An Act To establish in the Department of Labor a bureau to be known as the Women's Bureau.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That there shall be established in the Department of Labor a bureau to be known as the Women's Bureau.

Sec. 2. That the said bureau shall be in charge of a director, a woman, to be appointed by the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, who shall receive an annual compensation of $5,000. It shall be the duty of said bureau 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. The said bureau shall have authority to investigate and report to the said department upon all matters pertaining to the welfare of women in industry. The director of said bureau may from time to time publish the results of these investigations in such a manner and to such extent as the Secretary of Labor may prescribe.

Sec. 3. That there shall be in said bureau an assistant director, to be appointed by the Secretary of Labor, who shall receive an annual compensation of $3,500 and shall perform such duties as shall be prescribed by the director and approved by the Secretary of Labor.

Sec. 4. That there is hereby authorized to be employed by said bureau a chief clerk and such special agents, assistants, clerks, and other employees at such rates of compensation and in such numbers as Congress may from time to time provide by appropriations.

Sec. 5. That the Secretary of Labor is hereby directed to furnish sufficient quarters, office furniture and equipment, for the work of this bureau.

Sec. 6. That this Act shall take effect and be in force from and after its passage.

Approved, June 5, 1920.
United States Department of Labor,
Women's Bureau,
Washington, August 17, 1922.

Sir: The fourth annual report of the Women’s Bureau, for the fiscal year ended June 30, 1922, is submitted herewith.

FUNCTION AND AUTHORITY.

With the close of the fiscal year 1922, the Women’s Bureau completes the fourth year of its existence. Inaugurated as a war service in 1918, and established as a permanent bureau in the Department of Labor in 1920, its function is to “formulate standards and policies which shall promote the welfare of wage-earning women, improve their working conditions, * * * and advance their opportunities for profitable employment.” In the act by which it was created the bureau was given authority to investigate and report to the Secretary of Labor upon all matters pertaining to the welfare of women in industry. As no power of enforcement is given, its activities include chiefly the investigation of various problems so as to secure information upon which to base satisfactory standards and policies, the assembling of available information pertaining to these problems, and the presentation and dissemination of this information in popular form.

As the work of the bureau grows more extensive it becomes increasingly apparent how great is the need for definite information upon the subjects within the scope of its activities. If the chief function is to “formulate standards and policies” it is obvious that there must be made available much information on which to base these standards and policies. There is no satisfactory basis other than facts for the programs of those who are setting out to improve conditions in the industrial world, and the Women’s Bureau is becoming recognized as the source of reliable and unbiased facts such as make possible the inauguration of practicable programs. Some of the questions which are put up to the bureau for solution present very knotty problems, pronouncements on which may have a far-reaching influence upon the future of women in industry. For this reason it is especially important that all angles of such problems be considered and a careful adjustment of the different factors made before establishing a definite standard. For example, in a survey of the opportunities open to women it is no longer possible to state that women “can not” do this or “should not” do that. Instead it is necessary to make a careful study of the occupation to see whether women are doing it, how it is affecting
them, what adjustments it is possible to make so that they may do it without injurious effect, and whether such adjustments are practicable from the point of view of expense, taking into account not only the cost of installing or inaugurating the alteration, but the resulting changes in production. Similarly in matters of general or specific working conditions prevailing standards must be known, and practicable alterations suggested, taking into account the special physical conditions which inevitably accompany certain processes. In the matter of hours of work it is not sufficient to recommend schedules of one length or another. No innovation along such lines can be recommended or introduced without arousing the opposition of those conservatives who have always placed their chief reliance upon precedent. For their benefit, as well as to provide a scientific basis for recommendations, it must be shown that other establishments, other industries, other States, have a better standard of hours without having brought financial disaster upon themselves. In definite and concrete terms the effect of long hours upon health and efficiency, and therefore upon production and factory costs must be illustrated, and improved methods of operation which have been installed to offset decreases in production should be studied and described.

Before any statement can be made on so controversial a subject as wages a knowledge of the actual earnings received by a representative group of persons is only the first element of the information which must be had. The earnings received must be known in relation to the length of time worked, the reasons for losing time, the experience, home responsibilities, and age of the wage earners, the industry and the occupation, the regularity of work, the bonuses, vacations, etc.

Only such facts will afford the basis for an unassailable program for the improvement of conditions for women in industry, and it is with the need for such information in mind that the bureau undertakes investigations of industrial conditions and gathers the kind of information which the circumstances indicate will be most significant and most applicable to the question in hand.

The chief activity of the bureau during the past year has been its investigations of wages, hours, and working conditions in a number of States. Emphasis has been put upon the collection of data in the States, because of the great scarcity of such information, the insistent requests for it from local groups who need details upon which to base their programs, and because the rapid changes which are taking place in industry render it important that up-to-date information shall be available not only as it is applicable to local conditions, but also as it is combined with other data to give a broader picture of industry and the conditions under which it is employing women.

METHODS OF INVESTIGATION.

Before discussing the findings of the investigations which have been undertaken during the past year, it seems important to outline the methods which have been followed in securing the desired information, for in any investigation of social conditions such methods are one of the most important factors which will influence the find-
As a Government agency it is naturally the aim of the Women's Bureau to be unbiased in its presentation of facts, and to base its findings upon the careful examination of representative figures gathered and compiled in a scientific manner. The statistical methods employed vary, of course, with the different types of information secured, but conform as exactly as is possible with the accepted standards of authorities along these lines. These two facts are clearly witnessed in the reports issued by the bureau. The method of securing data, however, is not so generally known, and it seems that an outline of such method is not out of place in a report of this nature.

