

The **WOMAN WORKER**

✓ v. 21
no. 4

JULY 1941

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. XXI

No. 4

July 1941



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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

Migrant Workers in Delaware Canneries JUL 21 1941

THE number of workers who go from place to place in search of jobs has been growing. It becomes a problem in an increasing number of communities. Mushroom growths in defense manufacture emphasize it in new localities. The picture of the migrant is like the mosaic of the kaleidoscope, slight changes altering the arrangement and no pattern ever repeated exactly. However, certain elements keep recurring, such as low wages and long gaps between jobs, with resultant inadequacy in the bare necessities of life and almost complete lack of decent housing and medical care. Little more than a hand-to-mouth existence is possible, despite the expending of much effort and the enduring of much discomfort.

A cross section of the migration up and down the Atlantic coast was studied in Delaware last fall by the Women's Bureau. Eight of the Delaware canneries visited had camps for migrants. Such employees comprised well over one-third of the labor force of these plants, almost half the men and about one-third of the women being migrants. The plants canned from one to seven products in the season. When migrants began with the early crop there might be an idle period before the next was ready, and it was a question whether they gained by waiting or by seeking work elsewhere.

Where the Migrants Came From.

In the camps visited about 300 persons were interviewed, over half of them members of family groups of from two to seven persons, the remainder being individuals traveling alone. Of the 425 wage earners included, just over half were women. Practically all were Negroes. Though about one-fourth of the entire group gave Maryland as their permanent residence, and another fourth Florida, a total of 14 States and the Bahama Islands were represented. Most of the workers had come direct to Delaware from their home State, even those from Florida or Alabama, the proportion

moving from crop to crop being surprisingly low. On the other hand, a very striking proportion who were in camp in 1940 had not moved out of their home State the year before. Poor earnings in Florida in the winter of 1939-40 because of frozen crops, and a poor season in Maryland and Virginia oyster fisheries in the same winter, may have caused the greater search for work in 1940.

What the Migrants Were Paid.

Hourly rates of pay varied markedly from plant to plant, but at least for women they usually were the same for all in any one plant. This indicates that rates were fixed arbitrarily and not based on differences in work done. One firm paid 20 cents to all women, with 2½ cents an hour extra for staying all season. Two paid 30 cents to all. One firm paid 22 cents to Negroes and 25 cents to white women. Piece rates for peeling tomatoes and sorting beans are hard to compare, since the basis of payment was so varied. Average earnings of women during their employment in camps in the 1940 season were \$5.20 a week.

Members of families pooled their money, and often the average for such groups would be scant even for an individual. Two-person families, both members earning, had averaged \$346 for the entire year 1939 and \$212 up to the time of interview in 1940. Six-person families with four wage earners had averaged only \$171 in 1940 and those with three wage earners had averaged \$629 in 1939. The largest average amount in 1940 was \$485 for a family with five wage earners; in 1939, \$940 for the same number.

How the Migrants Were Housed.

In addition to cash wages, the migrant workers were given a room in the camp without charge. The rule of a room to a family meant that in 26 cases from four to seven persons occupied one room. The sleeping facilities provided consisted usually of built-in bunks with straw. Tables and

chairs generally were lacking, and crudely made benches or boxes served as seats. In one camp an oil cook stove was in every

room, but community cook stoves were more usual. Water and toilet facilities were out-of-doors and not always adequate.

More Women Placed in Defense Jobs

DEFENSE jobs have called women to many tasks. These range from nursing, operating power sewing machines, or dietetic work, to assembling gas masks and doing fine precision work for airplane instruments. The Civil Service Commission has sent a letter to government agencies urging them to employ women rather than men wherever possible. Two questions asked repeatedly cannot be fully answered, though some indications can be given: One, How many women are being added to defense employment? the other, What new jobs are women doing?

There is no basis for arriving at the full numerical increase in woman employment, though the increases can be told for important scattered plants—too small a sample for a complete estimate. In fact, even the full increase during World War I is not known, though in a large sample of war implement and war instrument industries investigated by the Women's Bureau, women employees more than doubled in number from 1916 to 1918.

Defense Placements of Women Increase.

Total placements of women by public employment offices were declining in the early months of 1941, but women finding jobs in manufacturing were increasing somewhat. The Bureau of Employment Security makes special tabulations of placements in some 400 defense occupations, but only about 1 percent of all women's placements are in these jobs. However, such placements were more than three times as great in the early months of 1941 as in the late months of 1940.

Numbers of Women in Defense Jobs.

There are at least four sources of data on number of women employed, but none can give the complete picture as to how many

are in defense jobs. Of course the number changes daily.

1. Census data by industry, when they become available, will show how many women worked in the spring of 1940 in industries that later developed defense production. The number since added to these is unknown, and the situation is constantly changing.

2. Reports of placements in defense jobs show only those made by public employment agencies, and there is no complete information on numbers hired at plant gates.

3. Indexes of employment trends are made from questionnaires sent out to employers. These are published, by sex, twice a year by the United States Department of Labor. They are the best available indications of the *trend*, but they are samples based on particular States and industries and hence show only the movement of employment and *not the complete numbers*.

