June and July, 1920, and in other industrial centers in the State between February 15 and April 15, 1921. Wages, hours, and conditions of work were the subjects investigated, and in addition to the 27 establishments employing 2,584 women in Atlanta, 104 establishments in 15 cities and towns were visited. These establishments employed 7,305 women and girls, of whom 17.5 per cent were colored. Although the investigation was made during a period of general industrial depression, the wage figures secured can be considered representative because figures were not taken for the current week but for the most recent full-time week worked. The results obtained, therefore, can not be considered to be abnormal. For this period the median weekly earnings of white women were \$12.20, and those of colored women \$6.20. Miscellaneous manufacturing was the lowest paid industry for white women, half the women in that industry earning less than \$9.15 a week. Colored women made their lowest earnings in garment manufacturing, where one-half of them earned less than \$3.90 a week. The highest earnings made by white women were in the manufacture of cigars, where one-half of the women earned more than \$15.90, while the colored women made their highest earnings in food manufacturing, where one-half of them received more than \$10.35 a week.

Among the women for whom yearly earnings were secured, one-half of the white women earned less than \$748 and one-half of the colored women less than \$413 a year.

Very long hours were found to prevail throughout the establishments investigated. Scheduled weekly hours of 55 and over were reported for 73.9 per cent of the women; and for 70.1 per cent of the white women and 38.5 per cent of the colored women scheduled daily hours were 10 and over. A low standard of sanitary and service facilities was found in many of the plants visited. Workrooms in need of cleaning, no provision of seats, unguarded machinery, inadequate or unsatisfactory drinking, washing, and toilet facilities, were some of the conditions which, added to low wages and long hours, showed that the conditions throughout the State were such as to need immediate action. The final report on this investigation is now being prepared, but on the basis of the preliminary memorandum sent out in June, 1921, local organizations are already working for better legislative standards for the regulation of industrial conditions for women.

Iowa.

A survey of hours and working conditions for women in the industries of Iowa was made in October, November, and December, 1920. This work was undertaken upon the invitation of the State commissioner of labor with the approval of the governor and the indorsement of the Iowa League of Women Voters and the Federation of Women's Clubs. Iowa is one of the six States which do not limit the number of daily or weekly hours of work for women. It permits women to work at night without restriction and it has no minimum wage legislation. For some years many groups throughout the State have been active in recommending such legislation, but their efforts have been unsuccessful. During three successive sessions of the legislature 8-hour bills were introduced, only to be defeated or so amended that they were withdrawn. A new bill introduced during the session of 1919 was so altered by amendments exempting certain industries from rulings in regard to hours, that it became necessary for the sponsors of the original bill to defeat the amended one, which had been changed until it meant the legalizing of existing conditions with no regard for industrial standards.

Following this defeat, the groups who had championed the 8-hour bill through three sessions determined that they must have fuller and more recent statements on the facts of the situation, that they might present arguments based on actual conditions. It was for this reason that the assistance of the Women's Bureau was requested.

The situation in Iowa was a significant one, as that State is representative of many States whose industries formerly were chiefly agricultural but now are becoming more industrial in character. Because of the youth of industry standards have not become fixed, and efforts to establish standards of a higher grade might have very far-reaching results.

The investigation covered 223 establishments in 21 cities and towns. Among these establishments were stores, restaurants, hotels, and laundries, as well as manufacturing plants. More than 22,000 workers were employed in the establishments visited, of whom, 10,411 were women. It was found that while 35.7 per cent of the women worked from 48 to 50 hours a week, 23.4 per cent worked from 50 to 52 hours, and 2.8 per cent worked 60 hours or more each week. Women were found who were working 73 hours a week in a candy

factory and others worked 84 hours a week in a food factory. These hours are not contrary to law, but they are contrary to all the dictates of efficiency and humanity and should not prevail in any community. Of course such long hours in many instances were not "normal" hours, but were caused by overtime, although in one establishment the 12-hour day and 7-day week had been the hours for three months. The more usual daily hours reported were from 8 to 9; 55.4 per cent of the total number employed, excepting restaurant workers, had a working day of less than 9 hours. But more than 10 per cent worked 10 hours a day or more, and 34.3 per cent worked 9 but less than 10 hours.

