

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

JAMES J. DAVIS, Secretary

WOMEN'S BUREAU

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



FISCAL YEAR
ENDED JUNE 30

1925



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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF LABOR,
WOMEN'S BUREAU,
Washington, July 27, 1925.

HON. JAMES J. DAVIS,
Secretary of Labor.

SIR: The program of activities of the Women's Bureau for the fiscal year ended June 30, 1925, testifies to the fact that the volume of work which the bureau is called upon to perform increases with each year of its existence.

The subject of wage-earning women has been arousing more and more interest throughout the country during the last few years. This quickened interest is traceable to several important causes. In the first place, the educational work of the Women's Bureau is largely responsible for riveting attention of many forces upon the problems of women workers. Moreover, census figures show that the number of wage-earning women is gradually increasing and that in 1920 there were more than eight and one-half million women in gainful employment, one woman out of every five being a wage earner. This number represents an actual increase since 1910 of nearly half a million. Such figures prove that the employment of women outside the home is not a temporary condition, but a problem that we have with us always. Not far from three million, or one-third of all the women workers, were in manufacturing and mechanical industries, trade, transportation, and public service; and it is with this group of gainfully occupied women that the work of the Women's Bureau is largely concerned.

Several decades ago only a few far-sighted social pioneers realized the importance of safeguarding women employed outside the home; it took the war, with its spectacular demand upon women workers and their heroic response, to attract the attention of the country at large to the welfare of wage-earning women as a national problem.

It was this war-time interest that brought about the inauguration of the Women's Bureau in July, 1918, as a temporary agency under the name of Woman in Industry Service. The realization of the need for the Federal Government to look after the well-being of workers in time of peace as well as of war led to the establishment of the Women's Bureau as a permanent organization in June, 1920, its function being "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." 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. Also, cooperation, whenever possible, with State and Federal officials in matters pertaining to wage-earning women has always been an important part of its policy. Its activities include chiefly the investigation of various problems for the purpose of securing information upon which to base satisfactory standards and policies, and the presentation and dissemination of these facts in popular and technical form. In other words, the Women's Bureau can initiate improvement by calling attention to its need, but other forces and agencies must carry on the actual work of reform.

Although it is important to safeguard men engaged in industrial enterprises and to prevent their exploitation, it is of even more vital concern to safeguard women workers because of their dual rôle. Women are producers not only of economic goods but of future citizens. As mothers or potential mothers, their interests and health must be protected. "America will be as strong as her women" is not only a slogan but a truism. If industrial forces are permitted to draw too heavily upon the time and energies of women employees, then industry becomes a menace not only to them as individuals but to their children. Wrong working conditions for women mean insufficient strength for bearing children and insufficient time to care for them. The sequel of this situation is the inevitable weakening or crippling of the Nation. Evils of this sort are insidious rather than obvious. The health of women is in the final analysis the keystone in the tower of strength of the Nation.

It has been the duty of the Women's Bureau, in the interest of health measures for women workers, to study the problems surrounding their employment and to draw up standards designed to make industry safe for women. These standards may be outlined briefly. The eight-hour day, Saturday half holiday, one day of rest in seven, adequate time allowance for meals, rest periods at stated intervals, and the prohibition of night work are the hour standards adopted. A living wage without discrimination because of sex is the recommended wage standard. The workroom conditions advocated include clean workrooms; lighting without glare; adequate ventilation; cool and accessible drinking water, with individual drinking cups or sanitary bubble fountains; washing facilities with hot and cold water, soap, and individual towels; an adequate number of clean, accessible toilets (one to every 15 women); cloak rooms; lunch rooms; and rest rooms. For correct posture at work it is recommended that seats have backs and foot rests and that they be adjusted to fit the machine and worker; also that, where possible, seats be so adjusted to machines and worktables that workers can sit or stand at work. Careful protection from machinery risks, from danger of fire, and from exposure to dirt, fumes, and other occupational hazards is also recommended. The prohibition of home work is another standard. In administration it is recommended that there be provided a satisfactory personnel department to have charge of employing and discharging, that there be competent women with responsibility for

conditions affecting women workers, and finally that cooperation of these workers be secured in establishing standards.

These policies are urged not only in behalf of health but of efficiency. It pays to have good conditions of work. Nevertheless, although the foregoing standards are not difficult to attain, and although a number of progressive managers have incorporated them in their industrial program, many other employers of women, either from ignorance, indifference, or conservatism, linger behind in the march of progress and subject their employees to conditions menacing to good health and good business.

In line with its policy the bureau, during its existence, has carried on work of a varied and extensive nature. In general the activities during the past year have included State investigations of conditions of employment for women in industry, special studies of problems particularly related to wage-earning women, and educational and research work.

STATE STUDIES

The Women's Bureau has always made investigations of the conditions of employment of women in individual States an important part of its work. Such a survey is undertaken at the request of some force in the State, either the State department of labor or an organization interested in the problems of wage-earning women. Since the State department of labor rarely has the funds, personnel, or equipment to conduct such intensive investigations, the Women's Bureau renders a valuable service not only to the State where the survey is made but also to the country at large in presenting data representative of women in industry that are comparable for various sections of the country.

Altogether the bureau has made surveys of the hours, wages, and working conditions of women in industry in 19 States. These investigations prove that although some women workers labor under satisfactory conditions, thousands still have unduly long hours, receive wages too low to permit a respectable standard of living, and work in insanitary establishments with exposure to unnecessary hazard and strain and with little provision in the plants for health and comfort. During the past year the bureau has been engaged in some manner on work of this type in connection with six States.

Ohio.