4. Finally, there are scattered reports for important particular plants. These are based on occasional special investigations, and show nothing as to complete numbers except for those plants at the time investigated. However, they are very interesting and they indicate the situation. (See *WOMAN WORKER*, May 1941.)

Types of Work Women Are Doing.

Women's delicate workmanship and skill are a boon to defense operations, but the great numbers employed are in much the same kinds of factory work long done by women. Reports that women are driving taxis, or tending filling stations, do not mean the absorption of great numbers in such occupations. Where women are in jobs unusual for them they are relatively few, and in most cases have specialized experience or aptitude for the work.

Of women's placements in early 1941 in defense occupations listed by the Employment Service, 60 percent were in textile mills, most of them as yarn winders, frame spinners, weavers, slubbers, and throwers—traditional employments for women. Some were in electrical plants, as radio assemblers, or armature winders. A few were in less usual jobs, such as work at engine lathes,

milling machines, or as core makers, spot welders, or airplane coverers. Women are proficient at inspecting cartridges and polishing small parts for rifles, and in one plant they are reported as assembling, shaping, sharpening, testing, and chrome plating bandage shears for government use. Women work in rubber factories on the bullet-proof gas tanks—rubber lined and covered—so vital to life in aircraft, but here again the actual process is not unusual for women. They work also on silk parachutes, but the jobs consist of skilled cutting and sewing.

Women's Work on Airplane Parts.

In airplane assembly factories¹ women constitute a very small part of the productive labor force, thus far only a fraction of 1 percent, and their chief work is sewing. Of course, many do the usual types of clerical work in the plant offices. Reports of any appreciable number of women in "Aircraft plants" refer chiefly to the places *making the parts and accessories* for planes. Women are especially good at certain processes on airplane instruments, primarily the same types of work women long have done in electrical or other plants, such as coil winding, bench work, inspection, or assembly of delicate parts.

In assembly factories, the force of women could be considerably increased. One of the predominating jobs in the assembly of a plane is riveting, with its concomitant processes of drilling, counter-sinking, dimpling, and bucking. A large part of this work, though not all of it, might be done by women after a little training.

Much of the bench work on the simpler subassemblies could be done by women, and the skills required do not differ materially from those of women in many other industries. Women could do at least one-fourth of the inspecting, and in case of shortage of male workers considerably more. This refers to inspection of the parts, not to the floor inspection of the assembling of the plane. Inspectors usually advance after plant experience, and to do this work

women would need considerably more experience than they have had.

Need for Women Nurses and Doctors.

Women Army nurses have Army rating with proper rank and war-risk insurance. Not so the woman physician, though more than 2,500 are registered as qualified for national emergency service, about 500 of them willing to serve overseas. Medical societies in New York, as well as the American Medical Women's Association, are pressing for adequate rank for these women doctors if called to serve, but the American Medical Association recently refused to endorse this. In Great Britain 80 women hold commissioned rank in the Royal Army Medical Corps. Senior medical students graduating in 1941 from accredited medical schools are given the chance to gain commissions as first lieutenant in the Medical Corps Reserve. This should be open to young women as well as young men doctors. Other professional services engaging relatively small numbers of women are dental hygienists, therapy aides, and dietitians. The American Dietetic Association is seeking the rank of commissioned officer for members who go into Army service, now entailing danger without protection so that other fields are more attractive to trained women.

The need increases for nurses, both on the military and the civilian front. The following numbers have been asked for: Army Nurses Corps, 4,000; Veterans' Administration, 1,100; U. S. Public Health Service, hospital division, 200; Indian Bureau, 164. Nurses are needed in the Navy Reserve Corps, but the number is not stated. In 1940 there were 7,269 nurses in the Federal nursing services, an increase of 50 percent in 5 years. In civilian service there is need for supervisors and nurses to carry on health programs among students, and for "one-nurse" service in rural areas. Nurse technicians are needed in rural hospitals for work in anesthesia, X-ray, physiotherapy, and laboratory technique. It is estimated that 300,000 graduate registered nurses, chiefly women, now practice in the United States and its possessions

¹ For further details see Women's Bureau multilith: Women's Factory Employment in an Expanding Aircraft Production Program. June 1941.

Women Workers in Great Britain

ENGLAND needs 500,000 more women in war industries and arrangements have been made to start their impressive march. Registration of women 20 years old was required on April 19, and about 350,000 signed up. Those of 21 years followed May 3, and other age groups may be called on later. Lists of those qualified for war work will be kept ready for use as required. Acceptance of jobs will be voluntary as long as possible. A Women's Consultative Committee has been appointed to advise the Minister of Labor on questions affecting recruiting and registration and on the best methods of securing women's services in war efforts.

From Hosiery to Munitions.

A more immediate source of woman labor for munitions work is from employment in less essential industries. Early in 1941 hundreds of women operatives, clerks, and warehouse employees in hosiery mills were released for work on armaments. A census of hosiery workers was made and each manufacturer called on to supply a quota of women. A committee assisting in the transfer includes representatives of workers and employers. Within about 2 weeks 1,000 women went from textile mills to take charge of drills and lathes in munitions factories. These women have astonished foremen by the ease with which they have mastered such entirely different work.