In the 30 hotels and restaurants investigated, which employed 366 women, it was found that 18.2 per cent of the women were working 70 hours a week or more. More than 80 per cent worked a 7-day week, and their working day was sometimes spread over 12 or 13 hours, with short periods off duty during the day.

Very inadequate sanitary and service facilities were found in many establishments, and it was often evident that little consideration had been given to the comfort and health of the workers.

During the course of this study special attention was given to the industrial opportunities and training open to women. It was found that, although their opportunities were not few, training for women was very generally lacking. Women were employed in almost every occupational group in the industries studied, but the only training offered to them by the State was two courses in telephony, while in only 5 per cent of the establishments studied was arrangement made for the instruction of beginners by special teachers. The system of instruction in 55 per cent of the establishments provided for the use of foremen and forewomen as instructors, and in 8 per cent for exceptional workers to serve as instructors. In 20 per cent of the establishments no definite system of instruction of any sort was reported.

The preliminary report of this investigation was sent to the State in January, 1921. The final report is now in press.

Maryland.

At the request of the governor of Maryland, with the indorsement of local women's organizations and the State department of labor, an investigation has been made of hours and working conditions for women in the industries of that State. This investigation was conducted in May and June, 1921. This survey covered 142 establishments, employing more than 10,000 women, in the city of Baltimore, and 98 establishments, employing more than 3,000 women, in the remainder of the State. In Baltimore 68.6 per cent of the women had a working week of 48 hours or less, only 9.6 per cent working as much as 52 hours. The daily hours of two-thirds of the women were less than 9. In the remainder of the State 60 per cent of the women had a working week of between 48 and 52 hours, as many as 23.9 per cent working 52 hours or more. Sixty-five per cent of the women had daily hours of 9 and under 10, about 23 per cent working less than 9 hours and the remainder working 10 hours or more. The preliminary report of this survey will be submitted in the fall.

COOPERATION WITH STATE LABOR OFFICIALS.

In addition to the work done in the States in the form of the surveys already described, the Women's Bureau has been in close touch with those State officials who were most immediately interested in industrial problems. The contacts which have been established with State labor officials are particularly valuable in the work of the bureau, as they provide opportunity for the exchange of information and experience, and to some extent consolidate the opinions and standards of many groups working toward the same goal.

Each of the 48 States in the Union has its own industrial problem and each is trying to handle this problem in the wisest way. As already remarked, conditions vary to a considerable extent in different localities, but the fundamental problems are the same everywhere, and the experience of each State is closely related to the future or past experience of its neighbor. For years many of the States have urged the creation of a division in the Department of Labor which should serve as a clearing house of information and should base its decisions on industrial problems on the knowledge gathered from all sections of the country. In response to this demand, for those branches of the State governments which are primarily interested in the questions of women in industry, the Women's Bureau is functioning as a clearing house of information regarding the activities affecting women in industry which are going on throughout the country. At the annual convention of the Association of Governmental Labor Officials in July, 1920, there was found to be a very general demand for the publication of a bulletin which should provide the members of that organization with information as to the activities in the various States. As the association had neither funds nor equipment for establishing such a service, the Women's Bureau volunteered to send out a news-letter periodically until the association should be equipped to undertake such work for itself. This summary is in the form of a mimeographed letter, a few pages in length, and outlines activities affecting women in industry in the different States. The information from which the news-letter is compiled is furnished by the State officials or by organizations working in the States. The letter is sent to a limited list, chiefly the State labor officials and a few prominent women's organizations.

In addition to the more general advisory relation to the States, the Women's Bureau has made several special studies at the request of the State labor officials. These studies have been made not only for the assistance they might give the States in question, but because it was recognized that the information obtained was of more than State-wide significance and would be of value for the work of the Women's Bureau as well as that of the State.

