

The **WOMAN WORKER**

✓ V. 26
no. 5
SEPTEMBER 1940

United States Department of Labor
Women's Bureau

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

FRANCES PERKINS, SECRETARY

WOMEN'S BUREAU

MARY ANDERSON, DIRECTOR

THE WOMAN WORKER

PUBLISHED EVERY 2 MONTHS

Vol. XX

No. 5

SEPTEMBER 1940



CONTENTS

	Page
WOMEN WHO CAN WORK IN DEFENSE INDUSTRIES.....	3
HOW A MINIMUM-WAGE LAW PROVIDES A "FLOOR".....	4
RECENT TRENDS IN WOMEN'S WAGES AND EMPLOYMENT.....	5
EARNINGS IN HOUSEHOLD EMPLOYMENT.....	6
WOMEN AGRICULTURAL WORKERS.....	7
TOWARD MINIMUM FAIR WAGES.....	9
Progress Under the Federal Act—Minimum Wage in the States.	
WOMEN IN UNIONS.....	12
Progress of Apparel, Food and Tobacco, Auto and Electrical, White-Collar, and Service Workers.	
NEWS NOTES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS.....	14
State Legislation—Home-Work Laws Upheld—More Rhode Island Women Employed—Connecticut Night Law Upheld—Work Hours of Virginia Women—Delaware Beauty Shops—Georgia Women County Officers—Productivity and Wages—Compulsory Labor of German Women—Work Rules for British Women.	
RECENT PUBLICATIONS.....	16

Published under authority of Public Resolution No. 57, approved May 11, 1922 (42 Stat. 541), as amended by section 307, Public Act 212, 72d Congress, approved June 30, 1932. This publication approved by the Director, Bureau of the Budget.

For sale by the Superintendent of Documents, Washington, D. C., at 5 cents a copy or 25 cents a year

Women Who Can Work in Defense Industries

PROBABLY not far from 2 million women are immediately available for defense work, according to preliminary and conservative estimates covering women actively seeking work through the Employment Security Agency and those now on W. P. A. rolls. Almost a sixth of these already have the necessary skills or at least some experience, enabling them to adapt themselves easily.

There is a large additional group who have only partial employment and would be available for further work. Indicated by the 1937 Census of Unemployment as at least half a million, this probably is not an overestimate for the present.

Well over a quarter of a million of the unemployed women are possessed of skill, according to a recent preliminary report of the Employment Security Bureau. Of this group of skilled women, 34 percent are in the Middle West; 22 percent in the Middle Atlantic States (excluding New York ¹); 20 percent in New England; 14 percent in Southeastern States; and 8 percent in the Far West (excluding California ¹) and the Southwest.

Figures reported by the W. P. A. show more than 300,000 available women on projects in May 1940. Many of these have had experience with machines. Last December about 17,000 women were at work on power machines in sewing projects.

In addition to those unemployed and on W. P. A. work, there are large but indefinite numbers of women now at work on jobs less skilled than they are accustomed to who could quickly be called back to their more skilled occupations.

Women do much of the skilled work in the manufacture of certain textiles and clothing needed in a defense program, and as these expand, large numbers of women can be used. According to United States Bureau

of Labor Statistics figures, women comprise the following proportions of skilled workers:

	<i>Percent</i>
Knitted outerwear.....	76
Hosiery (full-fashioned).....	52
Knitted underwear.....	30
Boots and shoes (not rubber).....	22
Cotton goods.....	21

This group includes the following occupations that were listed as skilled:

- In cotton manufacture—Smash hands, weavers, and hand drawers-in.
- In shoe making—Machine cutters, binding stitchers, padding or soft-shoe stitchers, top stitchers, all-round stitchers, and vampers.
- In hosiery mills—Loopers, seamers, toppers, menders, and miscellaneous knitters.
- In knitted-underwear plants—Cutters, hand and machine knitters, and loopers.

Long experience with women in industrial employment shows that there are certain types of work that women perform particularly well. They excel in work requiring care and constant alertness, good eyesight, and use of light instruments such as gages, micrometers, vernier calipers—work calling for little physical exertion. These are characteristics of such jobs as inspection of castings, machinings, and finished parts, of routine powder analysis, of testing electrical equipment.

Women excel at work requiring manipulative dexterity and speed, but which permits them to set their own tempo and to work in a sitting position. These are characteristics of bench work calling for laying-out work for machine operators, operating very small machines to finish small and irregular parts, assembling delicate instruments and machines, loading shells, filling powder bags. They also are expert at work requiring skill but little strength either in handling parts or in setting up machines. These are characteristics of drilling machines, lathes, milling, grinding, and polishing machines operating on small parts. Women operate large machines on heavy work when lifting devices and pneumatic chucks can be used.

¹ New York and California were the only two major industrial States not included in this preliminary report, which covered 33 States.

How a Minimum-Wage Law Provides a "Floor"

THE WAY in which a minimum wage, fixed by State or Federal authorities, operates to keep wages from falling to bottom levels is strikingly illustrated in a Women's Bureau study of women employed in numerous types of canneries in 1938 and 1939. If in so highly seasonal an industry, one in which employment necessarily is irregular and in which the peak periods may be very brief, workers benefit by these laws, even fuller effects are indicated for occupations with less seasonal change in employment.