In a wage study, data are taken showing the name or number, occupation, amount of earnings, regular daily and weekly hours, hours or days actually worked, rates of pay, and bonuses received for each woman employed in the establishment. This information is copied by the agents of the bureau directly from the pay rolls, and is taken for one week during which no shutdown or holiday has occurred. A certain amount of leeway is allowed in selecting this week, so that a period which is as nearly normal as possible can be chosen, but effort is made to have all the current wage figures secured within a period of about a month, so that all figures can be said to cover the same period. With the wage figures secured from the pay roll is combined other information of a more personal nature which is given by the women themselves on a form distributed to them to fill out. This information includes age, nativity, conjugal condition, age beginning work, time in the trade, time with the firm, occupation, and living condition. The facts thus secured, when added to the wage figures taken from the company's books, make possible very valuable correlations, such as age and earnings, experience and earnings, etc. In addition to the current pay roll figures, in some investigations, it is desirable to show changes which have taken place over a period of months or years, or the situation in an industry or group of industries during another period of greater or less activity. For this reason pay roll figures for all employees of an earlier date are also taken. The date of this early pay roll period varies with the different investigations and local or general industrial conditions.

As the firms' policies on methods of payment, bonuses, fines, payment for overtime, vacations, and the length of the pay period are found to vary considerably and to have a very conspicuous effect upon the wage figures recorded, general information covering such topics is secured for each firm and recorded on a third schedule. This information is given for both the early and late pay roll periods, so that changes in policy may be considered in establishing the causes for any general changes in earnings which may be found for the two periods.

To give a final picture of the earnings available, a limited number of women are selected—from 10 to 20 per cent of the total number employed—who have been more or less steady workers throughout the year, and their earnings are recorded for each week during the year, with a record, where obtainable, of the cause of any weeks of absence. This involves an examination of the pay rolls for every week in the year, and is an arduous and complicated task, but in no
other way does it seem possible to give a fair estimate of the compensation which is received throughout the year and which can be said to represent a year’s budget.

When working conditions are included in the investigation a fifth schedule is used on which is recorded information secured from the management as to numbers, age, and sex of employees, scheduled daily, weekly, and Saturday hours, length of lunch period, hours of night workers, special conditions in the industry—such as seasonal fluctuations or the giving out of home work—and the employment policies of the establishment. An inspection is made of the establishment and descriptive details are noted on the schedule, covering such topics as the type and condition of stairways, exits, and elevators; the construction, repair, cleanliness, and arrangement of the workrooms; methods and adequacy of cleaning, heating, ventilation, lighting, and seating; special hazards or strains; type, condition, and number of washing facilities, toilets, lunchrooms, restrooms, and cloakrooms; and the health service or allied activities.

As the bureau feels convinced that no investigation is complete unless the women themselves are given a word in it and their point of view is represented, visits to the homes of a number of the women are included as part of each investigation. The results of the interviews secured during these visits are recorded on a simple schedule, which calls for information on such subjects as the reasons for irregularity at work, former occupation with hours and earnings and reasons for leaving it, education, living condition, home duties, size and composition of household, and financial contribution to the family.

Information of the sort covered by these schedules has been secured for more than 100,000 women during the four years of the existence of the Women’s Bureau. With experience, certain methods have changed slightly, but on the whole the material is comparable and has been collected according to one central idea, that of forming a broad foundation of facts to which additions can be made each year, and of offering a standardized method of investigating wages, hours, and working conditions.

The material thus collected is necessarily very detailed and could not be secured without generous cooperation from employers. Almost without exception such cooperation is given, and free access is afforded to all the sources of information. In return the bureau furnishes, through its reports and general information gained from these studies of conditions which prevail in many different parts of the country, a definite outline of the standards which are possible and which exist within an industry, and can offer to employers who are interested in establishing the best practicable standards concrete examples of methods and conditions which exist elsewhere. Every effort is made to insure complete anonymity for the information given out. Care is taken to make statistical classifications large enough and to describe working conditions in such manner that no establishment may be identified. Copies of schedules and detailed information are furnished on request to the State labor departments when the studies have been made in direct cooperation with these departments, but otherwise the information secured is treated as being strictly confi-
dential, so that no establishment may be handicapped by the publication of the material, but rather so that information on both general and specific standards and conditions in different industries may be made available for the use of industry as well as for the benefit of wage-earning women.

As a general rule, when the material has been collected two forms of report are issued for each study, a preliminary memorandum giving the outstanding facts on earnings and hours of work, and a final report in which all the details and correlations of the material are fully considered. It is necessary to get out the preliminary memorandum because the facts secured lose much of their value if they are not up to date, and because the preparation and printing of the final report takes so much time that it can not be made available for immediate use. The preliminary memorandum is usually ready within two months of the time the material is brought in. It is mimeographed or printed in temporary form and sent to interested persons in the State under consideration and to all employers whose establishments were visited during the course of the survey. The final report of the State studies can not be prepared and printed in much less than nine or ten months after the material is brought in. When it is published it is sent to the general mailing list of the Women's Bureau.

HOURS, WAGES, AND WORKING CONDITIONS.

During the past year the bureau has made investigations along the lines just described for 10,000 women and 150 establishments in Kentucky; 11,000 women and 151 establishments in South Carolina; 5,700 women and 129 establishments in Alabama; 3,100 women and 188 establishments in Arkansas; and 16,900 women and 160 establishments in Missouri; making a total of 46,700 women and 778 establishments in the five States.

The need for the type of information secured through these investigations is well evidenced by the facts which they have afforded. Probably the majority of persons whose acquaintance with industry is not particularly profound think that the 8-hour day and something which at least approaches a living wage are standards which are generally accepted that they no longer need emphasis. These State studies have shown, however, that long hours of work and low wages are the rule rather than the exception for large numbers of women, and that these conditions are so widespread as to constitute a very definite challenge to the constructive action of all groups interested in these subjects.

In the five States studied, conditions differed to a certain extent, but on the whole the emphasis is much the same for each locality.

The 10-Hour Day and 55-Hour Week.