At the convention of the Association of Governmental Labor Officials the Women's Bureau was requested to work out a budget of the living expenses for a single girl to be used by minimum wage commissions in making their awards. Accordingly, after a careful investigation of the subject a budget based on the prices prevailing in the District of Columbia was drawn up. This budget was presented to the Minimum Wage Commission of the District for the making of the wage award for women employed in laundries.

For the Minnesota Minimum Wage Commission the Women's Bureau has tabulated wage schedules for more than 4,000 women and minors in that State. The commission has authority to secure from every employer in the State one week's pay roll for every woman and minor employed. This mass of material was being secured, but the commission had neither funds nor personnel to compile it. Recognizing the value of such comprehensive figures, the bureau was glad to undertake the task of tabulating and putting them into such form that they could be used. On the basis of these tabulations a report which will serve as a basis for future minimum wage decisions is now being written under the direction of the Minnesota Minimum Wage Commission.

WOMEN IN THE GOVERNMENT SERVICE.

A very conspicuous standard for industry throughout the country is set by the Federal Government, which employs large numbers of women. It is essential that the standards under which these women are employed should be those which can be pointed to with pride, both for the honor of the Nation and for the efficiency with which its work is conducted. The Women's Bureau has no authority over the conditions under which women work in the Government service, but in this field as elsewhere it may, when requested, serve in an advisory capacity. During the past year the Women's Bureau has been called upon for expert criticism and advice by two bureaus in other Federal departments.

In August, 1920, the Bureau of the Census asked for the advice of the Women's Bureau in adjusting a condition which had arisen among one group of its women employees. This group was dissatisfied with the task system under which they were operating the punching machines in one division. It was found that some of their complaints were well founded and the bureau was able to advise certain changes which resulted in greater satisfaction and a better understanding among the workers involved.

In June, 1921, the Treasury Department requested the Women's Bureau to make a study of working conditions in the Bureau of Engraving and Printing in order that the health of the employees might be properly safeguarded and that any wrong conditions might be adjusted and remedied. The Bureau of Engraving and Printing is a very large establishment and the work performed necessitates the use of many complicated and uncommon machines. For this reason a thorough survey, concluding with definite recommendations for action, would require reports on special conditions from industrial engineers and physicians. It was not possible for the Women's Bureau to retain such experts, but a general survey has been made, as a result of which methods of remedying some of the more obvious conditions were pointed out, while recommendations were made for more detailed and expert study of certain processes to ascertain their effect upon health and the most practicable means of altering them where necessary.

SPECIAL STUDIES.

Such cooperative work with the State and Federal departments as has been outlined is a permanent part of the program of the Women's

Bureau. No less important are the special studies which are inaugurated from time to time, to throw light on the significant developments for women in the industrial world. These special studies vary in scope and subject matter and each has a different significance, while as a whole they afford a basis for a just formulation of policies and a knowledge of current conditions.

The responsibility of wage-earning women for the support of others.

Wage-earning women's contribution to the support of others has not received full recognition from industry or from the general public. And yet it is essential that accurate knowledge of the extent of this responsibility should be secured and related to the low wage prevailing for women, so that its full significance to the community may be understood. Almost every investigation which touches women in industry supplies additional evidence that women are working more often than not to eke out the insufficient wage of a husband or father, or to supply the wage which had formerly been earned by a husband or father who has died or become incapacitated. With the necessity for supplying the wants of one or more dependents women must contend against the age-old theory that they are breadwinners for themselves alone. The man is recognized as the provider, or the potential provider, for a family, and his wage must be based accordingly, but it is not so with the woman worker. Her wage is apt to be below the minimum cost of living for an individual, while in many cases her responsibility is as heavy as a man's.