The report on the survey made in the fall of 1922 of the hours and earnings of women in Ohio industries, which has been completed and published during the last year, presents records for 32,088 women and girls, employees in 302 factories, stores, and laundries, these establishments being located in 44 cities and towns in the State. The data show that the State, although not in the foremost ranks, stands well in progressive hour legislation and in its record of scheduled weekly hours for women, but that it occupies a less encouraging position in regard to wages paid to women workers. A number of establishments which had adopted the 8-hour day and the 48-hour week, and in some instances had even shortened their weekly schedule to 44 hours, were more progressive than the State law which restricts the employment of women to 9 hours daily or

50 hours weekly. In fact, three-tenths of the women included had a working-day of 8 hours or less, and about one-third had a weekly schedule of 48 hours or less. The median earnings of the women 18 years of age and over for a representative week were \$13.80; that is, one-half of the women earned more and one-half earned less than this amount. One-fifth of the total number of women in all of the industries failed to secure as much as \$10 during the week scheduled. In some instances this was due to lost time. For the 14,291 women who worked the firm's scheduled time the median week's earnings were \$15.20; 6 per cent were paid less than \$10, and not far from a third received less than \$13 for their week's work.

Illinois.

A preliminary report was submitted on the hours and working conditions of women in Illinois industries, the survey having been made in the spring of 1924. Records were secured for 48,730 women employed in 429 establishments—factories, stores, laundries, hotels, and restaurants—located in 50 cities and towns in the State. Since the overwhelming majority of the women surveyed in the State had an 8-hour or 9-hour day or a day of between 8 and 9 hours, and since the larger proportion of the women in all industries taken together throughout the State were employed on a weekly schedule of 48 hours and 26.1 per cent of the women worked even shorter hours, the situation in regard to scheduled hours of employment in the plants visited was found, on the whole, to be fairly satisfactory. The need for more advanced hour legislation than that in force in the State—a 10-hour day and a 70-hour week—in order that no women be subjected to unduly long hours, is shown by the fact that 35 establishments employing 5.4 per cent of the women had a day as long as 10 hours. The working conditions varied considerably in the plants visited; in some they were excellent while in others conditions affecting the health, comfort, and efficiency of the workers were reported in need of great improvement. Inadequate seating arrangements, insanitary washing and drinking facilities, and the lack of rest rooms and lunch rooms were the most conspicuous defects noted.

Oklahoma.

A survey was made of the hours, wages, and working conditions of women in Oklahoma industries, the field work having been done during the spring of 1924. The report, which has been completed and is now in press, gives records for 4,135 women employed in 172 establishments, comprising factories, mills, stores, telephone exchanges, restaurants, hotels, and laundries. As far as working hours for wage-earning women are concerned, Oklahoma may be said to occupy a middle ground. Although the limitations of the State law—9 hours daily and 54 hours weekly—do away with the evil of excessively long hours, an 8-hour standard has not made great progress in the State and a 6-day week remains more common than the 5½-day week. Hour data for 121 factories, stores, and laundries show a schedule of 8 hours or less for 20.6 per cent of the women and a weekly schedule of 48 hours or less for 18.5 per cent, whereas 64.4 per cent of the women had a daily schedule of 9 hours and 49.6 per cent a weekly schedule of 54 hours. Of 776 women in 17 telephone exchanges, 94.6 per cent had a scheduled day of 8 hours and

a scheduled week of 48 hours. For 568 women employed in 34 hotels and restaurants the scheduled hours of duty on 81.2 per cent of all the workdays were 8 or less. Overall hours on 36.1 per cent of the days were 10 or more.

Although the wage standards were found to be higher than those in many communities, need for considerable improvement was apparent from the records secured. Wage data for women in 135 factories, stores, laundries, and telephone exchanges showed median earnings for the week scheduled in April, 1924, to have been \$13 for white women and \$8.20 for negro women. The median week's earnings of 2,004 full-time white workers were \$15. The median week's earnings for 406 white women in 34 hotels and restaurants were \$11.75, and for 185 negro women in these establishments the median was \$10.10.

In the State as a whole standards of plant equipment affecting the comfort and health of the workers had not reached a satisfactory level. For example, markedly inadequate seating arrangements were reported for over one-third of the plants; that is, no seats were provided for occasional rest periods for women who had standing jobs, or stools without backs were furnished for women who sat constantly at their work. The need for improved sanitation was shown by the fact that almost two-thirds of the establishments had inadequate drinking facilities—either common cups or no cups or insanitary bubble fountains; that four-fifths of the establishments had unsatisfactory washing facilities—common towels, no towels, or no washing facilities whatsoever; and that in a number of instances there were insufficient toilet facilities. The record for service facilities showed that of 172 establishments, 97 had no lunch room, 40 had no cloak room, 113 no rest room.

Delaware, Mississippi, and Tennessee.

During the year the field work in connection with a survey of hours, wages, and working conditions of women in industrial employment has been completed for three other States—Delaware, Mississippi, and Tennessee. The Delaware survey, which took place in the summer of 1924, covered over 4,000 women employed in 147 establishments—factories, stores, laundries, canneries, hotels, and restaurants. Since Mississippi is less important as an industrial center than are the other States which have been surveyed by the bureau, the Mississippi survey conducted in the winter of 1925 was less extensive in scope, including only 81 establishments and a little less than 3,000 women. In Tennessee an investigation including more establishments and a larger number of women than either of the two just mentioned was made in the spring of 1925.—216 establishments and a little over 16,000 women.

SPECIAL STUDIES

Because of the need and the demand for enlightenment on subjects particularly related to wage-earning women, the Women's Bureau has continued or completed a number of special studies of this type inaugurated during the preceding year, and has undertaken several new ones.

Labor legislation for women in industry.

The great variation found in the labor laws for women workers in the 48 States is shown in the bulletin dealing with the State laws on hours, minimum wage, and home work affecting women workers, which was revised during the last year to give an outline of the laws on the statute books in 1924.

Women wage earners in States which place no legal limit on the number of hours women may be employed daily or weekly are at a great disadvantage as compared with those employed in industrial occupations in States where an 8-hour law for women is in effect.