Among the most striking of the facts secured are those which show how generally the 10-hour day and 55-hour week prevail, and how comparatively seldom is found the more modern and efficient standard of the 8-hour day and 48-hour week.
The following figures summarize the findings on this subject for the five State investigations:

### Scheduled daily hours.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>8 and under.</th>
<th>10.</th>
<th>Over 10.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ments.</td>
<td></td>
<td>ments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kentucky</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>1,455</td>
<td>15.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Carolina</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>507</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arkansas</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>214</td>
<td>9.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alabama</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>470</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missouri</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>3,604</td>
<td>21.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Scheduled weekly hours.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>48 and under.</th>
<th>55.</th>
<th>Over 55.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ments.</td>
<td></td>
<td>ments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kentucky</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>2,041</td>
<td>21.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Carolina</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>509</td>
<td>4.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arkansas</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>232</td>
<td>11.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alabama</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>721</td>
<td>12.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missouri</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>5,992</td>
<td>32.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Alabama more than one-half and in South Carolina more than four-fifths of the women were scheduled for 10 hours or more a day and 55 hours or more a week. The hours in Arkansas show the result of the law which limits hours for women in that State to 9 a day and 54 a week, and almost all the women were scheduled for the hours permitted by law. The same is true for Missouri, except that a more general application and more rigid enforcement of the law resulted in no women being scheduled for as much as 10 hours a day or 55 hours a week. In Kentucky the 10-hour day and 60-hour week law affected the scheduled hours to a certain extent, so that no women were scheduled for more than 10 hours a day; but the 55-hour week was in force for 10 per cent of the women surveyed and another 10 per cent were scheduled for more than 55 hours.

The 8-hour day and 48-hour week were in force for a comparatively limited number of women in most of the States. Missouri ranked first in this respect, with 32.3 per cent of the women scheduled for 48 hours or less a week, and 21.3 per cent for 8 hours or less a day. In Kentucky scheduled hours were 48 or less for 21.6 per cent and 8 or less for 15.4 per cent of the women. In South Carolina slightly less than 5 per cent of the women had such schedules, and although in Arkansas and Alabama the proportions were considerably larger, they did not approach even the record of Kentucky.

In examining the general trend of hours in the five States it is significant to see that Missouri, which had the most strict legal
limitation of hours, had also by far the largest number of women whose scheduled hours were 8 a day and 48 a week, a standard far better than that set by law. The figures also for Kentucky show that the 8-hour day and 48-hour week is not a Utopian standard which can only be enforced by stringent legislation, but is one which is adopted in many cases in the interests of efficiency and better administration.

**Earnings.**

The figures showing weekly earnings indicate that the standards of wages are even lower than those of hours in the States under consideration. The median earnings for one week for all of the white women included in each survey were as follows:

- **Kentucky** $10.75
- **South Carolina** $9.50
- **Alabama** $8.80
- **Arkansas** $11.60
- **Missouri** $12.65

These amounts represent earnings from the point of view of the woman wage earner, what she actually has to live on for the week, and are not computed in relation to the length of time worked. A certain amount of lost time is inevitable among any group of individuals or industries, and this lost time naturally affects the figures for earnings. As it is seldom possible to discover accurately the causes of lost time and to include only time lost by no fault of the worker through conditions in the industry, the figures just quoted do not, perhaps, give credit to the industries for as high a rate of pay as may be their custom. For this reason an additional correlation must be made which shows the earnings for those women who worked approximately full time, 48 hours a week or more. In these computations the wage figures will probably be somewhat too high to be quite accurate, as in almost every manufacturing establishment there is lost time due to conditions in the plant or the industry which can not be avoided by any efforts of the workers, and which therefore represents a definite lowering of earning power without regard to the ability or exertions of the wage earner.

For those who actually worked 48 hours or more the median earnings were as follows:

- **Kentucky** $11.60
- **South Carolina** $11.95
- **Alabama** $10.00
- **Arkansas** $13.55
- **Missouri** $13.90

Admitting that these sums, which represent the median of actual earnings for what is approximately full-time work, give a better picture than can actually be the case in most industries, the picture is none too satisfactory. The highest median, $13.90 in Missouri, means that one-half of the several thousand women who worked practically a full week received less than this amount for the week's work, while in Alabama, where the lowest median was found, half of the women who worked 48 hours or more received less than ten dollars.

On the whole the first figures given are perhaps the more representative, as the industries so frequently fail to record the actual
hours worked that numbers for whom such records were secured were necessarily smaller, and in many cases pieceworkers were not included, as their hours had not been recorded. Whichever figures are the more representative, however, they both indicate a standard of wages which is so low as to be a serious menace to the health and well being of a very large number of wage-earning women. Of course the cost of living varies in different parts of the country, but it is not likely that, at the present time, wages of from $13 to $10 or even lower can be justified by any reference to the cost of living for one person. The situation is further complicated by the fact that many of these women were found to be supporting or contributing to the support of others.

Much interest has been aroused in the States by the foregoing and other more detailed figures which were included in the reports which have been issued; and it seems likely that the broader knowledge of actual conditions will lead to a better understanding of industrial problems and the interrelation of those problems with the life of the community.

Working conditions.

The conditions under which the women were employed in four States (in Missouri working conditions were not investigated) varied in each industry and even in each establishment, but on the whole they showed a lack of definite minimum standards for conditions affecting the health, comfort, and safety of the workers such as are established by the industrial codes in many States. In most cases what high standards there were represented the individual preference of an employer or group of employers, rather than the accepted condition below which no establishment should be allowed to fall. However, the evidences which were found of commendable conditions were especially encouraging, as they indicated that the practicability of high standards had been recognized as a business proposition in some firms whose example could not fail to influence general progress along such lines.

Because of the many different qualifications of the subject, it is not possible to describe working conditions in great detail, but it is significant to point out the most conspicuous standards which were or were not observed in the four States.