In Wisconsin and Minnesota, important pea-canning areas where a State minimum wage was in operation, the rates prevailing for women on this product were above such minimum. Though some of the rates set seemed low, they were well above the amounts earned by many women in States where no minimum had been fixed. Most Wisconsin pea canneries were in the smaller communities, where the minimum rate was 20 cents, but relatively few women were paid so little and the prevailing rates in 1938 were 22½ cents (the minimum for larger communities) and 25 cents. Similarly in Minnesota, with minimum rates of 24 and 27 cents in the smaller communities where most of the canneries are situated, the larger numbers of women received 25, 30, 32½, or 35 cents. In important pea-canning States where no minimum had been set, 20 cents or less was paid to 17 percent of the New York women and to over 75 percent of the Maryland women in 1938.

In the 1939 season the Federal Fair Labor Standards Act was in effect, with its floor of 25 cents (though this excepted canneries in communities of under 2,500 if all their produce came from an area within 10 miles). The proportions of all employees in tomato canneries who received less than 25 cents were markedly reduced, as shown in the following information for identical plants in 1938 and 1939.

	Percent receiving under 25 cents an hour	
	1938	1939
Illinois.....	17	12
Indiana.....	14	5
Maryland.....	51	29
New York.....	19	(1)
Wisconsin.....	43	0

¹ Less than 0.05 percent.

Labor costs in this industry usually are only a small proportion of total production costs—in tomato canneries frequently only 9 to 12 percent—so a raise for a substantial number of wage earners adds relatively little to the total costs.

The plants that paid above the minimum fixed did not reduce rates, and the amounts earned by those processing the same products in different States still vary widely. For example, in plants covered by the act, workers on tomatoes averaged from 21.2 cents an hour in Texas to 47.3 cents in California; pea canners from 26 cents in Arkansas and Virginia and 27 cents in Maryland to more than 44 cents in Washington. In those not covered by the act rates sometimes ran very low—the *average* for tomato cannery workers in Arkansas was only 15.5 cents an hour, in Texas 15.9 cents, and in Virginia 17.3 cents.

The 1940 season is affected by the somewhat higher minimum of 30 cents an hour. The 1939 study indicates that this would result in increases for 55 percent of the workers in citrus-juice plants, and to more than 60 percent of those in plants canning citrus fruit or both fruit and juice. Juice is prepared almost solely by men but the canning of the fruit sections is done largely by women. The workers in plants producing cold-packed and frosted fruits and vegetables in Washington and Oregon, two of the leading States, already receive above the 30-cent minimum.

The report also discusses the effect of hour laws and of other legislation, and covers additional types of canning.

Recent Trends in Women's Wages and Employment ¹

WOMEN's employment in manufacturing increased about 2 percent from the spring of 1939 to the spring of 1940. The picture differs markedly among the various industries. A number of those important in defense showed outstanding gains, with increases also for men though usually in smaller proportions than for women. In a number of other industries there were appreciable employment declines for both sexes.

The more notable changes in identical firms in employment of women from March 1939 to March 1940, with those of men for comparison, were in the following industries:

	Percent increase	
	Women	Men
Electrical machinery and supplies.....	23	19
Glass and pottery.....	18	7
Hardware.....	12	10
Auto tires and tubes.....	8	6
Knit underwear.....	7	10
Men's cotton clothing.....	7	4
Cotton goods.....	5	6
Paper boxes (set-up).....	5	6
Dresses other than cotton.....	4	(¹)
Book and job printing.....	4	(¹)
Radios and phonographs.....	4	13
Cotton dresses.....	3	3

	Percent decrease	
	Women	Men
Boots and shoes (rubber).....	20	10
Hosiery.....	16	18
Silk and rayon.....	15	8
Woolen and worsted.....	12	4
Cigars.....	5	10
Boots and shoes (leather).....	4	3

¹ Less than 1 percent change—a decrease in dresses and an increase in book and job printing.

Changes in Average Hourly Earnings.

In March 1940 women's hourly earnings averaged 47 cents in the major woman-employing manufacturing industries, an increase of 3 percent from March 1939 figures for the same firms, according to data reported twice a year by the Women's Bureau. Hourly earnings had increased in the great majority of the industries reported. During the year the 30-cent minimum required under the Fair Labor Standards Act went into effect, and the resulting increases

at the bottom of the wage scale undoubtedly had an important influence in pushing up the hourly averages. Most notable of the advances were the following:

- Percent increase
- 10—cotton dresses.
- 6—cotton goods; hosiery; confectionery; women's undergarments; rubber boots and shoes.
- 5—silk and rayon; woolen and worsted.

Average week's earnings in these firms were not greatly different from those of a year ago, due to some extent to a decline of nearly 3 percent in hours worked. There were, however, decided changes in earnings in a number of industries. In March 1940 week's earnings of women in these manufacturing industries averaged \$15.92, with an average of 34 hours worked in the week. Here again the wage picture varies widely with the industries, some having high, others quite low, averages.

Changes in Week's Earnings.

Week's earnings are influenced by number of hours worked. In some industries women's earnings advanced considerably from March 1939 to March 1940; in some they declined. However, a net gain is indicated, since the increases in earnings were greater than the lengthening of hours. There was even a slight increase in week's earnings in four industries in which hours worked had shortened—the making of cotton goods, woolens and worsteds, women's undergarments, and paper boxes. Further, in almost all industries where week's earnings had declined, hours of work had decreased more

¹ Source: Pay-roll records mailed by employers to the Bureau of Labor Statistics for a week about the middle of March. Included are over 372,000 women in 22 industries representing nearly two-thirds of all women in manufacturing, and nearly 27,000 women in laundries and cleaning and dyeing plants. Wage and hour figures given cover all plants reported; percent changes are computed from data for identical plants only. The 12 States included employ about three-fourths of all women in manufacturing—California, Connecticut, Illinois, Indiana, Massachusetts, Michigan, Missouri, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania. Mimeographed tables showing more complete data for March 1940 can be obtained from the Women's Bureau. Earlier data appeared in the Woman Worker for March and September 1938, May and September 1939, and March 1940.