In all, 43 States, the District of Columbia, and Porto Rico have laws regulating the number of hours women may be employed, showing that the tendency to safeguard women in the interest of the home and the family is almost nation-wide. A much greater effort, however, is necessary to make industry safe for women. In many States the number of industries or occupations coming under the law is so limited as to affect only a small proportion of the wage-earning women in the State. Moreover, only 13 States—Arizona, California, Colorado, Kansas, Massachusetts, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oregon, Rhode Island, Utah, and Washington—the District of Columbia, and Porto Rico limit the number of hours of women employees in some industries to 8 hours a day or 48 hours a week.

Night work for women is prohibited to some extent in 16 States—California, Connecticut, Delaware, Indiana, Kansas, Massachusetts, Nebraska, New Jersey, New York, North Dakota, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Washington, and Wisconsin—and Porto Rico.

Thirteen States have laws establishing a minimum wage for women workers—Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Kansas, Massachusetts, Minnesota, North Dakota, Oregon, South Dakota, Utah, Washington, and Wisconsin. Three of these States—Arizona, South Dakota, and Utah—have set a minimum wage by law in specified industries or occupations. The remaining States have created boards or commissions with power to study various occupations or industries and establish minimum wage rates for each or all of them. In Colorado, however, the commission, because of lack of sufficient appropriation, has never functioned. Arkansas has a wage rate set by law, which the commission has the power to change. The highest wage set in any of the awards in the several States is \$16 a week in all industries in California.

About one-fourth of the States have laws either prohibiting or regulating home work. Women are in positions of authority in the State departments of labor in 15 States and in minor positions in 19 States for the purpose of looking after the interests of wage-earning women.

Women in the fruit-growing and canning industries in the State of Washington.

One survey, similar to the State investigations in some respects, but constituting a more intensive study of special seasonal industries, is that of women workers in the fruit-growing and canning industries in the State of Washington. The field investigation was made in the summer and fall of 1923, and the report is now in press. The

survey covering as it does two distinct types of work, outdoor and indoor employment, necessitated the collection of data on many subjects and the analysis of many problems. In the course of this survey on the hours, wages, and working and living conditions of women in these types of work, interviews were held with 958 women working on 219 ranches (berry fields and apple, pear, and prune orchards) and with 2,056 women employed in 63 establishments (fruit and vegetable canneries and evaporators, fish and clam canneries, apple and pear warehouses, and prune-packing houses).

The report presents an analysis of a number of subjects connected with the personal and family history of the women workers and of particular interest in the study of wage-earning women, such as their age, marital status, living condition, size and composition of their families, and their share in family support. Since almost one-third of the women workers included were migrants, the problems related to this type of labor, and in particular the matter of temporary housing of the workers on the ranches, are discussed at length.

Working conditions in fish, fruit, and vegetable canneries, in evaporators, and in fruit warehouses, and wage and hour data for the workers in the various types of outdoor and indoor work are analyzed in considerable detail.

The report shows that, in addition to the strain of long hours which so frequently accompanies the work, there are certain characteristic problems in connection with working conditions bearing particularly on the comfort and welfare of the women employed, such as crowded workrooms, wet floors, inadequate seating, and unsatisfactory temperature.

The industries are accompanied by great irregularity in the hours worked day by day, a condition due largely to the perishability of the product. Also, there was found great irregularity of employment during the season, which consisted of periods both of intensive activity and of great slackness in work, this situation being due largely to the harvest period of the fruit and vegetables and to the run of fish.

The accompanying summary gives a general idea of the wages available in the various industries included. The wage data for women in outdoor industries were collected by means of interviews and questionnaires. The wage figures for women in the indoor industries were copied directly from plant pay rolls. Attention is called to the fact that in the wage data for outdoor industries it has been necessary to give average rather than median earnings because in so many instances the number of women in the groups under discussion were too small to permit the computation of medians. For indoor industries, however, in which much larger groups of women were encountered, it has seemed more advisable to present medians.

Outdoor industries

	Average daily earnings
Berry fields	\$1. 60
Prune orchards:	
Picking	3. 09
Sorting	3. 43
Apple and pear orchards:	
Thinning apples	3. 17
Apple picking	3. 42
Pear picking	2. 97

Indoor industries

	Median week's earnings
Fruit and vegetable canneries and evaporators.....	\$12.30
Fish canneries.....	12.50
Apple and pear warehouses:	
Apple sorting.....	18.45
Apple packing.....	31.05
Pear sorting.....	18.05
Pear packing.....	25.85

Another matter touched on is the occupational history of the women in regard to the types of work formerly engaged in—whether regular, irregular, or seasonal—the number of occupations, the average time of employment in the various types, the age at beginning to work, and the first as well as the chief occupation.

Since the high labor turnover is a constant worry of the employers in the canning industry, data secured on this subject were carefully analyzed. The difficulty was found to be due, on the one hand, to the seasonal nature of the products handled and the uncertainty of crop deliveries, and, on the other, to the lack of stability of the labor force, many of the workers being housewives and school girls who wanted employment for a few days, weeks, or months only. Both the employer who wants dependable employees and the employee who wants regular work have their troubles. The situation varies with the different classes of establishments discussed. Fish canneries and apple warehouses represent two extremes; the former have the most uncertain conditions with dull or hectic days and nights, and the latter the most certain with a practically stable labor force. Between these two extremes are conditions in the fruit and vegetable canneries where by means of canning a succession of crops there is an overlapping of harvest periods, and the season is prolonged for many months.

Another subject treated to a slight extent in the report is that of industrial accidents and diseases. This study is based on 168 records of injuries received in 1923 by employees in fish, fruit, and vegetable canneries—94 being for women. Of these 94 women, 70 had suffered from infection, 17 from bruises, burns, or cuts, and 7 from strain, sprain, dislocation, fracture, hernia, etc.

Home environment and employment opportunities of women in coal-mine workers' families.