Workroom conditions, including such matters as cleanliness and method of cleaning, arrangement of the work and workers, lighting, seating, and ventilation, are the most vital factors in considering industrial standards in any establishment. The investigations conducted during the past year, like those of previous years, have shown a great need for the establishment of minimum standards in regard to those matters which will insure that workrooms shall be cleaned regularly by persons hired for such work; that they shall be scrubbed occasionally and not left for years to accumulate dust and dirt; that workbenches or machines shall be so arranged that there is room for passing safely between them and that the workers shall not be crowded together; that lighting shall be provided which is sufficient in quantity and arranged so that the workers are not exposed to glare, which involves the provision of shades and awnings for windows and a sufficient number of properly shaded artificial lights; that chairs shall be adjusted to the work and to the worker and shall
be provided for all occupations, even those which necessitate standing, so that the worker may sit comfortably during rest periods; that ventilation shall be forced if necessary to remove dust and fumes from the air, that heat and humidity shall be kept to a minimum, and in any case that plenty of fresh air shall be introduced into the workroom.

Such standards were by no means generally observed in the States under discussion. Although there were many conspicuous examples of excellent conditions, it was more usual to find a general slackness about the physical conditions in the plants; to find plenty of windows but no shades, or the panes so dirty that light was insufficient; shaded lights but the shades adjusted so that they were not effective in preventing glare; seats provided, but often only stools or boxes instead of the comfortable equipment which could have been supplied; cleaning done, but neither thoroughly nor regularly; and so on.

In the matter of sanitation and service facilities the same conditions prevailed. Drinking facilities were generally provided and in the majority of cases bubblers had been installed. However, in only comparatively few instances were the bubblers of a strictly sanitary type, and when water was secured from faucets or tanks the common cup was not at all unusual.

Washing facilities varied from a hose and a barrel to modern equipment with hot water, soap, and individual towels. The more usual condition was between these two extremes, with a common towel found frequently and seldom with soap provided.

Toilet facilities were perhaps the most unsatisfactory of all sanitary provisions. They were often inadequate in number (more than 15 women to one seat), and in many cases were not properly shut off from the workroom nor ventilated. Antiquated and altogether unsatisfactory types of plumbing were reported, and cleaning was by no means sufficiently thorough or frequent.

The provision of service facilities varied with each establishment. Usually some kind of provision was made for cloakrooms and lunchrooms, although a number of plants were reported in which the workroom was the only place available for eating lunch and keeping outdoor clothes. Rest rooms were provided less often, though it was not unusual to find a couch or cot in a corner of the cloakroom.

The prevention of accidents by definitely planned activities including inspection, organization of safety committees in the plants, and general agitation for better safety standards, had received very little attention in spite of the fact that accidents were not infrequent and that safety committees of workers and foremen have been found to reduce the accident rate very considerably.

Employment management as it is practiced in many large and efficiently run establishments was found in almost no instance. In the small establishments where only a few women were employed, there was usually one person who handled all matters of employment, but in larger plants the hiring and assignment of workers to jobs, and their transfer and discharge, was apt to be quite uncentralized with a resulting failure to use fully the abilities and energies of the employees.

On the whole, the standards of working conditions were so varied as to indicate great need for a more definite policy along those lines.
If it is finally established that certain working conditions are a minimum requirement for comfort, health, and decency, there is no doubt that such a minimum should apply to all establishments and not merely to those which realize the administrative importance of an up-to-date, efficiently run plant. Many States have detailed industrial codes which are an important step toward providing universal application for such standards. The working-conditions studies made by the Women's Bureau during the past year indicate that such codes could be established with far-reaching benefit in the States under discussion.

NEGRO WOMEN IN INDUSTRY.

In each of the States investigated the employment of considerable groups of negro women has presented special problems. As the studies were made mainly to secure general wage and hour figures for women, special attention was not given to the occupational activities of negro women although it is recognized that this subject is of vital concern to those interested in the development of opportunity for this group, which is comparatively new to industry. Certain general figures on employment, however, show the chief field of activity for negro women to have been in the following industries:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Industry</th>
<th>Number of negro women</th>
<th>Per cent of all negro women employed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kentucky</td>
<td>Manufacture of tobacco and cigars</td>
<td>1,121</td>
<td>87.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Laundries</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>6.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Carolina</td>
<td>Manufacture of tobacco and cigars</td>
<td>302</td>
<td>35.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Manufacture of textiles</td>
<td>243</td>
<td>28.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Laundries</td>
<td>228</td>
<td>27.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alabama</td>
<td>Manufacture of textiles</td>
<td>315</td>
<td>35.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Laundries</td>
<td>307</td>
<td>35.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arkansas</td>
<td>Laundries</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>37.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hotels and restaurants</td>
<td>217</td>
<td>43.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missouri</td>
<td>Manufacture of tobacco and cigars</td>
<td>275</td>
<td>17.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Laundries</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>28.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Food manufacturing</td>
<td>815</td>
<td>53.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It was found that in some localities a small number of negro women were being introduced into manufacturing industries, but as yet their opportunities in such occupations are limited. Even in those manufacturing industries where they were employed in any considerable number, they were apt to be concentrated in one occupation or group of occupations with little opportunity for enlarging their field of activities. In Kentucky, for example, an overwhelming proportion of the negro women were employed in the manufacture of tobacco, an industry which requires many different processes and grades of skill. Yet of the 1,121 negro women tobacco workers, 925 were hand stemmers, a process which requires a certain amount of dexterity but which is not comparable with the many more skilled processes, and which does not command a very high reward in the matter of wages or working conditions.

In both Alabama and South Carolina a good proportion of negro women were employed in the manufacture of textiles, the great indus-
try of these two States. But in each State the occupations in the textile industry in which negro women were most often employed were cleaning and sweeping, which occupations have little industrial significance. In South Carolina, Alabama, and Arkansas laundries provided employment for considerable groups of negro women, and in this industry almost all occupations were open to them. More than half of the negro women in Missouri were employed in the manufacture of food products. Their work in this industrial group was confined almost entirely to nut picking, an unskilled occupation.