than wages (a notable exception is women's coats and suits, where week's earnings, though higher than in any other industry reported, went down markedly in the year). The more outstanding changes in week's earnings, with changes in hours worked in these industries, were as follows:

	Percent increase in—	
	Average week's earnings	Average hours worked
Men's cotton clothing.....	11	8
Cotton dresses.....	9	1
Confectionery.....	6	0
Electrical machinery and supplies....	4	3
Hardware.....	3	2

	Percent decrease in—	
	Average week's earnings	Average hours worked
Women's coats and suits.....	14	6
Boots and shoes (leather).....	8	10
Boots and shoes (rubber).....	5	11
Glass and pottery.....	5	4
Hosiery.....	4	9
Silk and rayon.....	3	8
Men's suits and overcoats.....	3	5

Women's Earnings in March 1940.

The average of week's earnings in the total of the manufacturing industries reported in March 1940 was \$15.91. Figures secured in this way, from the better organized and for the most part larger firms, are somewhat higher than those found in intensive field studies giving a cross section of plants of all types and sizes. However, even for the industries reported in March 1940, week's earnings of women in almost half the industries averaged less than \$15, though in a few they averaged above \$20. Average week's and hourly earnings of women workers are shown in the following.

	Average week's earnings	Average hourly earnings (cents)
Over \$15:		
Women's coats and suits.....	\$23.77	82.8
Dresses other than cotton.....	22.10	69.2
Auto tires and tubes.....	20.84	67.6
Electrical machinery and supplies..	20.62	54.7
Boots and shoes (rubber).....	19.43	51.9
Men's suits and overcoats.....	17.39	51.2
Book and job printing.....	17.25	49.2
Radios and phonographs.....	16.64	50.3
Hardware.....	16.00	44.2
Women's undergarments.....	15.80	45.8
Hosiery.....	15.59	48.2
Glass and pottery.....	15.52	44.6
Under \$15:		
Woolen and worsted.....	14.89	48.4
Confectionery.....	14.86	42.8
Boots and shoes (leather).....	14.38	42.0
Paper boxes (set-up).....	14.30	40.1
Cigars.....	14.24	41.6
Cotton dresses.....	14.20	38.3
Knit underwear.....	14.09	39.5
Men's cotton clothing.....	13.72	39.2
Cotton goods.....	13.35	39.1
Silk and rayon.....	13.05	39.7

Earnings of Women and Men.

The lowest weekly average for men in March 1940 was \$16.05 in cotton mills, but women's earnings averaged less than this in all manufacturing and in 14 of the 22 branches reported.

Trends in Laundries and Dry Cleaning.

The reports included also about 27,000 women in laundries and dry-cleaning plants, almost nine-tenths of them being in laundries. Women's employment had increased in the laundries reporting for March 1939 and March 1940; their week's earnings had increased also, and more than their hours.

Earnings in Household Employment

AVERAGE weekly earnings of general maids and housekeepers—the latter excluding presumably the women who supervise staffs of servants—ranged from about \$2 in South Carolina and in North Carolina to not quite \$8.50 in New York when room and board was furnished by the employer, according to estimates made by

the officials of the United States Employment Service in its branch offices for every State in the Union. The average for women receiving meals only was about 60 cents more in New York and less than 30 cents more in the two other States. These are the first figures on earnings in household employment that ever have undertaken to repre-

sent all the States. They have been prepared from data for 1936 and 1937.

Average wages in each State were estimated for seven classes of employment, including the more specialized jobs usually found when more than one person is employed in a household. The most common situation, however, is that of one person, practically always a woman, doing alone whatever work is required. The following discussion pertains to such a group of women, namely, the general maids and housekeepers.

An average of less than \$5 was estimated in 29 States for workers receiving room and board and in 24 States for those receiving meals only. The average was \$5 but less than \$6 with room and board in 9 States, with meals alone in 12. In only 2 States and the District of Columbia did workers furnished either full maintenance or board only average as much as \$8, and in none so much as \$9 a week.

Wage figures quoted here show the great need for some minimum-wage machinery in a field employing more women than does any other. A suggestion that each community form a specialized service for household workers within their local employment service was made by a representative of the Women's Bureau at a panel held during the convention of the International Association of Public Employment Services. Such a program could seek more desirable jobs for the workers and better qualified applicants. It could be supplemented by a committee representing the various community interests, such as the W. P. A., the N. Y. A., the

public schools, organizations of homemakers and household workers, private non-fee-charging placement agencies, and many others. Subcommittees could concentrate on various phases of the problem, such as training, standards, and legislation.

A careful, factual approach to the question of fair minimum rates for household employment is being made by the committee on household employment of the Chicago Y. W. C. A. In determining such a rate material has been brought together on cost of living, actual wages paid, and minimum rates fixed for other industries in Illinois. Wages at which workers were placed by employment agencies and wages offered in newspaper advertisements in Chicago were studied. The average prevailing wage at which experienced workers were placed was nearly \$11 a week; for beginners the wage was slightly more than \$7. The average offered in newspaper advertisements during a single week was around \$8. A preliminary report proposed a minimum of \$8 a week for beginners, with two or three raises of \$1 each in the first year. About \$8.20 was estimated as the living cost for a single woman in household employment, based on the budget for Philadelphia determined by the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry, but deducting for room and board (usually furnished the household worker), for difference in transportation and clothing requirements. This was borne out by average actual expenditures of a small group of such workers in Chicago. The problem will be studied further at later meetings.