To add to the little information available on this subject, the Women's Bureau undertook in April, 1920, an intensive investigation of the extent of responsibilities for the support of others among a group of men and women wage earners in Manchester, N. H. During this study personal interviews were had with 776 men and 562 women employed in the same establishments. Records were secured also of the complete year's wages for every wage earner in 541 families. These records showed that of the workers earning a proportionate share of the family income—that is, one-third of the total family income if there were three workers, one-fourth if there were four workers, and so on—16.8 per cent were sons, 13.7 per cent were daughters, and 4.1 per cent were mothers. The importance of the daughters as wage earners therefore was nearly equivalent to that of the sons. With the wage value of the daughters and sons so nearly equal, the figures of the amount contributed by them to their families are most significant. A total of 199 American-born sons and 198 American-born daughters reported on the proportion of their earnings contributed to the family. All their earnings were contributed by 116 of the daughters and 63 of the sons, and 70 per cent or more of their earnings were contributed by 135 of the daughters and 86 of the sons.

The complete report on this study is now in preparation. It will include, in addition to the figures secured in the Manchester study, material from the Bureau of Labor Statistics cost-of-living surveys and from State departments of labor, as well as an extensive summary of other reports on the same subject.

Negro women in industry.

In November, 1918, shortly after the signing of the armistice, the Woman in Industry Service inaugurated a survey of the conditions

under which Negro women were being employed in industry. This study showed the effect of the war on the scope of employment open to Negro women and the conditions under which they worked. The conclusions of this study were part of the general report on *The Negro at Work During the World War and During Reconstruction*, published in the fall of 1920 by the Division of Negro Economics of the United States Department of Labor. From indications noted during this investigation that the status of Negro women in the industrial world was rapidly changing, it seemed important to follow up this study with another which would provide information as to the status of a similar group of women workers under the present altered condition in industry. Therefore a study was made which included many of the establishments visited in connection with the earlier investigation, as well as establishments in several other localities. A total of 150 plants, employing 11,812 women, were visited, the survey covering 17 localities in nine States. As far as possible detailed facts were secured concerning all labor conditions affecting the life of Negro women workers. The opinions of officials of each factory were obtained, inspection of the workrooms was made, and Negro women employed in the factories were interviewed. An intensive study of the home responsibilities, educational equipment, and living conditions of 85 Negro women tobacco workers in Virginia also was made. The report of this study, which is now in press, shows that while many Negro women have been laid off since altered labor conditions have made their employment no longer essential, in many establishments they have been retained and are filling their positions with success. The reports of many employers indicated that they had accepted Negro women as a permanent part of their labor force. Where Negro and white women were employed together, however, the Negro women usually were found working under much inferior conditions and at a lower wage rate, although often on similar processes. This situation may lead to great unrest among both groups of women, and the report emphasizes the importance of establishing equality of treatment for Negro women in industry. The successful application of this method of management was found in several establishments, and details of administration are described. The intensive study of the group of tobacco workers brought out the slight educational equipment of these women, the great extent of responsibility for the support of others, and the low standards of housing and community life which were available for them. This report will provide a basis for definite recommendations of the wisest employment methods and industrial uses for Negro women.

Wages in the candy industry.

In response to requests from interested women's organizations, an investigation of wages for women in the candy industry in St. Louis and Chicago was begun in the spring of 1921. Because of unsettled conditions in the industry at that time the figures secured will not be significant until they can be compared with those of a later and more active season. For that reason the investigation has not been finished, but will be held up until conditions in the industry are sufficiently normal to provide a just basis of comparison.

Research and education work.

The gathering and preparation of original material is only one part of the activities of the Women's Bureau. Urgent requests for information of all sorts are constantly coming to the bureau, while the investigations in hand require the compilation of a large amount of material already available. The charts showing the status of legislation affecting women in industry in the different States have been in such great demand that it has been necessary to publish them in pamphlet form, thereby reducing the amount of paper and the expense of issuing. The changes which take place in the laws described in these charts necessitate constant attention and periodical revision. Much research work is involved also in meeting the requests for special articles on different subjects pertaining to women in industry. Contribution of such articles to leading magazines and other publications is an effective method of establishing proper industrial standards and policies, which is welcomed by the bureau. This form of educational work, however, important as it may be, is only incidental to the other activities of the bureau, as the appropriation of the Women's Bureau does not permit of the employment of a staff sufficient to carry on this in addition to other more immediately necessary duties.