On the whole, from the figures secured in these surveys the industrial development of the South does not seem to have touched the negro women to any great extent. Several more or less isolated instances of their employment at new or unusual occupations indicate, however, that it will not be long before a change comes in respect to the employment of negro women, and that this large group of potential industrial workers will be used for more general industrial purposes.

In view of the different occupations of negro and white women a significant comparison can not be made between the earnings of the two groups. In relation to generally accepted standards of wages and the cost of living, however, it is important to examine the earnings of negro women. In the five States under discussion their median week’s earnings, irrespective of time worked, were as follows:

- Kentucky: $8.35
- South Carolina: $5.80
- Alabama: $6.05
- Arkansas: $8.85
- Missouri: $6.00

For those negro women who worked 48 hours or more during the week the median earnings were:

- Kentucky: $10.15
- South Carolina: $6.30
- Alabama: $6.35
- Arkansas: $7.25
- Missouri: $11.05

It is obvious from these figures that the tobacco industry in Kentucky, where most of the negro women in that State were employed, paid a very much higher wage than prevailed in the industries employing negro women in other States.

More detailed figures bear out this statement and show that the tobacco industry paid its negro women employees a median wage of $8.35 in Kentucky and of only $4.85 in South Carolina. A similar situation existed in Missouri where the great majority of negro women who were reported as having worked 48 hours or more were employed in the tobacco industry. Many establishments do not record hours but only days worked, and the Missouri figures showed a median of $7.75 for women who were reported as having worked on 5 or more days during the week, which represents practically a full week’s work. In this group the majority of workers were employed in the manufacture of food products. Laundries showed considerable difference in their wage rates in the various States, for in Kentucky the median earnings were $8.15, in South Carolina $5.70, in Alabama $6.10, and in Arkansas $9.35. In the two States where there was a significant proportion of negro women employed in
textile establishments there was not a great difference in the earnings, South Carolina having a median of $6.25 and Alabama of $5.40.

On the whole, such figures as these indicate a very unsatisfactory standard regarding the employment of negro women. By no stretch of the imagination can five, six, or even eight dollars be considered a living wage at the present date. The fact that negro women can be secured for such low wages and that they are ready and anxious to extend their sphere of activities in industry presents a grave problem for the employment of all women in industry and the establishment of standards of adequate wages, which it is their right to expect in return for their labor. A standard of less than living wages for negro women will inevitably affect other wage standards and it is imperative for the well-being of the community that there shall be no reduction in these standards but rather that for both races there shall be a steady improvement in the relationship between earnings and necessary expenses for healthful living.

COOPERATION WITH THE STATES.

As the conditions under which women work in industry come to be more generally recognized as being of importance to the community and needing careful supervision and regulation, there is an increasing need for constant cooperation and interchange of ideas and experiences among those who are most immediately concerned with these subjects. In its relations with State labor departments the Women's Bureau has found during the past year a constantly developing appreciation of this need and of the large fund of information which the bureau can offer on the basis of its investigations in different parts of the country and its contacts with representatives of many different interests.

In conformity with its policy of serving as a clearing house for information as to activities relative to women in industry in the United States, the bureau has continued to issue the news-letter which was inaugurated in the winter of 1921 at the request of the Association of Governmental Labor Officials. This news-letter is in the form of a few mimeographed pages, and supplies information on special activities in the States, by the Federal Government, or in foreign countries, which are of significance in relation to women in industry. The letter is issued monthly and is sent to a limited number of persons, chiefly officials in State labor departments and others whose position or work brings them in contact with women in industry.

In addition to this more general type of information and to the special investigations in the States already described, it has been the policy of the bureau to supply special information for the use of State officials when they were not able to secure such information for themselves. For the Industrial Commission of Wisconsin the bureau has investigated rates of payment for women employed in the tobacco industry in Virginia and Kentucky, this information to be used by the Wisconsin authorities in making wage awards in that industry. At the request of the Industrial Commission of North Dakota the bureau advised and assisted in making a study of the cost of living for a working woman in North Dakota. The informa-
tion thus secured was presented at hearings which were held to determine minimum-wage rates in the industries employing women in that State. A similar investigation was made by the bureau at the request of the Minimum Wage Commission of the District of Columbia. The information gained through this study was presented at the hearing held to determine a new wage ruling for women employed in stores in the District.

WOMEN IN THE GOVERNMENT SERVICE.

The Federal Government employs more women in more varied occupations than does any other agency in the country, and it is inevitable that from time to time special problems should arise in relation to the employment of one or another group of its women employees. The Women's Bureau affords a consulting service for such situations, and in the past year has been called upon for investigations by three Government departments.

In June, 1921, the Treasury Department requested an investigation of the conditions of work for the women employees in the Bureau of Engraving and Printing. The work in this bureau is of many different types, some of it involving the use of complicated and uncommon machinery, and it was not possible for the Women's Bureau to retain the experts needed to make a detailed and scientific study of such working conditions. Instead, a more general survey of conditions was made, covering such subjects as lighting, ventilating, seating, and service facilities. A preliminary report was submitted to the Director of the Bureau of Engraving and Printing, and the recommendations which were made were taken up with the chief of each section to which they applied. The result of these conferences was that a number of recommendations were put into effect immediately, and in making the final report it was possible to indicate many improved conditions.

At the request of the Post Office Department an investigation was made in September and October, 1921, of the wages and working conditions for women employees of the mail equipment shops. In securing the information for this investigation the plant was inspected, the processes on which the women were employed were analyzed, the rating records were studied, and the women employees were interviewed. A report with recommendations for changes was submitted to the Postmaster General.

In June, 1922, at the request of the Secretary of Labor, an investigation was made of the administration of the Government hotels. The circumstances which brought about this investigation showed that there was much unrest and dissatisfaction among the guests of the hotels, and that there was very little cooperation or understanding between the management and the guests. The Bureau of Efficiency cooperated with the Women's Bureau in making a study of the accounts of the hotels. The final report of the investigation will be submitted to the Secretary of Labor.