When war was declared over 4 million British women were in insured jobs. About 400,000 of these were in metal, engineering, and vehicle factories, industries since expanded for war production. On the other hand, some 832,000 were in the distributive trades, and some 314,000 in hotels, restaurants, and taverns, industries to be greatly curtailed by the war. Textiles and clothing, to a limited extent essential industries, accounted for 678,000 and 443,000, respectively. The chief group not covered by

unemployment insurance was that of household workers, who numbered about 1¼ million in 1931. The labor situation in Great Britain from May to October 1940 was surveyed by the International Labor Office. In this period, many men entered military service, and many persons not usually in the labor force took insured employment.

Scale of Women's Wages.

At first many collective agreements continued to fix different rates of pay for women and men, though two or three agreements applied the principle of "the rate for the job." (See also *WOMAN WORKER*, September 1940, p. 15.) The old idea of different rates for women may lead to curious anomalies. For example, in the printing trades during 1940 a 5-shilling increase was allowed for men and for women on men's work, but other women were allowed only 2 shillings and 6 pence. More recently the principle of equal pay and conditions is being recognized in other trades, and agreements have been reached in the case, for example, of paper mill and chemical workers.

The rise in earnings from October 1938 to July 1940 was much greater in war-supply industries than in those producing mainly for civilians. In the latter, real wages fell, when a 24-percent rise in cost of living is considered. Women's average earnings increased by 34.4 percent in metals, engineering, and shipbuilding, and by 25.5 in textiles. In clothing the increase was only 10.4 percent, in food, drink, and tobacco, 7.5.

With Hours Too Long Production Falls.

In May and June 1940 the 70-, 80-, and 84-hour week became widespread. Not only did men work very long hours but all Factories Act limitations on hours of women and young persons were ignored, and some of them worked 70 or 80 hours a week. At the same time holidays and rest periods were either cancelled or drastically reduced.

There was constant realization, however, that such schedules must not be continued. Production was on the decline rather than increasing. Industrial accidents had become too frequent and it was believed that reduced hours were needed to increase output and preserve the health of the workers. Effects of long hours as reported in one plant making airplanes showed about 4 percent of the workers absent each day from extreme fatigue.

In August a special effort was made to arrange some holidays, to be taken in rota-

tion to avoid complete stoppage. These varied in length from a long week-end to a full week. The full enforcement of the Factories Act began again. By October the excessive hours of May and June were being reduced, in most cases. Where rest pauses had been introduced it was found that production had gone up. With the beginning of the heavy air raids in September, plans were made to enable workers living in crowded industrial areas to spend occasional nights and days in quieter places, either in hotels and rest homes, or in private homes.

Old-Age Pensions for Women

THE extent to which women are protected under the Social Security plan for old-age pensions becomes increasingly clear in reports recently issued. This great effort toward security finds a very considerable justification in figures indicating that it has given the hope of at least some income after the work period of their lives to approximately 10 million of the 12¼ million working women in the United States. In time, larger numbers will benefit.

Number of Women With Account Numbers.

The number of women *at present* actually holding account numbers has not been reported, but of more than 40 million applications for numbers, by the end of 1938, practically 11¼ million (or 29 percent) were from women. This is a good proportion, since it cannot include the many women in occupations not covered, such as domestic service and professional and government work, and even with these included the April 1940 census reports women as constituting 24 percent of the total labor market.

The latest report shows about 52¼ million account numbers established, with attempts being made each month to eliminate duplication. Of course, at any given time not all holders of account numbers are working, and not all working are currently employed in a covered occupation.

Number of Women Receiving Benefits.

In the early months of the program, through February 1938, about 33,500 death claims had been certified, nearly 7 percent for women (see *WOMAN WORKER*, November 1939, p. 5). During the first 6 months of 1940, 62,166 claims for benefits to the insured worker were allowed, 12 percent of them for women. Only 2 of these retired women had dependent children. Of 11,674 claims for survivor benefits, 201 were for dependents of women—about three-fourths for children, one-fourth for parents.¹ How many persons still living have withdrawn from employment without qualifying for compensation is not known.

Are Women's Jobs Regular Enough for Benefits?

To be eligible for benefits at age 65, the worker must have received at least \$50 in wages in a covered employment in each of one-half as many quarters as have passed since January 1, 1937 (or since the worker became 21 years of age, whichever date comes later). For example, workers who retired on January 1, 1940, must have earned at least \$50 in each of 6 quarters. Once a worker has earnings for at least 40 quarters, she is then qualified without further employment.

¹ The widower of a woman worker may receive a lump sum, but has no right to monthly benefits as has the widow of an insured man.

To what extent do women seem to be fulfilling these requirements? Revised figures show from employers' records that just over 9 million women and well over 23 million men earned taxable wages in 1937. On the basis of the labor force reported in 1940, these represented about 70 percent of the women and not quite 60 percent of the men. However, it is easy to see that many women must have failed to secure two quarters of employment, if three-tenths of them had earned less than \$100. In 1938, almost 8¼ million women had reported taxable wages, more than 7 million of them in both years. Men fared better, since 85 percent of those reported in 1937 also were included in 1938, but only about 80 percent of the women.

