In July 1948 more than 1 3/4 million women were engaged in agricultural work, according to Census reports. They were one-tenth of all employed women and nearly one-fifth of all agricultural workers. From a peak in June of more than 2 million, the number of women farm workers had declined by about 330,000. Women in nonagricultural employment had increased by 82,000, numbering 15,819,000 in July.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>July 1948</th>
<th>Number of women</th>
<th>Change since June 1948</th>
<th>Total persons</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Population (14 years and over)</td>
<td>55,161,000</td>
<td>+ 90,000</td>
<td>108,597,000</td>
<td>50.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civilian labor force</td>
<td>18,405,000</td>
<td>- 280,000</td>
<td>63,842,000</td>
<td>28.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed</td>
<td>17,626,000</td>
<td>- 250,000</td>
<td>61,615,000</td>
<td>28.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>779,000</td>
<td>- 30,000</td>
<td>2,227,000</td>
<td>35.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armed forces</td>
<td>15,000</td>
<td>- 1,000</td>
<td>1,293,000</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonworkers</td>
<td>36,742,000</td>
<td>+ 372,000</td>
<td>43,462,000</td>
<td>84.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(U.S. Bureau of the Census)

MINIMUM WAGE

Illinois issued its first minimum-wage order for retail-trade occupations, effective August 12, 1948. The minimum rate for experienced women and minors is 55 cents an hour; for learners and apprentices, 45 cents. This latter group is defined as persons "having no previous, similar, or related experience in the employment for which he or she is hired." The learning period may not exceed 3 months or 600 hours of actual working time. A one-half hour meal period must be allowed for 5 consecutive hours of employment.

The Rhode Island retail-trade order became mandatory on September 1, 1948. Rates are the same as in the directory order issued in 1946: For experienced employees working 36-44 hours a week $22; for inexperienced, $21. Not less than 75 cents an hour must be paid for hours over 44 a week (maximum 48).

COST OF LIVING

The estimated budget for an employed woman in Arizona has recently been issued. It reflects the minimum requirements for a woman worker without dependents, and was estimated as $1,953 per year as of April 1948. The annual cost of commodities and services alone was estimated as $1,684, an increase of 7.7 percent over the March 1947 estimate for these items.
OCCUPATIONS OF EMPLOYED WOMEN, 1945 AND 1948

In the 3 years since 1945, the number of employed women reported by the Census Bureau declined by nearly 2 million. At the same time the number of men increased by more than 9 million, resulting in a decrease in the proportion of women in every major occupation.

The decrease in number of women was most marked in the groups of "operatives" (mainly factory workers) and of farm workers. There were more women in 1948 in both the proprietors and professions groups. The number of saleswomen had not changed, but there was a noticeable decline in the clerical group.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Major occupation group</th>
<th>Number of women (in thousands)</th>
<th>Percent distribution</th>
<th>Women as percent of all workers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All employed women</td>
<td>17,626</td>
<td>19,610</td>
<td>100.0, 100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerical and kindred workers</td>
<td>4,701</td>
<td>4,900</td>
<td>26.7, 25.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operatives, laborers, craftsmen and foremen</td>
<td>3,803</td>
<td>4,740</td>
<td>21.6, 24.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service workers, except domestic</td>
<td>1,923</td>
<td>2,060</td>
<td>10.9, 10.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domestic service workers</td>
<td>1,688</td>
<td>1,790</td>
<td>9.6, 9.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saleswomen</td>
<td>1,440</td>
<td>1,440</td>
<td>8.2, 7.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional and semiprofessional workers</td>
<td>1,323</td>
<td>1,210</td>
<td>7.5, 6.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proprietors, managers, and officials (except farm)</td>
<td>962</td>
<td>780</td>
<td>5.5, 4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farmers and farm workers</td>
<td>1,787</td>
<td>2,690</td>
<td>10.1, 13.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

EARNINGS IN WHITE-COLLAR JOBS

The National Industrial Conference Board made an analysis of earnings and hours in two groups of industries - white-collar and nonwhite-collar. One of the conclusions is that "In some instances not only has the wage earner fared better percentage wise since 1939 than the salaried worker, but the actual earning position of the groups has been reversed. The average hourly earnings of an employee in retail trade were lower in November, 1947, ($1.025) than that of a cotton textile production worker ($1.051). In contrast, prior to World War II, retail trade paid an average of 53.5 cents an hour while cotton textile mills paid only 38.9 cents." [For further details see the Conference Board Business Record, May 1948.]
At the 31st session of the International Labor Conference, the two Conventions on Night Work for Women were revised so as to reflect changes in industrial practices. The 1919 Convention prohibited employment of women in certain industries from 10 p.m. to 5 a.m. (mining, manufacturing, construction, are the main industries covered). This was amended in 1934 to provide that 11 p.m. to 6 a.m. could be substituted after consultation with workers' and employers' organizations, the revision including also the exemption of women in managerial positions. The 1948 revisions resulted in three major changes:

(1) the period of 7 consecutive hours during which women shall not be employed can now be selected from any time between 10 p.m. and 7 a.m. Thus the practice in United States factories of employing women on two shifts, the second one up to midnight, but not using women on the third shift, will fall within the terms of the Convention. (Great Britain preferred 11 p.m. to 6 a.m. as the prohibited period; some countries believed it better not to work women after 10 p.m., and they would prohibit women's employment between 10 p.m. and 5 a.m.)

(2) provision for suspension of the Convention in time of emergency, after consultation with workers' and employers' organizations; such suspensions to be noted in the country's annual report on application of Conventions that is sent to the International Labor Organization.

(3) exemption of women in technical work, in addition to women in managerial positions, and also women in health and welfare services who are not ordinarily engaged in manual work.

Another Convention revised was the one prohibiting night work for young persons.

Two new Conventions adopted are of great importance to people in every country; one requires Governments ratifying it to make effective the right of workers and employers to form and join organizations of their own choosing; the other makes provision for maintaining free public employment services (a formal Recommendation was approved designed to supplement the provisions of the latter).

Among the Resolutions adopted are two of special interest to women: (1) The request that consideration of international regulations requiring equal remuneration for work of equal value for men and women workers be placed on the agenda of an early session of the Conference, preferably next year's; and (2) the request that the Governing Body [which is the executive council of the ILO] consider the advisability of placing on the agenda of an early session of the Conference, preferably the 1950 Session, the whole question of the status and employment of domestic workers.

During the Governing Body's meeting, held concurrently with the Conference, David A. Morse, then Acting Secretary of Labor of the United States, was elected Director-General of the International Labor Office, the Organization's permanent secretariat.
WOMEN IN GOVERNMENT

United States. Miss Frieda R. Hennock, a New York City attorney, whose appointment by the President was approved by the Senate in the late spring, is the first woman to be a member of the Federal Communications Commission; the appointment is for seven years.

Japan. The director of the women's and children's bureau in the Japanese labor ministry is Mrs. Kikue Yamahawa.

GREAT BRITAIN. Conditions in the Textile Industry

Recruitment of women from Europe for British textile mills is now permitted. The possibility of importing women from the displaced persons' camps in Germany and Austria was explored by the British Cotton Board early in 1947, after the trade unions had agreed in principle to their employment in Lancashire mills. By the end of 1947 some 3,200 European workers were in the Lancashire cotton spinning mills, and nearly 200 others were in training; in addition some 1,000 Poles have been recruited. The workers, all women, are mainly Balts, with a few Ukrainians and Yugoslavs.

Overtime in the textile industries of the Manchester District was agreed to last winter by the trade unions, an extra half-hour being added to each of the 5 working days, raising the working week to 47½ hours. The request for overtime to step up production, however, was not received with enthusiasm. Over 65 percent of the workers in the cotton industry are women, the majority with household responsibilities, and there were complications already existing due to work schedules staggered to reduce electricity at peak hours.

A factory in Birmingham, England, that in 1942 found it necessary to employ women as part-time workers, began this program "with great misgivings." The only women available at the time were married women prevented by domestic ties, and also those women prevented by physical disability, from doing full-time work. It was found that it would be convenient to work two half-day shifts, changing over at lunch time. A report issued in the spring of 1948, in telling the company's experience, states that the firm (Southalls Ltd., manufacturing surgical dressings) was by this time employing over 1,100 part-time women, whose ages ranged from 19 to 70 years. Further, in addition to these part-timers, the company also had a few working alongside full-time workers in other departments. They were skilled workers, weavers, winders and sewing machinists who had been with the firm, in most cases, before marriage; the women weavers and winders working part time were allowed to work the hours most convenient to themselves.

Equal pay for equal work has been a long accepted principle of the textile industry, especially in the weaving section. According to a September 1947 report, however, it has not prevented the development and stabilization of "women's jobs" at relatively low rates of pay. Short part-time shifts, both day and evening, have attracted many married women, easing the acute bottlenecks in yarn production. The report also states that many firms establish mill nurseries.