SPECIAL STUDIES.

So much emphasis has been laid, during the past year, on the accumulation of material for the State studies of wages, hours, and working conditions, that because of limitations in both appropriation and
personnel of the bureau, it has not been possible to make any extensive studies of special conditions affecting wage-earning women. Nevertheless, two special studies which had already been undertaken have been completed and one additional investigation has been made.

Home responsibilities of wage-earning women.

The report on the home responsibilities of wage-earning women which has been in preparation for some time is completed and nearly ready to go to press. This report contains most significant figures showing the importance of women as economic factors in the home, and the information thus made available should serve to clarify public opinion on the much-discussed subject of woman's need to work and the social significance of a living wage for her.

Women in the candy industry.

A study of the hours, wages, and working conditions of women in the candy industry in St. Louis and Chicago in 1920–21 has been completed and is now in press. This investigation was made in response to requests from interested organizations of women, and although it was made during a period of unsettled conditions in the industry, some of its findings are of great importance. The study included 31 factories in Chicago and 19 in St. Louis, employing respectively 2,070 and 632 women. In regard to hours, wages, and working conditions, candy manufacturing was on a generally higher plane in Chicago than it was in St. Louis. The Chicago establishments showed much shorter scheduled hours and much more lost time than did those in St. Louis, yet the women in Chicago received considerably higher wages. In general the great majority of the St. Louis women received earnings which could scarcely be termed a living wage, in view of the high cost of living which prevailed throughout 1920 and which had declined only slightly at the time of the investigation. Even in Chicago, where wages were higher, a number of women were inadequately paid. The median weekly earnings of the women in Chicago were $14.65, and in St. Louis, $11.95.

The new census.

Federal statistics regarding women are collected every 10 years in the general census population, and the schedules on which the returns are made are a rich mine of valuable information on this subject. Unfortunately the appropriations allotted for the census have not been large enough ordinarily to provide for the publication of special data on breadwinning women without curtailing other census publications. When it became apparent in 1921 that much of the illuminating material appearing on census schedules for breadwinning women was not going to be compiled and published, the Women's Bureau was requested by the National League of Women Voters to assemble and publish as much of this material as the bureau's funds would permit. Accordingly, with the consent of the Secretary of Commerce and the approval and cooperation of the Director of the Census, the bureau undertook to extract the data for a single city. It was obviously impossible for a bureau with so limited a staff and appropriation to attempt to get comprehensive figures for any special correlations affecting all women, so it was decided that the greatest contribution would be to make, for a limited
number of women, a detailed study of the information which was available on the schedules, but which had not been used in the tabulation for the census. The unit chosen for examination was the city of Passaic, N. J., where the population was not so large as to render the work of scrutinizing each schedule too expensive, yet where there were breadwinning women in numbers large enough to warrant statistical analysis.

The data secured from this study show the quality and extent of the information available for publication concerning the nation's breadwinning women and indicate the extreme importance of presenting this information so that its significance can be seen for all women included in the census enumeration. In addition to showing the actual information which can be secured from census schedules, this study had a secondary purpose, which was to demonstrate the availability of census data bearing upon family conditions surrounding breadwinning women as a guide to the sort of intensive surveys most needed. The information secured from the schedules showed a very large number of breadwinning mothers going out to work, although in their families were no adults who might with reason be regarded as caretakers of the children. It seemed important to discover if this situation as indicated by the census schedules presented an actual problem, and if so, to how great an extent the implications of the material on the schedules could be relied on as an index of matters requiring special attention.

Accordingly, the addresses of 1,000 women breadwinners who had small children were taken from the schedules, and were followed up by agents of the bureau. Over 500 women were found and identified as breadwinning mothers who had been enumerated in the census of 1920. The information which was secured from them showed that very inadequate provision was made during the hours in which the parents were away from home and the indications of the general census figures were fully substantiated by the more detailed findings.

**RESEARCH.**

Although the investigations conducted by the bureau form the most conspicuous part of its work, another very important function is that of continuous research in order that a fuller fund of information regarding conditions and practices relating to women in industry should be made available.

Requests are constantly being made for detailed information on special topics, the securing of which involves careful investigation and compilation of material from many different sources. The Conference on Unemployment called by the Secretary of Commerce in Washington in October, 1921, is one of the agencies to which the Women's Bureau has supplied special information relating to the employment of women in certain occupations. Special data regarding the operation and application of labor laws have also been much in demand, and have necessitated careful examination of labor legislation in the various States. Statistics from the Census, from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, and from other sources have been consulted frequently, in response to requests for general statistical information. Bulletin No. 16, which was issued in 1921, and which gives
the details of State labor laws for women, has been kept up to date through constant attention to the changes which are continually taking place in the laws passed, in their interpretation, or in the rulings of State commissions.

In connection with the report on the home responsibilities of women a large amount of research work was conducted in order to assemble all available material on this subject. In the final report are summarized the findings of 50 investigations as they applied to the subject of home responsibilities. This type of research, which provides a basis for special reports, is assuming a more important part in the work of the bureau as it seems increasingly necessary to combine in available form the large mass of material which pertains to the many subjects relating to women in industry.

**EDUCATION AND PUBLICITY.**

If the information secured through investigations and research work is to be of any general use, it is important that a well considered plan should be followed to present such material in popular form so that its general application may be apparent, and so that its significance may be readily understood. In pursuance of such a plan the bureau during the past year has maintained close contact with organizations and persons who were interested in the problems of women in industry. The Director of the Women's Bureau has served on the industrial committees of a number of organizations and has cooperated in an advisory capacity with others.

One of the most significant movements of recent times in connection with women in industry has been the establishment of the Summer School for Women Workers in Industry at Bryn Mawr College. This summer school was inaugurated to offer facilities for higher education to women workers in industry, and provides an eight weeks' course and scholarships of about $200 each to 100 young women. The Director of the Women's Bureau has been in very close touch with this work since its inauguration, and is a member of the general administrative committee of the school.