The immediate source of the information presented in this report, which was issued during the last year, was the material collected by the United States Coal Commission in 1922 and 1923 in the course of its investigation into conditions of life and the cost of living of coal-mine workers in the bituminous regions of Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Illinois, Ohio, Kentucky, Indiana, Iowa, Alabama, Tennessee, Virginia, Missouri, Oklahoma, Maryland, Michigan, and certain Western States and in the anthracite region of Pennsylvania. From these data the Women's Bureau compiled the statistical material concerning the home environment and the opportunities for gainful employment of the approximately 500,000 women in coal miners' families. All data concerning the domicile status and economic organization of the mine workers' families were secured originally by the United States Bureau of the Census in the course of its 1920 population enumerations. In addition to such data

compiled from the census there was available certain information gathered at first hand by the United States Coal Commission. In all, 1,578 mine workers' families were visited personally by the Coal Commission's agents in the course of its cost-of-living study. In selecting the families to be scheduled, the greatest care was exercised by the commission in order that a representative group might be obtained. From the schedules thus collected the Women's Bureau compiled material concerning the number of daughters in these families, the number of wives and daughters at work, the kinds of work in which they were engaged, and the amount of their contribution to the family income during the year or half-year under consideration. Information concerning living conditions as affected by community environment in the bituminous and anthracite fields was secured on a detailed schedule by the Coal Commission's agents who made personal visits to 1,094 communities in which about 350,000 mine workers lived; 811 of these communities were controlled by mine companies, and 283 were independent mining towns. From the unpublished material thus gathered the Women's Bureau has extracted facts which concern especially the women of the miners' households.

The facts revealed in this report raise the question: Are the coal-mining companies, coal-mining communities, and the Nation as a whole returning value received to these half million women who occupy a position of peculiar industrial and economic importance in a basic industry? Since coal mining is of necessity carried on in many instances in isolated localities, the presence of the family is essential for keeping the mine workers in these regions, and the help of the wives, whether gainfully employed or not, means greater efficiency on the part of the miners themselves.

Because of the location of the mines, the miners' wives and daughters who are forced to become wage earners—more than 100,000 among those included in the study—are faced in many cases with extremely limited opportunities of employment. Three-fourths of the bituminous-mine workers and less than a third of those in the anthracite section lived in places sufficiently remote from towns and cities to cut off gainful occupation in many of the avenues open to women. Consequently, a much larger proportion of women in the anthracite region than in the bituminous regions were gainfully employed.

The majority of employed daughters in the anthracite section were in manufacturing establishments—chiefly silk and other textile mills—and in trade. In the bituminous regions, which offer less extensive and varied opportunities for work, the employed daughters still living at home worked chiefly as salesgirls and domestic servants, only a few finding employment as school-teachers and operators in small factories.

Married women, because of confining home and family duties, are naturally more limited than are daughters, in opportunities for gainful occupation, even though the need be very urgent. Of the bread-winning wives of miners, the overwhelming majority were supplementing the family income chiefly by taking mine workers as boarders or lodgers—an employment of importance to the coal-mining industry. Daywork outside the home (laundering and cleaning)

was only a secondary opportunity of employment for women with home cares.

While facilities available to miners' wives should be of such a type as to enable them to carry on the work of their households as efficiently as possible, the investigation revealed and emphasized the fact that, with the exception of lighting facilities, which were fairly good, the home and community resources in both company-owned and independent mining towns were too often far below what might be termed American standards. Especially conspicuous was the lack of adequate water facilities. Also, the sewerage system in most of the mining communities was totally inadequate. In the matter of community resources, outstanding facts shown by the investigation were that the majority of miners' wives and daughters were living in regions strikingly devoid of facilities which are necessary in recreation and improvement for women (public parks, reading rooms, libraries, rest rooms, and girls' clubs), and that most of the institutions that are considered as playing an important part in American community life usually were lacking in the mining camps distant from towns and were absent also from many of the independent communities.

Facts about working women.

During the past year the bureau has published a handbook of facts about working women: Their number, occupations, nationality, age, and marital status, their wages and hours of work, graphically presented by means of easily read charts. The study is based on census statistics and on investigations of the Women's Bureau.

Ranking high in importance and interest are the facts relating to the ages of the eight and a half million women in the United States who earn their own living and in many instances contribute to the support of their families as well. Perhaps it is not generally realized that one in every five working women is less than 20 years old and that more than one in every five is from 20 to 24 years of age. In fact, at least two-fifths of the women who work are under 25 years old. Another two-fifths are from 25 to 44 years of age. Or, to state this another way, nearly one-half of the women in manufacturing industries, practically two-fifths of those in agricultural jobs, in trades, and in professions, and two-thirds in transportation are less than 25 years old, in contrast to the one-quarter of those in domestic and personal service who are as young as that. Thus, in addition to the fact that more women are employed in domestic service than in any other group of occupations, even though their actual number has decreased considerably since 1910, we find that three-quarters of these are 25 years and over and that two-fifths of them, or nearly one-third of the total number, are 45 years or over.

Of the nearly 2,000,000 married women at work, one-half of whom are native white and approximately one-third negro, three-fifths are from 25 to 44 years of age, while another fifth are 45 years and over.

Native white greatly predominate among working women, taking the lead in all occupational groups except agriculture, in which they are outnumbered by negro women.

South Carolina stands out as the State having the greatest proportion of its women at work (more than one-third) and West Virginia as having the smallest proportion (about one-ninth).

Absenteeism in cotton mills.

The report on the study of the amount and causes of absenteeism among women employed in textile mills has been almost completed. The survey, which took place in 1923 and 1924, covered 18 mills located in the following 14 important textile States: Alabama, Connecticut, Georgia, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Mississippi, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, South Carolina, Texas, and Vermont. The records of 6,200 men and 4,338 women employed in these mills were inspected. Of the women, 2,215 were visited in their homes by the bureau's agents and interviewed as to the causes of time lost from their industrial employment. Although at this time it seems inadvisable to give definite figures before the report is ready for publication, it may be said that absenteeism is proportionately greater in certain occupations within the textile industry than in others and indicates the need for the management to give serious consideration and study to causes of fatigue and occupational problems, including those of enforced absences. Although the practice of keeping on the rolls a large number of extra hands does not in all instances work to the detriment of regular workers, there are cases where this practice causes a great injustice to many employees.