Women Agricultural Workers

WOMEN agricultural workers in the United States seldom present an isolated problem. Rather they are an integral part of family agricultural enterprises and their work status is determined largely by family economic activities. The 1930 census reports 909,900 women as agricultural workers. Of this number over 171,300

are wage earners and 475,000 are unpaid family laborers. The first of these groups adds to the family income by securing cash wages, as do industrial workers; the other increases the money crop of the farm and makes unnecessary the hiring of paid labor. Of all women agricultural workers, large proportions are in the East South Central,

the South Atlantic, and the West South Central States. The numbers quoted by the census may be considered a minimum, for the enumerators were instructed to consider a woman as doing farm work only if she did such work "regularly and most of the time." The great numbers of women in farmers' households who work in the field only at specific seasons are not included.

No figures are available that will permit an accurate statement of the number of women field workers, the amount of service they render, the conditions under which they work, the other burdens they carry, the effect of their field labor on conditions in the home, or its effect on present-day farm problems. Only a spotted picture can be given, but it may be enough to indicate the deep need of a carefully planned and thorough study of women in agriculture.

The largest number of women farm wage workers are employed in the cotton fields. In spring they chop and in fall they pick or pull the cotton. These women may be able to fit in some hoeing of corn after the cotton chopping and in some places pick up pecans for a short time in late fall. A study of migratory cotton pickers in Arizona showed that the average cash income of 518 migrant families and unattached persons from all jobs in 1937 was \$393. Southern Negro cotton workers undoubtedly receive less than this.

A large number of women work in tobacco fields in summer and in the strip houses in fall. Strip sheds are on the tobacco plantations and their workers are considered farm workers. The tobacco stalks, or in Connecticut the leaves, are strung and hung on laths in curing sheds. When cured the tobacco is taken down and leaves are stripped from the stalks and sorted by women. A recent study by the Connecticut Department of Labor found that shed workers (chiefly women) receive \$1.50 to \$2 a day for the short season, though boys picking tobacco in the fields are paid more, and women stringing the leaves for curing average \$2.60 a day.

In Louisiana and Florida women work at planting and cultivating sugar cane and at cutting, topping, and stripping and other harvesting operations, at wages of 11 to 18 cents an hour (houses and medical attention furnished by employers). In Colorado and other States growing sugar beets women are part of the family groups that thin out the young plants and cultivate them in May and June and pull and top the beets in late fall. A recent estimate showed some 15,000 women so employed, chiefly in Colorado, California, and in the Great Lakes region. Another survey showed Colorado families averaging 6.4 persons in the sample covered, with half the families receiving \$340 or less for the year's work of all their members.

A recent preliminary survey of 325 potato farms in three New Jersey counties revealed that most of the migratory Negro workers had come from Florida and Virginia in family groups. About one-sixth of all reported were women. Earnings were 20 to 35 cents an hour, and of course the work is seasonal. Fifteen years ago cultivating and harvesting on truck farms near metropolitan cities was done by women and children brought out from the cities. It is not known how much of this work is done by city families today, nor how much of the picking of berries, other fruits, hops, or other special crops is done by local women and their children, how much by migratory groups.

When fresh fruits and vegetables are trucked or shipped to nearby markets, the packing in baskets or barrels is usually done on the farm. Distinct from these field workers are the men and women who pack specially prepared fresh fruits and vegetables for distant markets. This latter type of work is done in central packing houses, sometimes owned by large producers, sometimes by cooperatives, and then again by contract packers or shipping-point dealers. The principal crops so handled are citrus fruits, apples, other deciduous fruit, green wrapped tomatoes, celery, lettuce, and to a less degree broccoli, cauliflower, spinach, and other vegetables.

Toward Minimum Fair Wages

Progress Under the Federal Act

Seasonal Products and Area of Production.

THE Administrator of the Fair Labor Standards Act has applied the seasonal exemption in the act to the storing of agricultural products in their raw and natural state, having found that 50 percent or more of the year's volume is received in 14 workweeks. This allows them, for 14 workweeks, a 12-hour day, 56-hour week, before payment of overtime.

The Administrator has announced that a seasonal exemption is granted also to plants canning or first processing or picking perishable or seasonal fruits or vegetables for 14 workweeks up to 12 hours a day or 56 hours a week. This doubles the time during which such plants may work overtime before payment of overtime rates, since the act already allows unlimited hours for 14 workweeks.

A new definition makes the "area of production" the "immediate vicinity" for plants with 10 or fewer employees canning or processing or packing fresh fruits and vegetables. On October 1 this replaces the present definitions, one of which fixes a 10-mile area for plants in the open country or in towns of under 2,500, while the other exempts plants with 7 or fewer employees. It will be remembered that the act exempts these plants from any wage and hour standards.

Wage Order for Paper and Pulp Industry.

A minimum of 40 cents an hour has been fixed for the making of pulp and primary paper, effective September 16. Many of the 11,000 women in the industry are among the more than 8,000 workers whose wages will be raised. Since labor costs range from 17 to 22 percent of operating costs, the latter will be increased by only about one-tenth of one percent.

Recommendations for Two More Industries.

The luggage and leather-goods committee has recommended a 35-cent minimum,

which if approved will increase hourly earnings for about 4,900 workers in a total of 18,250. The committee requested the Administrator to call this or another committee 6 months after the effective date of any wage order to reconsider the minimum.

The carpet and rug committee has recommended a minimum of 40 cents for employees making wool carpet yarns, rugs, and carpets, and 35 cents for workers on carpets and rugs made of other fibers. If approved, these will increase the rates of some 1,100 of the 31,000 workers in the industry, raising about 1,000 of them to 40 cents.

Two New Industry Committees Appointed.