Many more details are available for workers reported in 1938. About 83 percent of the women and 87 percent of the men had taxable wages in two quarters or more. For those reported in four quarters the difference between men and women was greater, 53 percent of the women and practically 60 percent of the men having earned taxable wages.

In general, larger proportions of the women than of the men with taxable wages were in trade (including finance) and in the personal and business services. On the other hand, larger proportions of the men were in manufacturing, and this of course was true also of transportation,² construction, and mining. Considering the total of covered employees in various occupation groups, women in manufacturing, communication,² and trade were a somewhat larger proportion than might be expected from the census figures.

Amounts Women Can Receive.

The average taxable wage reported for 1938 was \$515 for women and \$973 for men (a little lower than in 1937). For one-third of the women, wage credits for the year were less than \$200; for a little more than one-eighth, \$1,000 or more. A woman who during a working life of 45 years had averaged \$500 a year might receive a monthly annuity of about \$24.15 on retirement at the age of 65.

² This group includes transportation, communication, and public utilities.

Toward Minimum Fair Wages

Fair Labor Standards Administration Industry Able To Pay Overtime.

Wage-Hour Administrator Fleming, speaking in New York, made it clear that National defense is revealing to industrial management that the payment of time and a half for overtime work has not handicapped industry. A study among 70 industrial companies showed "that every one of these industries could have worked its employees 48 hours a week each in 1939, paid the penalty for the overtime, and still have made more money than it did make," General Fleming said.

New Minimum-Wage Rates.

June 30 marks wage raises for the largest number of workers ever to have increases by an industrial wage order, 300,000 in textile mills (other than wool and knit), two-

thirds of them in cotton mills. The new rate of 37½ cents takes the place of a 32½ cent minimum set in the original order of 1939. Lowest scale workers now receiving \$13 will earn \$15, in each case for the standard 40-hour week.

A minimum rate of 40 cents an hour for the portable lamp and shade industry became effective July 1. Women predominate in the making of lamp shades, and well over half of them, but somewhat less than half the men, should have wages raised by the order. Of workers on portable lamps less than one-tenth are women, but nearly two-thirds of these averaged less than 40 cents early in 1940, compared to about three-tenths of the men. There is no complete record of home workers on lampshades, but during a 15-month period ending in May 1940 permits for the employment of 262

home workers in the industry had been requested, chiefly in New York and New Jersey.

Effective in May, the following minimum rates were set for Puerto Rico: 25 cents for straw hats, manufactured coconut, cigarettes, cigars, full-fashioned hosiery, hair nets, mattresses, quilts, and pillows, and bay oil, bay rum, and aromatic alcohol; 15 cents for vegetable packing; and 12½ cents for hand sewing and 20 cents for other operations on raffia handbags.

Coverage.

The Wage and Hour Division's position that a wholesale establishment selling entirely within one State but receiving its products from other States is covered by the Fair Labor Standards Act, though the goods do not thereafter leave the State in which the distributor is located, has been upheld in its first test before a Federal court.

Federal courts have decided also that the act is applicable to (1) maintenance employees of a loft building rented to a manufacturer whose product crosses State lines, and (2) a manufacturer whose product is sold entirely within the State, but who knows that his customers intend to ship the product outside the State.

New Committees; Rates Recommended.

A minimum of 40 cents an hour is recommended for the making of men's shirts, single pants, and allied garments, which had minimums of 32½, 35, and 37½ cents. The committee also suggests a modification of the learner employment regulations. Under this, the proportion of learners allowed would be 10 percent instead of the present 5 percent of total production workers. The training period of 8 weeks at 75 percent of the basic minimum was increased to 12 weeks with rates as follows: First 4 weeks, 20 cents; second 4 weeks, 24 cents; third 4 weeks, 32 cents.

Women in Puerto Rico will receive very large increases in earnings if the recommended minimum rate of 20 cents for the leaf-tobacco industry is approved. In the year ending June 30, 1940, more than 5,500

women doing such work averaged 12.3 cents an hour, while 730 men averaged 13.3 cents. The addition of a miscellaneous handwork division to the needlework order has been recommended to include needlework on all articles not already enumerated. A minimum of 12½ cents is suggested for hand sewing and 20 cents for other operations such as cutting, stamping, sorting, washing, pressing, and examining.

A minimum of 34 cents has been recommended for brick, tile, and other clay building materials.

The recommended rates of 40 cents and 35 cents for two divisions of the jewelry industry have been disapproved, since these were inconsistent and overlapping in the definitions and it was not clear in all cases in which of the two categories certain articles belonged. A new committee was appointed. Of the five public representatives, two are women—Teresa M. Crowley of New York and Elizabeth B. Raushenbush of Madison, Wis. This committee has recommended 40 cents for the entire jewelry industry. If this rate is approved it will increase the wage rate of approximately 11,500 of the 35,000 workers normally employed.

A new wage rate is being sought for the women's and children's apparel industry now operating with a 35-cent minimum under the apparel order. The new committee met early in June and included three women members: Jane Perry Clark of New York City and Gladys Boone of Sweetbriar, Va., public representatives, and Rose Pesotta of Los Angeles, an employee member.