Minimum wage laws.

The present time is indeed a critical time for women in industry. The Supreme Court decision declaring unconstitutional the minimum wage law for women in the District of Columbia threw doubt upon the constitutionality of similar legislation in the States. It became absolutely important, therefore, that the basic and current facts as to women's earnings and their social and economic significance be made available, and the Women's Bureau in the spring of 1923 began a research study of the history, operation, and administration of the various minimum wage laws of the United States. This study, which has been continued steadily since its initiation, has necessitated during the past year the collection and tabulation of new and recent figures and the analysis of various court decisions, the object being to make the study as complete a history of the minimum-wage situation in this country as possible. Accordingly, the publication of the report has been delayed until the coming year.

Industrial accidents among women.

Because of a realization of the need to consider the employment of women from the standpoints of hazards and injuries, a study of compensable work accidents to women wage earners in New Jersey, Ohio, and Wisconsin was inaugurated in the spring of 1923. The tabulation of the data secured has been completed, and the report is now being written. The object of the study has been to determine the cause of accidents to women in industry; to ascertain the nature and degree of the resulting disabilities; to estimate the time lost for which compensation was paid as well as further time lost on account of injury; to investigate any assistance rendered making for rehabili-

tation in economic or home activities through medical treatment, vocational training, or job performed; and to consider means for the prevention of accidents. In each State the material was obtained partly from the accident records in the State compensation board's files for the 12-month period between July 1, 1919, and July 1, 1920, and from interviews with those women who had received a permanent disability. Records of about 3,300 compensable cases were studied, a majority of which resulted only in temporary disability. In all, however, about 400 women who had been left with a permanent disability of some sort were located and interviewed.

Legislation for women in Oregon.

The publication of the results of another interesting piece of research work, a comprehensive study of the legislation for women in Oregon, which the bureau had planned to issue last year, has been postponed because of certain necessary legal revisions. In the section of the report devoted to industrial matters, women's share in industrial activities in the pioneer days is discussed, followed by a detailed account of the enactment and administration of the laws on hours and minimum wage for women workers as well as those on seating and sanitary conditions in establishments employing women. The report also outlines the direct and indirect effects of the minimum wage law, showing that little if any loss of employment among Oregon women as a group can be related to the minimum-wage determinations, that the minimum-wage rates have not decreased the efficiency of the women, and that this minimum has not become the maximum. It is also shown that the law serves as a means of industrial conciliation and tends to instill in the organized woman worker a sense of her place in the community and arouses in the public a realization of its responsibility in the adjustment and prevention of industrial hardships to women and minors.

Women workers and family support.

A report which will soon be in press is one of a study made by the students in the economic department at the Bryn Mawr Summer School for Women Workers in Industry during the summer of 1924. The report consists of the analysis of questionnaires filled out by a group of 101 women between the ages of 21 and 36 who were studying at the school. The information secured was based on the personal experience of the workers, the main object being to discover to what extent their economic position was determined by their relation to the variously constituted household groups to which they belonged or contributed. The data compiled covered only the year ended June 1, 1924. The women studied were workers in the major women-employing industries of the country, the two largest groups being comprised of 31 garment workers and 24 textile operators. The only other groups numbering as many as 5 workers were those in the millinery, shoe, and telephone industries.

It is evident that, so far as the workers at the Bryn Mawr Summer School are representative, the burden of family support borne by women in industry constitutes so large a proportion of their actual earnings that it determines the economic position of the worker in a very important way. Some of the women in the group studied

already were sharing their earnings with others, even though these women were younger than their brothers who had married and, in that way, become responsible for the care of dependents. For nearly one-fifth of the workers the burden included the support of one or more total dependents. Even the workers who boarded away from home still contributed to family support in about one-half the cases.

Probably at least a half of all the women had the problem of family support to some degree, as more than two-fifths of them gave of their earnings to the support of total or partial dependents, while in the case of others their contributions to the family income probably exceeded the cost of their own maintenance. This responsibility had to be met from wages that were not, except in a few cases, at high rates, and from earnings that were frequently interrupted by periods of unemployment. The Bryn Mawr Summer School workers, however, did not include many representatives of the hardest pressed workers. They were at least so situated that—their maintenance being covered by scholarships—they could spare two months away from their employment and forfeit their earnings for that time. Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that the share in family support of women workers in general is probably an even heavier burden than that carried by the group studied.

Trend of employment.

Of late years sociologists and economists have given a great deal of attention to the problems of seasonal fluctuation and periods of depression in employment and the economic waste resulting therefrom.

Practically no consideration, however, has been given to the subject of women in this connection, except the women who are dependent upon male wage earners for support. One reason for this is the fact that students of these problems find available practically no employment figures by sex which cover a period of years. The Women's Bureau, therefore, at the request of the Committee on Governmental Labor Statistics of the American Statistical Association, has surveyed the field of available statistics on numbers employed which give figures for men and women separately, and will publish employment statistics covering a period of 10 years, 1914-1923 inclusive, collected by the State of Ohio but not published since 1915. This material is of extreme importance, not only because it includes figures for both sexes but because practically the same methods in the collection of data have been used throughout the period. The data are so nearly all-inclusive for employed persons within the State that they should prove of great value to individuals and organizations in the study and analysis of social problems related to periods of depression in employment or to employment in seasonal industries.

The chief interest of the Women's Bureau is to bring to the attention of statisticians and other persons the fact that a large proportion of women wage earners, not alone as wage earners but as wage earners supporting dependents, are affected by irregularity of employment. This condition is made more serious by the unmistakable conclusion that the average woman wage earner is responsible for the support of dependents. It is believed that when it is possible to study employment statistics which record the women employed

as well as the men, this phase of the question can not fail of inclusion in future analyses.

Effects of special legislation on the employment of women.