Industry committees have been appointed for the converted paper products industry (No. 14) and the embroideries industry (No. 15).

State Agreements for Enforcement.

Connecticut and Minnesota have signed agreements providing for inspection and investigation by State authorities for the Federal Wage and Hour Division. The only other such agreements are in North Carolina and the District of Columbia.

Applying the Act to Puerto Rico.

An amendment to the Fair Labor Standards Act approved June 26 provides for special industry committees for Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. These committees may fix a minimum less than the statutory 30 cents if economic factors demand it. However, the minimum provided must not give the islands a competitive advantage over the mainland. Overtime pay requirements and the ban on child labor remain as before.

The first wage-hour restitution for Puerto Rico has been reported. Under this a garment manufacturer pays about \$2,555 to 128 employees who had received less than the statutory minimum of 30 cents. The firm

sells its entire output in New York and other clothing centers in the United States. In the case of another needlework firm, a substantial volume of art linen goods and infants' wear has been held up until the required wage is paid. The plant has 30 to 70 employees and receives goods from over 2,000 home workers.

Pay for Rest Periods.

Employees coming under the provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act are to be paid for short rest periods, according to recent instructions. A "short" rest period is construed to include periods up to and including 20 minutes. When rest periods customarily taken are longer, final decision on whether or not employees shall be paid for them will rest with the regional director.

The Courts and Wage-Hour Enforcement.

It was estimated early in July that more than 137,000 persons work for employers against whom court action has been brought. Recent cases include those of a Virginia hosiery mill ordered to pay back wages of \$11,052 for failure to pay the minimum and overtime rates. A Georgia firm making pants and overalls has been held in contempt of court for suspending payment of \$2,067 ordered paid to 70 employees, and requiring a "kick back" of the amounts paid on the first installment.

In a late case two Minnesota lumber companies were fined \$10,000 and ordered to pay back wages and overtime of about \$35,000 to 700 workers. This involved family labor where a single check, averaging \$6.18 a week in winter and \$9.66 in summer, was paid the father for work of the mother and of children under 16. Women peeled bark from pulpwood and girls 12 to 20 did men's work. Children piled or cut brush. One woman trucker averaged about \$4 a day, from which she paid \$2 for the helper plus the cost of gasoline, oil, and repair for the truck.

That interpretative bulletins of the Wage-Hour Division are "more than legal opinions" according to the Supreme Court decision in the American Trucking Associa-

tion case, is the opinion that Alex Elson, Chicago regional attorney, has filed with the Circuit Court of Appeals in the case of a pearl button company. The court decision cited establishes the principle that "interpretations of administrative agencies charged with the enforcement of the statute are entitled to great weight."

Minimum Wage in the States

California—The Standard Week.

The Attorney General of California has reaffirmed his previous opinion that orders setting a minimum rate for a "standard week" require the payment of \$16 for whatever the usual hours of an establishment may be, even if less than 48. Many firms have entered into union agreements to pay \$16 for a 40-hour week, but others are still paying at the rate of 33½ cents an hour for less than 48 hours. Prosecutions have begun in such cases. Review of the opinion has been requested by a group of manufacturers.

Colorado—Public Housekeeping Order.

All establishments offering food or refreshments, or lodging with or without food, are covered by a Colorado wage order effective June 16. Among others specifically included are hospitals and sanitariums, private schools and colleges, but only the employees in public-housekeeping occupations are affected.

The basic minimum rate for experienced workers in Denver and certain of the adjoining areas is 27½ cents an hour; in the remainder of the State, 22½ cents. Time and one-half is to be paid for over 48 hours in a calendar week. Learners may be paid half these rates for the first 288 hours (6 weeks) of employment and three-fourths these rates for the second such period. Limited deductions are allowed for meals, lodging, and uniforms, but gratuities are the workers' sole property and are not to be considered part of the minimum wage.

Wages undoubtedly will be raised for many women. In 1937, of women receiving cash wages only, nearly two-fifths in hotels and more than half in restaurants had been paid less than \$10.

Connecticut—Benefits of Order for Cleaning.

Earnings are higher and employment is more stable in the Connecticut cleaning and dyeing industry since the wage order went into effect in January 1939. A survey by the Minimum Wage Division found average (median) hours and earnings of women and male minors in a period before and in one after the order to be as follows:

	<i>Median earnings</i>		<i>Median weekly hours</i>
	<i>Weekly</i>	<i>Hourly (cents)</i>	
Busy week—1938.....	\$14.22	32.4	47.2
1940.....	15.24	35.3	48.0
Slack week—1938.....	13.27	31.4	41.5
1940.....	14.82	35.4	45.8

The proportion of women earning between \$14 and \$16 had increased from 22 percent in 1938 to 45 percent in 1940. In 1939, 68 percent of the women had 9 months or more of work, though in 1938 only 54 percent of the women had employment for so long.

District of Columbia—New Official.

John E. Laskey, formerly United States attorney and past president of the District Bar Association, has been named employer representative on the District Minimum Wage Board for a 3-year term. Claude H. Woodward, who has served since the fall of 1937, said he resigned because of the time necessary for his own job.

Minnesota—Enforcement.

The value of State minimum-wage laws is well illustrated by the work of the Minnesota Division of Women and Children in May. Nearly \$5,400 in wage restitutions was secured for women and minors from 101 firms. Only 9 of the firms were subject to the Federal Fair Labor Standards Act and adjustments in these amount to \$275. Women in the other 92 plants would have lost over \$5,000 if the State act had not been in operation to secure these wages.

New Jersey—Orders Made Mandatory.