The exhibit material of the bureau, originally a 15-panel exhibit illustrating standards for the employment of women in industry, has been increased by the addition of a two-reel motion-picture film entitled "When Women Work." This film was designed to show in popular form the standards recommended by the Women's Bureau for the employment of women in industry. Several manufacturers cooperated with the bureau in preparing this film, and permitted processes and conditions in their plants to be photographed. With this cooperation it was possible to obtain photographs of actual conditions, both good and bad, which add very greatly to the value of the film. To accompany the film the bureau has had designed two posters and a small folder picturing the standards. The film is loaned free of charge to organizations who satisfy the bureau that they will put it to good use, but all expenses of transportation and showing are met by the borrowers. Since the film was released in December, 1920, it has been shown by 67 organizations in 26 States and the District of Columbia.

In addition to the definite educational material circulated by the bureau, members of its staff are frequently called in consultation by employers and others who wish information on methods of improving conditions. A manufacturer whose plant was visited during the course of one of the State investigations made by the bureau asked that its representatives assist him in making plans for standards and equipment in a new plant which he was planning to open. This service was readily agreed to, and the bureau submitted blue prints for cafeteria arrangements, rest rooms, and dormitories which had been perfected by the Housing Corporation of the United States Department of Labor.

A MORE COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAM NEEDED.

The experience of three years spent by the Women's Bureau in close contact with the problems of women in industry emphasizes

the need for the inauguration of a more comprehensive program than it has been possible for the bureau to undertake. The new census figures will show the greatly increased number of women in industry. They will also show the many new activities women have taken up in the past decade. But they will not show the deeper significance to the country which underlies the new industrial value of women. Many problems are connected with making this industrial value a true value to the country and to women as a whole. The important problems which need either intensive investigation or a general assembling of information are very numerous. It is the function of the Women's Bureau to contribute to the solution of these problems; and it should be made possible for it to undertake an adequate program of work. The following pages outline such a program. Every kind of undertaking which has or will come up is not included, of course, but it does represent the kind of program which the women of the country are looking for from the Women's Bureau.

INVESTIGATIONS.

Effects of special legislation upon employment of women.

The present day is witnessing a very searching examination of the regulations which surround the employment of women in industry. This examination is being made by two distinct groups of persons, those who want to extend wisely the protection which has been found to be necessary for women, and those who want to cancel all protective measures under the plea that they have proved to be a discrimination against the very group they were designed to protect. It is urgent that this conflict of opinion should be settled without delay, as the situation to which it has led is proving a great handicap to those who are working for the best protection of women in industry, and has resulted in much confusion in the minds of honestly interested persons of different opinions.

The Women's Bureau has conducted a small investigation comparing the employment of women after their hours were restricted by legislation to 9 a day and 48 a week in Massachusetts, with the employment of women in similar industries in New Jersey where they are permitted to work 10 hours a day and 60 hours a week. This study showed that for the two industries and the limited number of women covered in Massachusetts, the restriction did not result in any way in curtailing the employment of women.

A very much more comprehensive study of this subject should be made without delay, in order that the present uncertainty may be settled.

Wages.

The massing of women in low-paid industries which has been prevalent for so many years is a condition which still continues. The Women's Bureau has conducted several investigations of the wages and total yearly earnings received by large groups of women in industry. The striking figures which have resulted from these surveys, showing that many women are being paid far less than a living wage, illustrate the need for giving continuous attention to this subject. The factors which affect the wage rate, such as experience, training, age, occupation, and organization, are all related

very carefully to the actual wage figures obtained in the Women's Bureau investigations, so that a definite program for the improvement of conditions can be recommended.