A committee has been appointed for knitted underwear and commercial knitting and for men's and boy's woven underwear. These industries are now covered by the apparel order with minimum rates of 33½ and 32½ cents. Among the committee members are four women: Myrtle Brooke, Montevallo, Ala., and Mary B. Gilson of Chicago, public representatives; Willie M. Watson, Anniston, Ala., and Dorothy J. Bellanca, New York City, employee representatives.

Committees have been appointed for the wood furniture and the lumber and timber-products industries.

Minimum Wage in the States

Arizona.

A wage board has been appointed in Arizona to consider fixing minimum rates in the hotel and restaurant industry.

California—Reconsideration of Orders.

Public hearings have been held in San Francisco and Los Angeles on revision of the series of wage orders that long have been in effect in California. Orders in this State cover maximum hours and other labor standards as well as wages. The San Francisco hearing was so well attended by both employers and workers that it had to be extended for an additional session. The Heller report released in April of this year shows \$21.67 to be the minimum amount necessary for a proper living standard for women workers in San Francisco. Accordingly, workers asked that the new orders fix a higher minimum than the \$16 formerly in effect. They also asked that the orders define the "standard week" (to which the minimum applies) as 40 hours; and that the learning periods, during which lower minimums are permitted, be reduced or omitted.

California Court Defines Standard Week.

An association of laundry owners in southern California sought a declaration by the Superior Court in Los Angeles County as to the term "standard week" used in a number of minimum-wage orders. The court upheld the contention of the Division of Industrial Welfare that the standard week for which the \$16 minimum must be paid is the usual number of hours an establishment may operate, even if less than 48.

Hotel Workers Endorse Minimum Wage.

The Hotel and Restaurant Employees' International Alliance, at its convention in Ohio in April, adopted a resolution favoring the enactment of minimum-wage laws in all States now without such legislation, and further recommending wage orders for women in hotels and restaurants in all

States now having laws in effect. It was pointed out that 22 States were without such legislation, and 11 more had no order in effect for the industry. On the other hand, women and minors in 15 States had been greatly benefited by orders in effect.

New York—Minimum-Wage Law Upheld.

Several recent decisions in New York courts have upheld the State's minimum-wage law. A Brooklyn court recently upheld its constitutionality in an action brought against a laundry owner. The Brooklyn court is one of several courts of equal rank with the Court of Special Sessions, Bronx County, to disagree with a decision of the latter rendered in February of this year holding the minimum-wage law unconstitutional because of invalid delegation of legislative function to the Industrial Commissioner to declare what is and what is not a crime. The Brooklyn court held that the only delegation of power is that of preparing the minimum-wage standards; in this duty the discretion is limited by certain standards in the act. There is no discretion conferred to determine what violations of the minimum-wage order constitute a crime; the legislature has specifically set forth the offenses and the penalties.

The court also denied the employer's contention that since the fixing of a \$14 weekly minimum was in effect a guaranteed wage, it violated the due process clause of the Federal Constitution. It was held that even if the wage were fixed by day or hour it would be in effect a guaranteed wage for that period; this does not void the statute. The law does not require the employer to hire any particular worker or number of workers; it simply forbids payment of rates below those fixed as a minimum for health and decent living.

Since the unfavorable decision in the *Bess Morgan* case, in at least seven similar cases the courts have upheld the constitutionality of the law.

New York—Wage Order Helps Candy Workers.

The gains reported for women in confectionery in November 1939, as a result of

the wage order, were found to be maintained when sworn pay rolls for November 1940 were examined. The average (median) hourly earnings had increased slightly, as had the proportion receiving 40 cents or more, well above the minimum rate. Hours remained stable, few working less than 32 hours or so long as 48. Almost 90 percent of the employers were found to be in compliance, though the order is still directory.

North Dakota—Administration.

A minimum-wage inspection made in North Dakota in the spring showed that most violations were in the small towns. The most consistent cooperation in enforcing labor laws comes from organized workers, especially where the women themselves are organized. It is easier to induce a union member to make a complaint than one who is not a member. Officers and members of men's unions also give much valuable information as to violations in their localities.

Ohio—Beauty Parlor Order Mandatory.

The Ohio beauty parlor order which went into effect December 5, 1940 (see *WOMAN WORKER*, March 1941), was made mandatory April 4. Before that date visits to 351 shops subject to the wage order disclosed violations in 133 of these establishments. This was considered just cause to declare the order mandatory.

Oregon—Reconsideration of Orders.

Following public hearings, Oregon has raised the 30-cent minimum rate to 33 cents an hour for laundry work and to 35 cents for 7 other important groups. The new orders omit low-paid learner periods (except by special permit). A new order for the canning industry (effective June 8) raised women's rates from 37½ to 42½ cents, and recommended a 55-cent minimum for men.

Utah—New Orders.

A minimum rate for laundry occupations of \$13.05 for a standard week of 45 hours became effective June 16 in Utah. Time and one-half is to be paid for over 45 hours. Women who work less than 24 hours a week shall be paid for at least 4 hours'

work a day and at the rate of 30 cents an hour. Learners are to be paid \$12.05 a week for the first month. At least 1 week's vacation with pay is required after 12 months' service.