Effective July 15, the New Jersey wage orders for wearing apparel and for light man-

ufacturing were made mandatory, each providing a 35-cent minimum for experienced workers. The provision in the directory order for wearing apparel, calling for a progressive increase above 35 cents each year from October 1941 to October 1943, was not made mandatory. On the request of the labor commissioner, the original wage board for the apparel industry met July 23 to consider the question of establishing a lower rate for learners.

New York—Laundry Order Modified.

Effective June 15, the New York laundry order was modified in respect to laundries in resort counties that are required to pay a higher rate in the summer season—35 instead of 30 cents. Previously this rate was to be paid from June 15 to September 15, but on the basis of study and experience the period has been shortened to include only the weeks of July 4 through Labor Day.

Ohio—Recommendations for Beauty Culture.

The beauty-culture board in Ohio has recommended that employees in beauty shops (except those employed exclusively as maids) be paid \$16 for work up to and including 44 hours, if employed to work on more than 3 days in any week, irrespective of number of hours worked on any one day. If employed for 3 days or less, such workers are to receive \$4 for each day of 8 hours, or 50 cents an hour, with a minimum of 4 hours' pay in any one day. Persons employed exclusively as maids are to be paid \$14 for 33 to 44 hours, inclusive, and 38 cents an hour for less than 33 hours. Higher hourly rates are recommended for both maids and other workers—for more than 44 hours of work a week for full-time workers, and for over 8 a day for part-time workers. A report from the Ohio Bureau of Unemployment Compensation, covering women in beauty and barber shops who had worked 12 or 13 weeks in the first quarter of 1940, shows that 64 percent had averaged less than \$16 a week in that time. Almost four-fifths of the women in cities below 100,000 had averaged less than \$16.

Utah—Public Housekeeping; Retail Trade.

Minimum rates of from \$10 to \$14 a week, by zones to be determined by the Industrial Commission, have been recommended for public-housekeeping occupations in Utah. The industry is defined as including all establishments offering lodgings, and hospitals and institutions as well. All

women and minors are to be covered except registered nurses and resident managers.

The mandatory order for retail trade in Utah has been amended to fix the minimum at \$14 in Salt Lake City, the same as in Ogden. Other towns remain at \$10 to \$13 minimum. Learners' and part-time rates remain as before. (See WOMAN WORKER, July 1940.)

Women in Unions

Progress of Workers Making Apparel.

TWO GREAT unions of clothing workers reviewed in the late spring the important progress made in their organizations over long periods. The International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union celebrated its fortieth anniversary in May. With a membership of less than 5,000 during its first 9 years, it passed 50,000 in 1911, and 100,000 in 1920. The past 4 years have seen the membership mount to about 250,000. Practically 80 percent of these are women. The extent of organization, varying with branch of industry, ranges from 26 percent in knitted outerwear to 94 percent in coats and suits. The convention empowered the general executive board to take action looking toward the abolition of home work; to work for equalization of standards in certain branches of the industry; and to study the problem of a guaranteed annual wage.

The Amalgamated Clothing Workers reviewed the 25 years of organization at their convention in New York City. The general executive board reported that in this quarter of a century the union has achieved the 5-day week, more than trebled the wage rates of clothing workers, and reduced hours from 60 and 70 to 36 a week. While the organization began with the suit and coat industry, it has been extended into such low-wage industries as shirts. It is planned to continue a stabilization program which includes identical wage rates for a given industry throughout the country.

Such a program was put into effect last year for 20,000 workers in the low-priced clothing field. It is estimated that about 90 percent of men's clothing is manufactured under Amalgamated contract. The membership of fully 250,000 includes workers in laundries and dry-cleaning plants. Approximately half the members are women.

Some 130 Chicago cap makers have secured an immediate 5-percent increase in piece rates with a further 2½-percent increase for operators, cutters, and blockers on January 1, 1941. The contract provides a closed union shop, equal division of work, protection against discharge, and machinery for adjusting disputes.

Progress of Food and Tobacco Workers.

Early in the season a year's contract was signed with an association of canners in northern California covering between 50,000 and 60,000 workers. It provides 1 week's vacation with pay for regular workers, a preferred-hiring clause, the right to collect union dues on the job, and recognition of seniority on union lists. Basic pay of 42½ cents for women and 52½ cents for men remains unchanged. The past year's hour schedule also is continued; this sets a 40-hour week in the off-season and a 66-hour week during 14 busy weeks. A campaign is planned to organize other canneries and dried-fruit, nut-packing, cottonseed, and vegetable-oil plants in the State.

A renewed contract signed in an eastern date-and-fig-packing plant secured a 12-

percent wage increase for 800 workers, also a closed shop and a week's vacation with pay.

A year's contract in a Washington State preserving factory secured a raise in hourly rates of 2½ cents for women and 4 and 5 cents for men.

A contract in a cracker factory in Ohio provides a 5-day 40-hour week, with a minimum of 45 cents an hour and time and a half for overtime. Rates are to be raised 3 cents an hour every 3 months until the maximum for each class is reached. In addition, this contract and one in a bread bakery in the South provide for paid vacations, seniority rights, time-and-a-half pay for holidays, and safety and health measures.

More than 7,000 workers are covered by an agreement negotiated with a firm making cigarettes and other tobacco products in three plants in Virginia, Kentucky, and New Jersey. Outstanding provisions are a 40-hour week, a flat 5-percent wage increase, a week's vacation with pay, seniority rights, union recognition, and adjustment of disputes. This is the first union contract with this firm.

Progress of Auto and Electrical Workers.