A new study which was inaugurated during the past year, based on census statistics, deals with the women gainfully occupied in each State in relation to special labor laws for women. The survey covers a period of 50 years.

Effects of applied research on the employment opportunities of American women.

Protests against woman's invasion of industry have, generally speaking, died away. The public has realized at last that women have been forced out of the home into factories and mills by the accumulating momentum of invention and large-scale production. The rapid developments of the last decade stress the importance of keeping in mind the fact that the jobs which women hold in industry are living parts of the whole industrial organization and as such are undergoing changes and are reacting to conditions throughout the industrial body. Of considerable interest, therefore, is a report prepared by the bureau, which will soon be ready for publication, since it contains descriptions of conspicuous changes which have occurred in the employment opportunities of women in certain industries as a result of the application of research in the industrial field. Although such changes have affected the opportunities of men as well as of women the discussions in the report are confined almost wholly to women.

Foreign-born women in industry.

This investigation was undertaken at the urgent and repeated requests of organizations and persons interested in the establishment of greater opportunity and a better understanding of American life among the foreign-born population of the United States. Information gathered and compiled with this end in view would be a definite contribution to the body of facts upon which could be based a satisfactory policy for the education and treatment of the foreign born.

The field work in connection with this investigation was begun in December, 1924, and will be continued during the summer and fall of this year. Centers in eastern Pennsylvania where there is a marked proportion of immigrant women employed were selected for study.

The data have been obtained by interviews with the working women in their homes. The topics discussed in the interview cover age, residence in the United States, marital status, education, size of the family, number of wage earners in the family, and the industrial experience of the women in their native country and in the United States. The data being compiled also show the number of jobs, the kind of work, and the present wage, emphasizing the efforts made by the women in securing work, their underemployment, and their difficulties in adjustment in industry. In addition the questionnaire includes a summary of the worker's economic responsibility and her social interests.

Among the approximately 1,000 women interviewed thus far the predominating races have been Jewish, Italian, German, Polish,

Ukranian, Hungarian, and other Slavic races. The industries in which the women interviewed were employed have likewise been varied.

In Philadelphia, where the field work has been completed, a brief questionnaire was answered by about 700 foreign-born working women enrolled in the Philadelphia evening schools, showing the extent of education in their native country, correlating their length of residence in the United States with their time at school in this country, and also revealing the kind of work in which the women were engaged and their wages at the time of the interview.

Night work.

A study of night work for women is now under way. It is based largely on research work and consists of a discussion of conditions in the United States bearing on this topic, an analysis of State laws prohibiting and regulating night work for women, and a comparison of the situation in this country with that in other countries. The study also will include a compilation and welding together of material on the subject which has already been collected by the bureau during its State investigations.

Women in the Government service.

In 1920 the Women's Bureau published a bulletin entitled, "Women in the Government Service" (Bulletin 8). Realizing that the information contained therein was out of date, the bureau decided to revise the material to make it representative of present conditions. Accordingly, a new bulletin on this subject is now in the process of preparation.

RESEARCH WORK

The research activities of the bureau have constituted an important part of its program during the last year. A considerable amount of research work has been necessary in connection with the surveys made and with the reports written. For example, as a preliminary to the State investigations the research division has compiled data on the legal and industrial situation in each State surveyed. A number of the bureau studies have been based almost exclusively on information secured by research methods, a list of this type handled during the last year being as follows:

Minimum wage laws.

Legislation for women in Oregon.

Home environment and employment opportunities of women in coal-mine workers' families.

Facts about working women.

Effects of special legislation on women workers.

Effects of applied research upon the employment opportunities of American women.

Women who toil at night.

The status of women in the Government service in 1925.

In addition to work of this sort the research division has served as a bureau of information, replying to many requests from numerous organizations and individuals in all parts of the country in regard to matters concerning wage-earning women. Several other im-

portant pieces of work, the result of research efforts, consist of lectures by representatives of the bureau, articles written for conferences, and charts prepared for special occasions. In one case charts were prepared for use in a course dealing with vocational education and industrial economics given in a number of southern colleges. In another instance facts about gainful employment of women, secured from the census, together with charts prepared by way of illustration, were sent out to be used by the Chicago Women's Trade Union League.

Another definite means by which the bureau has been functioning as a clearing house of information regarding the activities affecting working women in this country and in others is the News Letter, which was started in 1921 at the request of the Association of Governmental Labor Officials and which during the past year has been issued monthly. Among other things the News Letter has outlined current activities in regard to the minimum wage laws already in existence. It has discussed all efforts in the various States to pass new legislation concerning wage-earning women, and presented digests of special and State reports on hours, wages, working conditions, industrial accidents, and law violations as related to women workers.

There has been prepared by the research division a series of charts presenting data secured from State laws on the safety and sanitation regulations applying to mercantile establishments, those pertaining to factories in general, and those concerning special types of factories and occupations. In addition, the regulations found in State laws prohibiting certain occupations to women and limiting or controlling the conditions of work in others have been put in chart form. It is not the intention of the bureau to publish these charts at the present time but to use them for reference purposes only.

EDUCATIONAL WORK

As a part of the educational program during the past year a number of articles have been written for encyclopedias, periodicals, and newspapers, concerning the work of the Women's Bureau, wage-earning women, and other closely allied subjects. News releases on the bureau's bulletins have been sent out for use throughout the country, while other information about matters of interest to the bureau has been given from time to time to journalists and special feature writers to be used in articles for various publications.

A valuable production initiated during the last year on which work has been continued whenever opportunity would permit is a bulletin containing vital social and economic truths about women in industry. This is being prepared in a popular form, designed to be interesting and instructive to young girls.

Exhibit material.

The use of exhibit material has constituted a popular educational feature of the year's activities. A large exhibit illustrating the financial and home responsibility of wage-earning women; six miniature theaters depicting scenes of hours, wages, and working conditions for women in industry; a model factory; maps showing labor laws for women in the various States; and charts representing the occupational distribution and progress of women in gainful occupations in the United States, and those setting forth the scheduled

hours and median wages of women in the States surveyed by the bureau have been in constant use. In fact, the exhibit material has been used by schools, colleges, universities, churches, women's clubs, and industrial and labor organizations in all parts of the country.