In connection with the reports published by the bureau and the information gathered through research, effort is made to secure general circulation of the significant data through newspapers and magazines. Besides furnishing material to special writers who request it, articles and news releases have been prepared and published. This type of activity, however, has not been developed very greatly, as the appropriation of the bureau has not permitted the employment of a staff sufficient in size to undertake such work.

The exhibit material of the bureau has been increased in certain respects and has been very generally circulated through the country. The fifteen-panel exhibit illustrating, through pictures and sketches, standards for the employment of women in industry, which has been in use in the bureau for three years, will be retired from circulation as soon as other material can be prepared to replace it. It has been used extensively throughout the country, and seems to have filled a definite need for some pictorial and popular form of exhibit on women in industry. The film "When Women Work" has been in constant use and will be circulated again during the coming year. In all more than 90 organizations in 28 States and in Belgium,
Mexico, and Japan have used the film or exhibit or both. In many cases these organizations have shown the material at a number of different meetings, so the figures quoted do not show the full extent to which it has been used. In several States the extension departments of the State universities have cooperated with the bureau in circulating the film.

To accompany the film and exhibit, and for separate use, the bureau supplies posters and a small pamphlet illustrating the standards for the employment of women. It also has prepared and loaned a number of sets of large colored maps showing the labor legislation affecting women in industry in the various States, and of charts illustrating figures from the census showing the occupational status of women and figures from the Women's Bureau investigations showing prevailing wages and hours of work for women in certain industries and States.

**PUBLICATIONS.**

During the past year the bureau has published the following bulletins:

No. 17. Women's Wages in Kansas.
No. 21. Women in Rhode Island Industries.
No. 22. Women in Georgia Industries.

The following bulletins are in press:

No. 23. The Family Status of Breadwinning Women.
No. 24. Women in Maryland Industries.
No. 25. Women in Candy Industry in Chicago and St. Louis.

The following bulletins are nearly ready to go to press:

The Home Responsibilities of Wage-Earning Women.
Women in Arkansas Industries.

Preliminary reports have been issued and final reports are now being prepared on the following subjects:

Wages, Hours, and Working Conditions for Women in Industry in Kentucky.
Wages, Hours, and Working Conditions for Women in Industry in South Carolina.
Wages, Hours, and Working Conditions for Women in Industry in Alabama.

The results of the investigation of wages and hours for women in industry in Missouri are being tabulated.

**THE PROGRESS OF SPECIAL LEGISLATION FOR THE PROTECTION OF WOMEN IN INDUSTRY.**

In considering the problems of women in industry and a program for the improvement of their conditions, no discussion would be complete which did not include the subject of legislative action, as the conditions for women in industry are more immediately affected by this than by any other one form of activity. During the past year attempts were made in a number of States to pass laws limiting hours or regulating wages for women, but they were almost universally unsuccessful and no new legislation except a
decrease from 60 to 55 hours a week and from 11 to 10 hours a day in some industries in South Carolina has been put upon the statute books. Interesting tendencies have developed, however, among the minimum-wage commissions, whose awards have so great an effect upon general standards in regard to women's wages as to make them of extreme significance to the work and the future plans of the bureau.

The readjustment of wages in all lines of work that took place after the peak of prices and wages in 1920, directed attention naturally to the part that the various State minimum-wage laws were playing in sustaining women's wages at a fixed level when the earnings of workers not similarly protected were quite generally being reduced. Two very opposite opinions at once developed as to the effect of minimum-wage awards and the course that these awards should follow. One group has held that as the cost of living was falling the wages set for women should be revised downward, and that minimum-wage laws were in many cases holding women's wages above the real minimum cost of living. Another group held that many of these so-called minimum wages were so far below the actual minimum cost of subsistence as to need revision upward rather than downward, and that even the more generous awards were compromises and in few cases had met the actual cost of living at the time they were set, so that they should either be revised or at least be left alone in the hope that falling prices would make them meet the real minimum cost.

The length of time necessary to make cost-of-living studies, for the deliberation of wage boards, and so forth, resulted in most of the new awards, which were the outgrowth of this agitation becoming effective in the first 6 months of 1922. One interesting phase of the situation was that no awards were made covering occupations or industries not already regulated. All the activity was directed toward having the awards in existence more nearly conform to present conditions. This resulted, as might have been foreseen when the conflicting views were considered, in a general leveling of wage awards. Such a peak award as the Washington State decree setting $18 per week as the minimum wage in public housekeeping was reduced to $14.50, but, on the other hand, minimum wages which had fallen far below the post-war cost of living were raised, as for instance the minimum of $8.50 per week in retail stores in Massachusetts which was increased to $14.50.

From July 1, 1921, to July 1, 1922, seven States have had conferences for the purpose of changing minimum wage awards. This means that 70 per cent of the States whose minimum wage boards have power to set wage rates, have felt the need of revising rates set from one to seven years previously. Only in the District of Columbia did the conference refuse to change the minimum, a figure set in 1919. In North Dakota, California, and Washington wage awards were fixed at a lower rate than those set for the same industries or occupations in 1919 and 1920. In Kansas and Wisconsin rates were raised, and in Massachusetts two rates fixed in 1920 were decreased, and four rates set in 1918 or earlier were increased. To-day minimum wage rates for adult women in the several States which do not have rates established by law are grouped
almost wholly between $11 and $16.50 per week, whereas a year ago they ranged from several at $7 and $7.50 per week to one at $18 and one at $20 per week. The respective sides to the controversies have been strong enough to force the revision of outstanding rates, whether high or low, and minimum-wage boards and conferences seem to have had, as their first principle, a compromise between these two diametrically opposed viewpoints.