An order for public housekeeping will be put into effect soon.

Wage Collections.

The District of Columbia Minimum Wage Board made 6,525 inspections in 1940. In the same period the Board collected \$13,472 in back wages paid voluntarily to 1,119 women and minors covered by the minimum-wage law, and \$5,091 for 136 men, women, and minors covered by the provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act. The entire amount paid in back wages from the effective dates of the various orders to December 31, 1940, is \$33,684.

In New Hampshire, in the year ending June 30, 1940, back wages of more than \$6,000 were collected for 922 women and minors in stores, restaurants, laundries, and beauty parlors. This does not include reports for dry cleaning, since that order had been in effect for less than 2 months in the year; nor for knit goods and clothing, since the State did not enforce orders in these industries because higher rates were set by Federal than by State orders.

Progress in Public Contracts

The Die-Casting Industry.

A minimum rate of 50 cents an hour has been set in plants making die castings for sale, not for incorporation in another product. Learners may be employed at 40 cents an hour, not to exceed 60 days, if the total number so classified does not exceed 5 percent of all workers. The determination became effective in the case of all contracts of \$10,000 or more for which bids were asked on or after April 5.

Record Keeping.

The Administrator has ruled that if an employer does not keep adequate records, an inspector may accept as evidence records kept by individual employees if found to be substantially correct.

Women in Unions

Court Decision.

THE Supreme Court has ruled that the National Labor Relations Board has constitutional power to require an employer to hire a man once denied employment because of his union connection.

Progress in Defense Industries.

A steel company that employs about half of the estimated 5,000 women in steel has arranged with the union that women shall receive the same minimum rate as men. In the North their minimum has been raised from 56 to 72½ cents, giving them a net gain of \$6 a week compared with an average of \$4 for men. In the South the minimum for women has been advanced to 56 cents, which is equal to the pay of men. All workers, both production and maintenance, had a raise of at least 10 cents an hour.

Most women in steel plants work in tin mills, inspecting thin sheets of steel that have been coated with tin. Vacation provisions have been much improved, giving 1 week after 3 years' service, and 2 weeks after 15 years, instead of the former 1 week after 5 years.

Other union contracts grant less to women than to men. An agreement in the automobile field in Ohio secured increases of 5 cents an hour for men and 4 cents for women, giving a minimum of 75 cents for men and 59 cents for women on production. In a tire and tube plant in the same State women secured an increase of 2 cents an hour, men of 3 cents. In Michigan an automobile appliance contract fixed a minimum scale after 50 weeks of 75 cents for men, 65 cents for women.

The 120,000 employees of two large firms making many kinds of electrical supplies have secured an increase of 10 cents an hour. More than a fourth of the workers in this industry are women, and on some products women outnumber men.

An agreement covering 135,000 workers in

men's clothing, chiefly suits and overcoats, provides for 10- and 13-percent increases according to type of garment, the first general advance since 1937. About 55 percent of the workers in this industry are women, and they received the same increases as men. Cutters and nonfactory help, such as ticket sewers and shipping clerks, received 10-percent increases, not to exceed a specified amount weekly. The agreement covers all union plants in the country, that is, 90 percent or more of the industry. Men's and boys' clothing manufacture is found chiefly in New York, Pennsylvania, Illinois, and Ohio. The same raises in rates were negotiated for 10,000 workers on men's and boys' single pants. All increases became effective May 19.

In the textile field, a contract with an important maker of synthetic yarns covers 18,000 workers, perhaps a third of them women. Increases were 5 cents an hour for men, 3 cents for women. A new clause provides that all employees laid off because of technological changes shall receive a dismissal wage of 1 week's pay for each year of service. Vacation pay is to consist of 2½ percent of a year's earnings. Strikes and lockouts are prohibited.

Progress in Women's Apparel.

A union election was won among 2,000 cotton-dress makers in Massachusetts, many of them teen-age girls. A series of skits given by the girls over a local radio station told their story effectively and helped to influence the election. The contract provided for a \$15-a-week minimum, \$1 above the Federal standard. If the Federal rate is raised, workers in the plant are to continue to receive at least \$1 more than the standard.

Glove workers and manufacturers in Fulton County, N. Y., have agreed on increases for the industry averaging 11 percent. About 30 percent went to the lowest-paid

workers. In 1936 there were some 3,000 men and 2,800 women in the Fulton County glove factories.

Progress of White-Collar Workers.

Wage increases have been granted, or soon will be, to some 25,000 telephone employees in the New York area. They range from \$1 to \$3 a week. An additional group of 10,000 will benefit by the raising of the maximum for each craft and the proportionate increases in intermediate scales, but these will not become effective immediately.

What is considered a model contract has

been signed with a family welfare agency covering 101 workers. Annual salaries are increased by \$60 for clerical workers, \$180 for case workers, and \$200 for supervisors. Minimum salaries have been set at \$1,650 for professional workers and \$1,080 (\$20.75 a week) for clerical. The 5-day 37-hour week is continued, with time and a half for clerical overtime. Vacations vary from 2 to 5 weeks for various categories, from office boy up. Sick leave of 40 days with pay is provided, as well as maternity leave of from 3 to 6 months, dismissal notice of from 2 weeks to 2 months, and separation allowance in case of retrenchment.