Another interesting and effective manner in which the bureau has conducted its educational campaign has been by means of motion pictures. The picture, "When Women Work," which has been in use since 1920, was revised last year by the addition of new scenes representing good conditions in a paper-box factory. Also, a new two-reel picture, entitled "The Woman Worker Past and Present," was prepared and circulated widely. The picture contrasts women's industrial activities in a former era—when women did the spinning, weaving, sewing, and baking for the family needs by their own fire-sides—with their occupations in factories, mills, and workshops at the present time. The benefits that have come to society from modern wholesale manufacturing are depicted, and also certain resultant hardships for the women engaged as wage earners outside the home. The fact is clearly brought out that many of these drawbacks to modern industrial methods are unnecessary and that in some plants satisfactory conditions for women workers have already been achieved. The need for greater and more widespread progress and improvement along these lines as well as the efficacy of good legal standards for wage-earning women is emphasized. The good and bad industrial conditions portrayed in the picture were, on the whole, taken in real factories during working hours, and the women operatives depicted were those actually engaged in the processes presented. The picture is not only educational but interesting, setting forth realistically and with a sufficiently vivid appeal to impress every audience, many types of factory work in which women are employed, the need for a consideration of the problems of such women workers, and the possibility of important adjustments. The film will be lent by the Women's Bureau to responsible persons and agencies with the understanding that the borrowers defray express charges and guarantee its safe-keeping.

Publications.

During the year the following bulletins have been published:

- No. 35. Women in Missouri Industries.
- No. 39. Domestic Workers and Their Employment Relations.
- No. 40. State Laws Affecting Working Women. (Revision of Bul. 16.)
- No. 41. Family Status of Breadwinning Women in Four Selected Cities.
- No. 42. List of References on Minimum Wage for Women in the United States and Canada.
- No. 43. Standard and Scheduled Hours of Work for Women in Industry.
- No. 44. Women in Ohio Industries.
- No. 45. Home Environment and Employment Opportunities of Women in Coal-Mine Workers' Families.
- No. 46. Facts About Working Women. A graphic presentation based on census statistics and studies of the Women's Bureau.
Preliminary Report on Women in Illinois Industries.
Sixth annual report.

The following bulletins are in press:

- No. 47. Women in the Fruit-Growing and Canning Industries in the State of Washington.
- No. 48. Women in Oklahoma Industries.

THE COMING YEAR

The program outlined by the bureau for the coming year includes a continuation of studies and reports begun in the year just closed but not yet completed and the inauguration of several new surveys of interest and importance.

The following bulletins are almost completed and will be sent to press during the next few weeks:

Women workers and family support.

Effects of applied research upon the employment opportunities of American women.

Women in Illinois industries.

Absenteeism of women in textile mills.

Legislation for women in Oregon.

Reports on the following subjects which are now in the process of preparation will be completed:

The status of women in the Government service in 1925.

Women who toil at night.

Industrial accidents among women.

Women in Delaware industries.

Women in Mississippi industries.

Women in Tennessee industries.

Trend of employment.

Minimum wage laws.

Effects of special legislation upon women.

An effort will be made to complete the bulletin on women in industry designed for young people. Another important piece of work to be started by the bureau at the beginning of the coming year is the indexing of the bureau's publications.

In order to meet the many requests for exhibit material, plans are under way for some new posters and a new traveling exhibit, practical for shipping, which will illustrate the effect of factory standards and conditions of work for women upon their standards of living and the influence of all such standards upon community and national welfare.

Several requests for State studies have come in, and the bureau plans to make at least two surveys of this type.

Some idea of the special studies which the bureau expects to begin during the coming year can be gained from the following statements:

Home and community facilities and family obligations of employed women.

There will be begun in the near future a study of home and community facilities and family obligations of employed women in a selected locality. This study must be undertaken at this time in order to form a part of the nation-wide survey by the General Federation of Women's Clubs in their campaign for better homes. Both the survey of foreign-born women in industry, which is now being made, and the report on Home Environment and Employment Opportunities of Women in Coal-mine Workers' Families, which has been published, will be valuable contributions to this nation-wide study of home conditions.

Elimination of unnecessary fatigue.

The whole question of opportunity of employment and occupational progress of women is so involved with problems of occupational adjustment that it is imperative that the Women's Bureau

take up a study of the elimination of unnecessary fatigue in a selected industry without further delay.

COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The appropriations which have been allowed for the work of the Women's Bureau have limited its activities in the past to such a degree that the bureau has been able to undertake but a small part of the work assigned to it by law.

In order to fulfill its function of formulating standards and policies, the bureau must collect very comprehensive as well as current facts relating to women in industry. Each year has brought a great increase in the volume and in the number and kind of demands made upon the bureau. State departments of labor, associations of employers and workers, organizations of women—State, National, and international—research bureaus, colleges, universities, and the public in general repeatedly turn to this bureau for information and data concerning women wage earners and their economic and social status. The majority of these requests are for work which must be undertaken if the Women's Bureau is to accomplish fully the task for which it was created.

It is unfortunate that the demands for special studies and for information on many phases of the work of the bureau must be continually deferred, because they exceed the capacity of the organization.

The necessity to postpone to some future time the undertaking of certain important activities, many of which have been urged for several years by various groups, adds greatly to the problems of administration. For example, questions of opportunity of employment and occupational progress of women are interwoven with problems of posture at work, the lifting of heavy weights, industrial poisons, dust, lint, hours of work, and other causes of fatigue to such a marked degree that a study of the one subject points to the urgent necessity for an investigation of one or more of the other problems.

As it has been impossible for the bureau to undertake extended studies of this kind, it has been necessary to put aside the more complex and intangible problems until they can be given the expert technical and detailed study necessary to furnish the basis for sound conclusions.