Another important aspect of the wage question is that of equal pay for equal work for men and women. As a principle this has been generally recognized, but as a practice it has not been generally put into effect. The great increase brought about by the war in the number of women employed in industries which formerly employed chiefly men has emphasized the need for continuous watchfulness lest by the introduction of women the wage rate in certain occupations or industries should be reduced. The country and industry must be made to recognize that wages should be based on occupation, not on sex.

Closely connected with the need for maintaining an adequate wage level for women in industry is the need for definitely answering the question whether women are in industry to support only themselves, or dependents as well as themselves. The Women's Bureau is working now on a study of this question which it is expected will add to the slight testimony existing of the many dependents who look to women for their support. A more comprehensive study of this sort would be of inestimable benefit to the working women of the country.

Hours.

Long hours of work prevail for both men and women in many industries. This is a condition which should be corrected for both sexes, but it is a condition which bears more heavily upon women. The many hours of housework which are part of the day's work for almost every wage-earning woman, combined in many cases with the care of children, make the matter of long hours for women in industry of tremendous significance to the community, to the industry, and to the women and their families. Hours of work for women, therefore, is one of the most important subjects with which the Women's Bureau is concerned, and about which general and definite information should be had.

General working conditions.

The standards which are recommended by the Women's Bureau can not and should not be regarded as applying only to women. In many instances they apply to both men and women. But because they apply especially to women it is within the function of the Women's Bureau to study the extent to which they already obtain and the ill effects resulting from their disregard, and to recommend methods for their installation or establishment.

Questions such as lighting, heating, and ventilation of the work-room and the guarding of dangerous machinery are undoubtedly matters of concern for both men and women in industry. If there were a Government agency satisfactorily equipped to handle such subjects for all industry, the natural and wisest course would be for that agency and the Women's Bureau to work in conjunction in conducting investigations and establishing standards where all industry is affected but where women are more immediately concerned. Until some such agency is established and such an arrangement made possible, however, it will be necessary for the Women's

Bureau to include these subjects in its surveys of conditions and recommendations of standards to be established.

Lighting.—The question of lighting in the factory is of very great importance where women are concerned, as they are likely to be employed in large numbers on processes such as sewing-machine operating, inspecting, or other fine work, which requires very close application and results in considerable strain on the eyesight. The provision of light in sufficient quantities and without glare has been shown to result in greatly increased output and appreciably lessened accidents and fatigue, and, therefore, from the viewpoint of both industry and worker, it is of primary importance that in the establishment of good working conditions for women this subject should be carefully studied.

Ventilation.—The same is true of ventilation in the workshop. The modern workroom is, as a rule, fairly acceptably equipped with windows or ventilation devices where necessary. In the older factories, however, where women have been employed for many years and will be for many years to come, in the manufacture of clothing and food, and in textile, tobacco, and other factories of this type, the value of fresh, clean air often is ignored. In the course of its investigations the Women's Bureau so frequently has reason to advocate improved systems of ventilation that it seems necessary to stress this subject and to provide more specific information than is yet available of the effects of good and bad ventilation.

Service facilities.—Among the recommendations made in the standards of the Women's Bureau is the provision of lunch rooms, rest rooms, dressing and cloak rooms, and adequate toilet facilities. All these are particularly important for women whose strength will be conserved and efficiency increased by comfortable and sanitary surroundings. Information is needed as to the most approved types of such equipment and of the extent to which it is provided.

Special problems for women in industry.

In addition to the general working conditions which apply to both men and women in industry there are certain conditions which bear particularly heavily on women, and it should be the immediate task of the Women's Bureau to search out these conditions and show their effects so clearly that there can be no further dissension over the need for regulation.

Piecework.