News Notes

Safeguards Needed for Defense Labor

"Governmental standards established by law for the protection of labor should not be weakened, even temporarily, unless clear necessity therefor exists." This is the first point stressed in recommendations made by the Labor Committee of the Twentieth Century Fund in its report on Labor and the National Defense. Quoting an order of General Crozier, Chief of Ordnance in November 1917, which recently was reaffirmed by the National Defense Advisory Commission, the Committee declares:

We agree with this declaration, and we find no reason for any relaxation of these legally established standards at this time. Modification should be made only as clear need therefor is shown, and only after consultation with the representatives of management and workers.

The statement of General Crozier was as follows:

In view of the urgent necessity for a prompt increase in the volume of production vigilance is demanded of all those in any way associated with industry lest the safeguards with which the people of this country have sought to protect labor should be unwisely and unnecessarily broken down. It is a fair assumption that for the most part these safeguards are the mechanisms of efficiency. Industrial history proves that reasonable hours, fair working conditions, and a proper wage scale are essential to high production.

Every attempt should be made to conserve in every way possible all of our achievements in the way of social betterments. But the pressing argument for

maintaining industrial safeguards in the present emergency is that they actually contribute to efficiency.

Labor Laws Passed for Women, 1941

During the legislative sessions of 1941, laws that directly affect women workers have been approved as follows:

Maine.

The hour law has been amended to exempt women employed in executive, administrative, professional, or supervisory positions and their personal office assistants who receive at least \$1,200 a year.

Nebraska.

Amendment to the 9-54 hour law exempts public service corporations and permits employment of women until 1 a. m. instead of 12:30, but employer may secure permit from Labor Commissioner to employ women all night. Commissioner may also permit 11 hours a day in emergencies in plants processing agricultural products.

New York.

An 8-hour day, 40-hour 6-day week, has been fixed for women bindery workers over 21. A week of 48 hours may be allowed if overtime is paid.

Ohio.

The 8-48, 6-day-week law has been amended to provide unlimited daily hours for women in financial institutions during any period of the year requiring preparation of government reports. This provision applies only to women working on such reports.

Further amendment extends to all communications companies (not only telephones as before) exceptions allowing 13-hour spread and emergency overtime; adds pharmacy to professions exempted; defines "day" as the period from midnight to midnight; requires 10 hours' rest between workdays; clarifies the exemption for canneries, making it apply only to women over 21.

Massachusetts.

Suspension of the 6 o'clock law for women in textile mills has been extended for 2 years. This permits employment until 10 p. m. as in other manufacturing.

Rhode Island.

The minimum-wage law has been amended to clarify enforcement provisions. The employer or his agent is now made directly responsible for compliance.

Puerto Rico.

A law has been approved providing machinery for establishing minimum-wage rates, maximum hours, and proper working conditions for all employees in any occupation, business, or industry, except domestic service. This act does not repeal the old minimum-wage and maximum-hour laws for women.

Equal Pay for Equal Work

The problem of equal pay is still with us with women's employment increasing. However, under the Fair Labor Standards Act some progress has been made, since it forbids the setting of minimum-wage classifications on the basis of sex. The data available indicate that relatively more women than men have received wage increases as a result of the statutory rates and the special orders issued under this Act. For example, in the shoe industry, a study by the Bureau of Labor Statistics in 1939 shows that 43 percent of the women compared with only 12 percent of the men were earning less than 35 cents, the rate afterward set for the industry. But the problem is still vexing, not only to the woman who must work for less, but to the man whose job may be given to a woman. Recent studies of the Bureau of Labor Statistics enable a comparison to be made of the earnings of men and women on the same job classifications. These studies cover leather,

enameled utensils, and jewelry. While not all are defense industries, all may well furnish workers with needed skills.

Considering only jobs reported by both men and women, the average of women's hourly earnings was most often about three-fourths as much as that of men. In the leather industry, the women received from 60 to 81 percent as much as men; in making medium- and low-priced jewelry, from 61 percent in skilled work to 75 percent or more in semiskilled; in making enameled utensils, from 63 to 95 percent.

The jobs classified under the same heading are not necessarily identical. It is stated often that men do the heavy work, women the light, on jobs in other respects the same. Thus women may dip in enamel or may solder and weld small pieces, men large. On these jobs women's earnings were not quite 80 percent of men's. One question, however, whether these differences would exist in a plant where men did both the light and the heavy work. On the basis of supply and demand, is it harder to find strength than dexterity? If both are necessary to a product, does one add more value than the other?

The individual woman cannot gain equal pay. Perhaps the most hopeful approach is through union activity. The American Federation of Hosiery Workers at its convention in May resolved that where women workers replace men in "equivalent employment * * * there shall be no reduction in any rates of pay or lowering of current standards."

A recent study made at Princeton University points out that "the experience both in the United States and England during the World War showed that the rule 'equal pay for equal work' was more likely to be applied where women were replacing men than when they were doing work usually done by women. This irregular application of the policy of 'equal pay' caused many difficult situations, especially when experienced women operators on one type of work were paid less than 'green' operators replac-

ing men on another type of work in the same plant."