The work of the Women's Bureau is national in scope, not local. Restrictions of its activities cause an injustice not only to working women but to society as a whole because of women's essential significance in the general welfare of the country. It must be remembered, as stated on a preceding page, that women are the mothers of the race, actually or potentially, and that many women in gainful employment are mothers and home makers as well as wage earners. Hence it is of paramount importance that adequate allowance be made for scientific studies of conditions surrounding the employment of such large numbers of women in the various industries and occupations. Accordingly, the special problems concerning their employment on the one hand and concerning the welfare of their children on the other necessitate adequate provision by the Federal Government for a clearing house of facts and policies relating to women's position in industry.

If we are convinced of the necessity of safeguarding the homes of the Nation, we can no longer ignore the problems of home making which confront our women workers, and as a Nation we must give these problems serious, intensive consideration. We must take careful stock of the needs of these homes, at least to the same degree to which we take stock of the needs of the Nation's commerce. It is not only necessary to study all phases of the conditions surrounding women in employment and the wages earned in such employment, but it is highly desirable to extend the scope of such studies so as to include certain phases of the conditions surrounding them in their home life and especially to establish definitely the fact that women are in industry, not only to support themselves but to contribute to the support of others.

Importance and need of a study on married women in industry.

Although the employment of married women has been the theme of much discussion for some years, it has now become a subject of supreme importance nationally. Census figures show that there were almost two million married women in gainful occupations in 1920—exclusive of widowed, divorced, or deserted women—and that there was a 53.7 per cent increase in the number of married women in manufacturing and mechanical industries, trade, and transportation during the decade from 1910 to 1920. While the census figures give the number of married women with husbands living at home, these figures fail to show the number of widowed or divorced mothers at work or the number of children affected by the employment of mothers.

In a study of census schedules made by the Women's Bureau for four cities—selected because they were representative of different sections and conditions in the country and fairly typical of industrial and rural communities in general—facts were brought to light showing that there were employed in these four cities 38,446 women 14 years of age and over, or over 38 per cent of the total female population. Twenty-one thousand of these employed women were or had been married, and over 61 per cent of the matrons were living with wage-earning husbands. Over one-half of the 21,000 who were or had been married were mothers, and two-fifths had children under the age of 5 years. Almost two-fifths of the mothers were employed outside the home.

It is essential, therefore, to collect present definite and comprehensive information about married women in gainful occupations. The problem of the employed married woman and especially of the employed mother, linked so closely as it is with the welfare of the home and the family, is naturally one of the most vital as well as one of the most complex problems before the country to-day. The Women's Bureau, which is expected by the country to throw light on this matter, realizes the necessity for a study which will require considerable field work in order to collect at first hand reliable information on the subject. Even though the many complicating social and economic factors make this whole matter a difficult one to settle entirely, nevertheless a scientific study of the question would make for a reduction of existing problems. A special appropriation will be necessary to carry on an intensive study of this sort.

Expansion of research division.

An increased appropriation for the next year is greatly needed for the extension of research of secondary sources, in order that it may keep pace with the field research. There should be an expansion of activities in the following ways:

Thorough investigation of sources in order to answer current inquiries.

More comprehensive legal research of State laws in the field of working conditions, of foreign laws affecting wage-earning women, and of law-enforcing agencies.

Studies of documents, reports, and laws concerning industrial hygiene, occupations and industries prohibited to women, fatigue, and posture; of court cases affecting labor legislation for women.

More detailed research investigations in connection with field reports on legal, industrial, and economic matters.

Preparation of additional special bibliographies.

More systematic examination of current publications on subjects of interest to the bureau.

Other activities of outstanding importance which must be postponed for lack of funds.

There should be undertaken exhaustive studies of the effect on women of specific conditions of employment, such as the piecework system, posture at work, the lifting of weights, and industrial poisons, especially where it is proved that these poisons affect women more quickly and more generally than they affect men.

There should be undertaken extensive studies covering the occupational opportunities of women and their opportunities of advancement in comparison with the opportunities of advancement offered to men in industry.

The theory of special legislation for the protection of women has been challenged by certain groups of citizens. Therefore it is unwise longer to delay undertaking an inclusive and progressive compilation of facts bearing on this important and disputed question in order to furnish comprehensive, unbiased material as a basis for a careful analysis of this question. Individual women as well as organizations all over the country are calling on the Women's Bureau for dependable facts on this subject. By special effort a study along this line has been started during the past year, but it was impossible for the bureau to do more than analyze available statistical data. It would be necessary in order to undertake a comprehensive study of this important subject to carry on extensive field research over a considerable period of time in a number of industries.

There should be undertaken in several industries studies of causes of absence and the relative difference in the amount and causes of absenteeism among women as compared with men in the industry.

There should be gathered current data on wages, hours, and working conditions of women in selected industries simultaneously in various sections of the country at a given period.

There should be prepared a codification of laws regulating general conditions of employment for women in the various States.

Another type of activity in which there is opportunity for considerable expansion is the educational work; especially is there a need for more exhibit material and for an increase in the number of popular articles concerning women workers, since by such methods a certain part of the public to which technical material makes little appeal can be interested in facts concerning women wage earners.

That there is great need for this kind of information is apparent from the many demands for such popular material constantly pouring into the bureau.

Conclusion.

That the Women's Bureau, so limited in appropriation and personnel, has been able to accomplish so much as it has in its brief history is due partly to the interest and enthusiasm of the members of the staff who, realizing the humanitarian aspects of the work and the vital relation of wage-earning women to national progress, have cooperated to an unusual degree to forward the bureau's program. The success of the bureau has also been brought about largely through the aid of the organizations of interested women in all parts of the country, desirous of bettering conditions for industrial workers. Like a national network, these groups stand seeking guidance from the Women's Bureau, ready to receive its messages, eager to cooperate in the dissemination of such information, and effective in helping to establish the necessary standards for wage-earning women.

MARY ANDERSON,
Director.