The question is immediately suggested as to how far this method of compromise is possible if the real purpose of the minimum-wage laws is to be carried out. In 9 of the 10 States the minimum wage set is supposed to represent the minimum cost of healthful living, and this fact is definitely stated in the basic law. In Massachusetts alone is this wage supposed to be modified by the financial ability of the industry to pay a certain wage. The tendency, however, seems to be to consider many factors besides the cost of living, such as wage rates in competing States, employers' statements that too high a rate will drive industry from the State, and so forth, and also to standardize minimum-wage awards within a State and from State to State, rather than to consider the cost of living in the State in question. This would appear to be a costly process for the workers, because a compromise rate below the cost of living in one State has a far-reaching effect in its influence on awards set in other States, as well as awards in other industries in the same State. A striking illustration of this is furnished by the action of the Massachusetts Minimum Wage Board in referring back to conference two rates of $14.50 and $14.75 per week with the request that they be brought more in conformity with the other awards recently approved by the commission, all but two of which were under $14. That such compromises are so often made emphasizes the need for more complete wage and individual budget figures than are now available, and for a detailed study of the relationship between wages and the cost of production in industries where women are employed under minimum-wage rulings.

Although the actual changes in legislation have been very few, the past year has seen a greatly increased interest in the broader aspects of the subject, and a very searching examination of the fundamental theories underlying legislative protection of women.

The focus of interest has been on the question of whether legislative regulation of conditions of employment for women is protection or restriction, and whether those who come under such legislation are not the objects of discrimination rather than solicitude. It is the function of the Women's Bureau to formulate policies, and one of the policies which it has always advocated is legislative regulation as a method of standardizing working conditions for women. It would seem that this is one way in which satisfactory conditions can be assured, and that because women are comparatively new to the industrial world and not always in a position to secure certain minimum conditions for themselves is no reason why, in the name of equality for men and women, they should be condemned to work under conditions which are a menace both to themselves and to the race.

The issue of equality between men and women is one which is open to many interpretations, perhaps the most dangerous of which would
guarantee to women the right to work under equally unsatisfactory conditions as men while not insuring that they will have an opportunity for as good conditions as men have been able to secure for themselves. For this reason a Federal amendment, for which there has been much agitation during the past year, to guarantee "equality" for men and women, seems to carry most dangerous possibilities. There are many civil and legal matters in which women undoubtedly do not receive equitable treatment under the law and which should be altered without delay, but there are also many other fields in which special protection is given them which it would be a very serious matter to jeopardize. An amendment to the Federal Constitution removing all civil, legal, and political inequalities and disabilities for women would be so far-reaching in its effect, would be so uncertain in its operation, and would involve such endless litigation that it can not seem to be practicable for any purpose and is certainly fraught with great danger for women in industry. The legislative background of protection for women in industry has been built up little by little with infinite care and attention to the details of precedent and experience. It would be most disastrous to weaken this protection by anything so wholesale and indiscriminate in its methods as a blanket amendment affecting "inequalities and disabilities" of women.

THE COMING YEAR.

For the coming year the Women's Bureau is faced with the need for two distinct types of information. The fact that almost every State will have a legislative session during the winter has brought many demands for special information from groups who want a foundation of facts upon which they can base their programs. Indeed, so many requests for State surveys have been made that it has been impossible to grant them all. Two surveys in important industrial States are to be undertaken within a short time and it may be possible to inaugurate others at a later date, but already it has been necessary to refuse requests for surveys in four States.

The importance of the basic information on wages and hours which is furnished by these investigations is well recognized, but it does not seem advisable to continue such studies to the elimination of the collection of other equally important material. There are other urgent problems to be studied which should take prominent place in the plans of the bureau. One of the most conspicuous of these questions which are arousing so much interest and concern at the present time is the effect of minimum-wage legislation on the earnings and opportunities of women and on the financial condition of the industries to which such legislation applies. The relation between hours and output, the effect of short or long hours on absenteeism and accidents, are also subjects of no small moment in the present day of increasing legislation regulating hours, and of keener industrial competition. Such subjects require expert and intensive study, but definite information about them will be of immense importance to the industries of the country as well as to the women who are employed in those industries. The bureau has already studied certain aspects of these questions in a very slight way. It is hoped
that during the coming year it will be possible to devote considerably more time to this type of investigation in order that the necessary information may be made available.

To the student of industrial conditions, hardly less important than the problems just discussed, are the findings of the census of 1920 in regard to the industrial distribution of wage-earning women and the changes which have taken place since 1910. As the census figures for 1920 become available it is clearly important for the Women's Bureau to study and interpret these figures so that their significance may be easily apparent. An intensive study of a limited number of census schedules has shown that they are a rich fund of information and that a more detailed study and analysis of their returns along the lines particularly pertaining to the subjects in which the bureau is interested will lead to most significant results.

In addition to the studies outlined above it is planned to extend the educational and exhibit work done by the bureau. A new exhibit is now in preparation, and it is hoped that additional graphic material, illustrating in popular form the standards and policies advocated by the bureau, can be prepared and made available for the use of the many agencies which are constantly requesting such material.

In conclusion, it is gratifying to be able to state that for the coming fiscal year the bureau has been granted an appropriation of $100,000, which is an increase of $25,000 over the sum granted for the past year. Even with this increase the appropriation is by no means commensurate with the field of work, but it will permit certain enlargements of the scope of activities.

The proviso attached to the appropriation for the fiscal year 1921 which limited salaries to $1,800, except for three at $2,000, has also been made less restrictive by the provision for additional positions of three at $2,200, one at $2,500, and one at $3,000. This provision permits a more satisfactory allocation of salaries for certain positions than was possible under the original proviso, but it does not remove the restriction, and until this is done, or until all salaries and positions are allocated in a more satisfactory way by reclassification, it will not be possible to secure the fullest efficiency and most satisfactory results from the salary expenditures of the bureau.

MART ANDERSON,
Director.

HON. JAMES J. DAVIS,
Secretary of Labor.