The very widespread use of the piecework system in industries where women are employed is a condition which is arousing considerable attention but about the effects of which not much has been learned. Women are very generally employed on processes involving the constant repetition, at high speed and under great tension, of one or more motions. An example of the result of continued activity in this kind of work is found in industries such as cigarette making, where girls who are packing cigarettes sometimes become afflicted with a sort of palsy, a jerking or rhythmic motion of their bodies, which follows the movements their hands and arms make while performing their work. This is an extreme instance of nervous reaction from a prolonged repetitive activity, but it points toward a condition which might easily undermine the strength and vitality of a large number of

women. Whether the piecework system produces the most satisfactory results when women are employed can be decided only after careful study. To be of any value, an investigation of the effects of the piecework system should be very extensive as to numbers of establishments, variety of industries, and period covered, and would require experts along both health and industrial lines.

Posture.

The effect on the health of women of continuous sitting or continuous standing, although recognized as particularly harmful to them, has not yet been extensively studied. What studies have been made have not always been linked up with industrial conditions so that a practicable adjustment of the seating problem can be reached. It is known that proper seating and an occasional change from a sitting to a standing position results in increased health and efficiency, but no definite standardization of seating has yet been achieved. This is important from the point of view of both industry and workers. The manufacturers should not be required to make large expenditures for chairs which will prove later to be of unsatisfactory design in relation to the health of his employees. When standards are established they must be in accord with working conditions so that they can be introduced successfully into industry. For this reason industrial experts should conduct such an investigation in cooperation with health authorities.

Lifting weights.

A similar situation exists in relation to the determination of the weight a woman may lift safely. This subject is even more difficult to handle than is the question of posture, as there are many different kinds of lifting, some of which may involve very little strain while others may have serious results. Certain States have already passed laws restricting to 15 or 25 pounds the weight of a core which a woman may carry in a foundry, but such regulations could not be satisfactory. The repeated lifting of even 5 or 10 pounds in certain positions might result in very much more serious injury to a woman's health than the occasional lifting of 25 or 30 pounds. Probably a blanket restriction of any sort would be unwise, but there should be available a very definite statement of the results of certain faulty methods of lifting or of lifting too heavy weights, with recommendations of mechanical adjustments which can be arranged to eliminate the necessity for such work.

Hazardous industries.

Women are employed in many industries where their work involves exposure to poisonous fumes, dust, or gases. It has been demonstrated conclusively after long research and investigation that one of these industrial poisons, lead, is of far more danger to women than to men. Lead poisoning in a woman is a race poison resulting in sterility, a larger proportion of children born dead, or a larger proportion of children dying in the first year of their lives. It is possible that other industrial poisons may have a similar or an equally serious effect upon women, and therefore investigations such as have already been made in the lead industry should be made of these.

Such investigations would be, in the last analysis, primarily a health matter, and should be conducted partly by an agency specializing in health. However, the improvement and regulation of conditions, the

possible adjustments of women's work with the needs of the industry, and the necessary precautions, are industrial problems which should be handled by the Women's Bureau. A cooperative investigation therefore would be the most satisfactory way of dealing with this important matter.

Compilation of material.

Original investigations are not the only source of information upon which the Women's Bureau should base its program of standards and policies. There is available already in different places, and in different forms, much material which should be used. This material varies in type; some of it is statistical, some of it is general in form. It contains information of general conditions, and methods of treatment of such conditions, collected from a very broad field. This information is applicable to the problems of women in industry and should be made available.

STATISTICAL INFORMATION.

Various branches of the Government collect extensive statistical data regarding the population of the country and its industrial conditions. This material is published in such shape that it can be used for reference and as basic material, but as a rule it is not so arranged that the information it contains and its significance toward certain problems of women in industry are readily apparent. It is clearly the duty of the Women's Bureau to use material from such sources as the census, the extensive statistical reports made by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, and other similar reports. For example, a comparison of statistics of the employment of women in industry from the censuses for 1910 and 1920 will provide a very definite basis upon which to plan the work of the bureau in relation to the probable development in the future of women in industry. The compilation of such material, and its presentation in such form that it is significant for application to the problems of women in industry, is a very important piece of work which should be launched in the near future.