A new and improved contract has been negotiated for 130,000 automobile workers in 54 plants operated by one corporation. To end inequalities in wage rates a total of \$5,000,000 a year in increases was secured. A dividend of 40 hours' pay in place of a vacation is to be given this summer to all workers with 1 year or more of seniority. These dividends will total some \$7,000,000. Other important provisions include: Seniority rights and their protection in sickness or absence for union activities; prohibition of strikes, curtailment of production, or lockouts; grievance procedure; protection of workers in the timing of operations.

A union in the electrical and radio field announces that in the 8 months ending in March 1940, approximately \$1,600,000 a year in wage increases has been secured through 88 contracts covering about 14,500 workers. Altogether about 250,000 work-

ers in some 300 plants are under union contracts, in contrast with about 15,000 in 1936.

Progress of White-Collar Workers.

Knowledge of conditions is an important first step to progress. A New York City union has made a survey of earnings of about 440 employees (an 11-percent sample) in 36 book and magazine publishing houses. About four-fifths of these employees are women. There seemed to be no accepted standards for beginning salaries, increases, advancements, or bonuses. Beginning salaries for stenographers varied from \$17 to \$32. Switchboard operators received from \$14 to \$30. About one-third of all workers covered received less than the minimum of \$22.93 which the New York Department of Labor considers necessary for a woman living alone. There was evidence of marked discrimination against women as far as salary levels and advancement are concerned. For example, the average for men editors, editorial assistants, and proofreaders was \$47.22 a week, while the average for women in the same category was only \$26.17.

The union of teachers in Chicago, through various committees, has made detailed studies of important problems. These include: Sick and maternity leave; the need of time for record-keeping; physical conditions, such as fire hazards, poor heating, and ventilation in school buildings; teacher-load and overtime.

Progress of Service Workers.

Dining-room, kitchen, and room-service workers in 10 hotels in Washington, D. C., have secured a new agreement, which includes for the first time a week's vacation with pay after a year's employment. A minimum of \$52 a month is set for all non-service employees, and the contract has protective clauses for dining-room, kitchen, and all service workers. Other provisions include: Uniforms to be furnished and laundered by the hotel; overtime for more than 8 hours' work a day; the union to fill all jobs; the right to draw a full week's wage each week. A similar agreement is in force in 5 other hotels in the same city.

News Notes and Announcements

State Legislation

THE ONLY State legislatures in session when the *WOMAN WORKER* went to press were Maine, reconvening July 22, and Missouri, meeting in special session on the same date. New Jersey and California had recessed until late in the year.

New Jersey.

Effective in June, an amendment to the industrial home-work law requires home workers and employers in the hand-knitting industry to maintain for 2 years daily records of work done, and requires employers to pay each worker immediately upon completion and delivery of work.

Louisiana.

The legislature has repealed the act passed early in 1940 to prohibit employment by the State of both husband and wife if either was paid as much as \$100 a month.

Home-Work Laws Upheld

In California, the first prosecution under the new home-work act resulted in placing the offending employer on 6 months' probation, fine and jail sentence being suspended. Desired results were obtained, as prosecution caused home work to be entirely suspended in Chinatown.

The New York home-work law has been upheld a third time by the action of the Board of Standards and Appeals in denying the petition of a group of manufacturers against the order governing the artificial flower and feather industry. This latest decision clears up two contested points: First, the Federal Fair Labor Standards Act does not supersede or conflict with the New York law; second, the order may apply to men as well as women, since the law's chief objective is the gradual elimination of home work by any person.

More Rhode Island Women Employed

Women's employment in major Rhode Island industries showed a marked increase from April to October 1939. In the latter month more than 66,000 women were at work in establishments employing 5 or more persons. They comprised 38 percent of all so employed, and over a 12-month period their numbers had increased by 14 percent as compared with 8 percent for men. Well over 31,000 of these women were in textile mills, nearly 8,000 in jewelry factories, and about 2,000 in the metal and machine industries. Compared with April 1939, employment of women had increased as follows: Textiles, 7 percent; jewelry, 32 percent; metals and machinery, 18 percent.

Connecticut Night Law Upheld

A unanimous decision has been handed down by the Connecticut Supreme Court holding valid the law prohibiting the employment of women in restaurants after 10 p. m. A group of women musicians employed as entertainers in a restaurant sought an injunction against the Labor Department restraining it from enforcing the law against them. The Supreme Court denied the request.

Work Hours of Virginia Women

The 48-hour week for women in Virginia, which went into effect in June 1938, largely confirmed a schedule quite generally established, especially in manufacturing. The report of the Department of Labor and Industry showed that in 1937 the workweek was 48 hours or less for 88 percent of the women in manufacturing and 74 percent of those in laundries and dry-cleaning. The effects of the law may be seen in the report recently issued for the calendar year 1938. The percent of women working more than

48 hours was reduced in manufacturing from 12 to 6 and in laundries and dry-cleaning shops from 26 to 3. The law allows longer hours in fruit and vegetable canning, tobacco rehandling, peanut cleaning, and oyster shucking and packing. The first three account for 90 percent of the women in manufacturing who worked 49 hours or more in 1938.

Delaware Beauty Shops

The Attorney General of Delaware has ruled that beauty shops come under the law fixing women's hours in any "mercantile, mechanical, or manufacturing" plant.

Georgia Women County Officers

A survey by Flora Beal Craton lists 84 women serving as county officials in Georgia. Of these, 76 were elected. The largest group, school superintendents, numbered 20.

Productivity and Wages

In spite of labor's great increase in productivity over the period 1923-24 to 1936-37, "gains to labor proved to be chiefly greater leisure," according to a recent report of the Brookings Institution entitled "Productivity, Wages, and National Income." Labor's share of the total income from manufacturing was about the same at both dates, though labor produced about 50 percent more in the later than in the earlier year. Total man-hours were less by 16 percent, and real wages, on a weekly basis, had increased by only 6 percent. Wages had risen less than 1 percent in the cotton-textile industry and less than 2 percent in tobacco, but about 11 percent in automobiles and parts and in paper and pulp, and about 8 percent in iron and steel.

Compulsory Labor of German Women

Penalties for offenses against the system of compulsory labor service in Germany apply to women workers. Refusal to carry

out the service, or encouragement to refusal, is punishable by imprisonment or internment. These orders apply to women in the former Polish and Czech territories as well as in the main Reich. An order issued a year ago (September 4, 1939) increased the strength of the compulsory labor service for young women to 100,000. It was stated that within a month the women's labor camps in operation had doubled, 1,575 camps being at work in October and over 2,000 expected by April 1940. Among the occupations commanding these girls and women was the seasonal agricultural work, and some 25,000 of them were to be called up in November for harvesting potatoes, beets, and other products.

Work Rules for British Women

The British Home Office early in March presented a report on hours of employment of women and young persons in factories during the first 5 months of the war. It stated that the ill effects of continued long hours on production are widely recognized, and that "*** notwithstanding the exceptional demands being made upon industry for increased and accelerated production to meet the war emergency the hours and conditions of employment of women and young persons are being kept under supervision and control."

At the outset of the war overtime up to 60 hours a week and changes in starting and stopping time were freely allowed. This arrangement was temporary and was terminated at an early stage, after which authority to depart from the peacetime requirements of the factory act were obtained only after careful investigation. A tendency toward standardization of emergency hours in some industries led in time to the making of general orders.

When the report was published in March, four general orders had been issued allowing the following extended hours, inclusive of overtime: Light engineering and metal work, 57 hours a week; the clothing industry, 54 hours; the woolen and worsted industry,

54 hours; cotton spinning and weaving, 55½ hours. Orders issued, usually for short periods, in the case of 2,914 individual factories included the following authorizations: Employment of women on two day shifts of 8 hours each, in 299 factories; employment of women at night in 57 factories.

Negotiations were undertaken in a number of industries as to the wage to be paid women who replace men for the duration of the war. Women employed as bus or tram conductors were ordered paid the men's rate on reaching the age of 21. For those under 21 the rate was to be 90 percent of that paid to men, and for both groups

there was provided a learning period of 6 months during which 90 percent of the men's rate was to be paid. An agreement in the boot and shoe industry provided that women transferred to men's departments were to be paid a graduated scale for the first month and then to receive the same piece rate as men. Labor agreements for employing women to replace men in engineering during the war provide a period of at least 32 weeks before paying the full rate and bonus of the men, unless any woman can work without added supervision, assistance, or training. Women drafted into such work shall be regarded as temporarily employed.

Recent Publications

Women's Bureau—Printed Bulletins ¹

EFFECTIVE INDUSTRIAL USE OF WOMEN IN THE DEFENSE PROGRAM. (Standards for women's employment.) Special Bul. 1. 22 pp. 10 cents.

HOURS AND EARNINGS IN CERTAIN MEN'S-WEAR INDUSTRIES: RAINCOATS; SPORT JACKETS. Bul. 163-5. 29 pp. 10 cents.

EARNINGS IN THE WOMEN'S AND CHILDREN'S APPAREL INDUSTRY IN THE SPRING OF 1939. Bul. 175. 91 pp. 15 cents.

Women's Bureau—Mimeographed Material ¹

STATE MINIMUM-WAGE ORDERS FOR LAUNDRY AND DRY-CLEANING OCCUPATIONS, JUNE 1940. 96 pp.

DISCRIMINATIONS AGAINST WOMEN. Address by Mary Anderson before Arlington County (Va.) Soroptomist Club, March 28, 1940. 8 pp.

A NEW PROGRAM FOR HOUSEHOLD WORKERS. Address by Mary V. Robinson before panel of convention of International Association of Public Employment Services, Kansas City, Mo., May 16, 1940. 7 pp.

Other Department of Labor Publications ¹

MONEY DISBURSEMENTS OF WAGE EARNERS AND CLERICAL WORKERS, 1934-36. Bureau of Labor Statistics. North Atlantic Region (11 cities). Bul. 637, Vol. II.

FAMILY EXPENDITURES IN SELECTED CITIES, 1935-36. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Bul. 648. Vol. V, Medical Care; Vol. VI, Travel and Transportation.

WAGES, HOURS, AND WORKING CONDITIONS IN UNION BAKERIES, JUNE 1, 1939. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Bul. 673.

MANUAL ON INDUSTRIAL-INJURY STATISTICS. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Bul. 667.

PROCEEDINGS OF SIXTH NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON LABOR LEGISLATION. Division of Labor Standards. Bul. 35.

DISCUSSION OF INDUSTRIAL ACCIDENTS AND DISEASES. (1939 Convention.) Division of Labor Standards. Bul. 36.

PROTECTING EYES IN INDUSTRY. Division of Labor Standards. Bul. 37.

SAFEGUARDING MANPOWER FOR GREATER PRODUCTION. Division of Labor Standards. Special Bul. 1.

Other Recent Publications

A STORY ABOUT 50,000 NEW YORK WOMEN. New York State Department of Labor, April 1940. 10 pp. (Mimeographed.)

This pamphlet presents in a lively way what has been accomplished by four minimum-wage orders and by the law governing home work.

¹ Bulletins may be ordered from the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C., at prices listed. A discount of 25 percent on orders of 100 or more copies is allowed. Mimeographed reports are obtainable only from the Women's Bureau.