Codification of laws regulating conditions for women in industry.

There is a very great diversity of laws regulating the employment of women in industry in the various States. Many laws designed to produce the same results are very different in their phrasing and in their content, and frequently in their effects. In some instances a badly drawn or amended law has resulted in almost defeating the end for which it was designed. There is much discussion of the way in which different conditions should be dealt with in the law. For this reason a critical summary and evaluation of the laws in existence in the different States, together with a recommendation of the points which should be included in certain typical cases, would be very welcome to the many groups who are striving to improve working conditions for women.

Cooperation with State departments of labor.

The need for giving assistance to the States which is so apparent to-day, and which is attested by the number of requests which have been made to the Women's Bureau during the past year (e. g., Kansas, Iowa, Georgia, Rhode Island, and Maryland), may decrease

in years to come. It will only decrease as the State labor departments become more adequately provided for, both as to funds and powers, and until this time arrives the Women's Bureau should be in a position to render such help as may be needed.

The establishment of standard methods of investigation so that similar industrial material could be gathered simultaneously in many different States, should be a development of the investigating work of the bureau.

EDUCATIONAL WORK.

Definitely formulated standards and the findings upon which they are based will be of very little value to anyone if they are not given out in such form as to be readily understood and accepted by the public. For this reason a definite plan of educational activities is needed to round out the work of the bureau. In addition to the routine report writing which naturally accompanies any investigational or research work there is great demand for special articles on topics relating to the employment of women in industry. Exhibit material also is wanted all over the country. The Women's Bureau has had ten sets of one small exhibit on the road almost continuously for two years.

In response to many demands the bureau has recently had produced a short motion picture illustrating its standards. Twenty copies of this film are now in constant use. This type of work is an important branch of the bureau's activities which should be extended, as it translates into simple and appealing terms standards which should be the common knowledge of everyone directly or indirectly connected with industry.

BUREAU CRIPPLED BY LEGISLATIVE RESTRICTION.

In discussing any of the activities of the Women's Bureau it is very necessary to emphasize the great importance of an adequate staff equipped with the proper training and experience to make decisions acceptable to everyone and not open to criticism. An investigator who goes into a factory to report on general or special conditions must have a background of experience and knowledge of conditions in other factories in the same industry if her recommendations are to be significant and practicable for the industry. An investigator who has very complete knowledge of what conditions should be in a textile factory might be completely at sea in a machine shop where conditions necessarily are very different and where the standards of a textile plant could not apply.

The same is true for each of the special subjects included in the standards of the Women's Bureau. The work of the bureau would be absolutely without value if its decisions and reports could not be considered to be based on the best expert knowledge and experience available, and if its material were not compiled and reported according to the highest standards. A standard which could be challenged as having been established without sufficient or proper knowledge and experience would have no value.

In spite of the expert qualifications which are required by the nature of the work of some members of the staff of the bureau, the

appropriation granted by Congress for the fiscal year 1921-22 carried a clause which provided that no salaries should be paid in the Women's Bureau in excess of \$1,800 a year except three of \$2,000 and the salaries of the director and assistant director, which were fixed by law. As the total sum of the appropriation was not decreased when this clause was inserted, there is no saving involved. The only result is a discrimination against a few highly trained people who are doing most valuable work at a rate of pay considerably less than that paid for similar work in other departments and in other sections of the Department of Labor itself. Unless this restriction is removed it will be impossible to recruit highly trained persons for the work of the bureau. There is no way in which the bureau could be more completely crippled than by eliminating the possibility of employing expert workers. Because of the disastrous results which may follow the establishment of such a precedent of discrimination against women by the Federal Government, it is earnestly recommended that every effort be made to relieve the bureau of this restriction.

MARY ANDERSON,
Director.

HON. JAMES J. DAVIS,
Secretary of Labor.