Hour Law Enforced in Louisiana

The maximum sentence for violating the 8-hour law for women workers in Louisiana was pronounced recently against a laundry official in New Orleans. In giving this decision, Judge Frank T. Echezebal pointed out that "Students of current history cannot fail to reach the conclusion that now, more than ever, laws intended for the enforcement of social justice must be strictly administered." As part of the reason for the penalty imposed, the judge quoted from an address delivered by Archbishop Joseph Francis Rummel at a meeting of the Young Men's Business Club.

Archbishop Rummel, after challenging New Orleans business men to build a better economic, civic and social structure and to fight totalitarian philosophies by respecting the dignity and rights of the individual, said: "This will express itself in the wages and salaries you pay, in the treatment of those who are in your employ, in the fairness of your attitude toward your clients and customers, and even toward your competitors. . . ."

"Your mission," Archbishop Rummel further declared, "is to attract and create more and better opportunities of employment, to apply sound principles and policies to business management, to put forth sincere efforts to promote social justice in the relations between workers and employers."

Married Women's Work Now Sought

It is the usual experience the world around that when industry grows a bit short of workers married women's work begins to be appreciated again. So England found. So this country is more quickly realizing. In States where of late certain legislators sought feverishly to save society by sending married women back to the kitchen, the public now calls on them to save industry by going back to paid jobs. For example, factories in a number of Connecticut towns and stores in Ohio are calling on the married women anew.

Women's Earnings Rise in Texas

Women in factories in Texas earned an average of \$12.30 a week in the 2-year period ending August 31, 1940, according to information secured in the course of regular inspections. Average earnings were not reported for the previous biennium, but the

fact that more than half the women in that period earned less than \$12 is indication of an improvement in wages under the Fair Labor Standards Act. The gain was marked for women in clothing. The average was about \$14, though in the earlier 2 years more than half had earned less than \$12. Under the impetus of Fair Labor Standards the pecan-shelling industry was quite extensively mechanized and employment decreased markedly. At the same time there was an increase in union activity. The women remaining in the industry found their earning power greatly increased. Weekly wages averaged \$8.49, while earlier practically all had earned less than \$5. In the retail and service fields there was no indication of improvement in earnings.

Industrial Injuries to Women

Industrial injuries to women are in general more severe in manufacturing than in other industries, Pennsylvania statistics for 1939 show. While only two-fifths of all women involved were in manufacturing, just over half of those left with permanent disabilities were employed in factories. Nearly 3,500 cases of injuries to women were reported, chief of those in manufacturing being in textiles and clothing, with food and paper and printing also important. In 7 cases death resulted; in 6 a permanent disability was recognized as preventing further employment. In 112 cases there was a permanent injury resulting in partial disability; such injuries may or may not prevent the woman from continuing the same job.

The compensation rate depends on the woman's earnings, and for nearly one-third of all temporary liabilities the wage reported was less than \$12.50 a week; for more than half it was less than \$15.50.

In Florida 424 injuries to women were compensated in 1940, with some permanent disability resulting in 3 cases only. More than one-fourth of these women were earning less than \$10 a week, two-thirds earning less than \$15. Injuries reported that were not compensable, perhaps because they resulted in no loss of time or none over the 4-day waiting period, numbered 1,400.

Hard for Teachers in Dayton, Ohio, To Make Ends Meet

Most Dayton teachers can get through the school year with careful management if no emergencies arise, or if the term is not cut, but must borrow during the summer months or for emergencies, according to a recent survey. Over two-thirds of the unmarried men and women were found to have dependents. More than three-fourths of the entire force, including principals and assistant principals, were women.

This survey followed a financial crisis in

Dayton that resulted in the closing of the public schools. It gave much information on the teaching staff in the school year 1939-40, and also included other local government services.

The recommendation made for the immediate improvement of the school situation was to insure teachers at least 9 months of employment at the present salary level with salaries paid promptly when due. For the future, salary schedules should be adjusted as soon as the financial position improves, taking into consideration increased training, especially in elementary schools.

Recent Publications

Women's Bureau—Printed Bulletins¹

- STATE MINIMUM-WAGE LAWS AND ORDERS: 1940. Second Supplement to Bul. 167. 13 pp. 5¢.
THE MIGRATORY LABOR PROBLEM IN DELAWARE. Bul. 185. 24 pp. 10¢.

Women's Bureau—Mimeographed Material¹

- EARNINGS AND HOURS IN STORES AND RESTAURANTS IN MICHIGAN. April 1941.
WOMEN'S FACTORY EMPLOYMENT IN AN EXPANDING AIRCRAFT PRODUCTION PROGRAM. June 1941.
SERIES OF STATE BULLETINS ON LABOR LAWS FOR WOMEN: Illinois, 29 pp.; Massachusetts, 30 pp.
STATE MINIMUM-WAGE ORDERS FOR BEAUTY CULTURE OCCUPATIONS. April 1941. 68 pp.
STANDARDS FOR THE EMPLOYMENT OF WOMEN IN INDUSTRY. (In Spanish.) Leaflet.

Other Department of Labor Publications

- MONEY DISBURSEMENTS OF EMPLOYED WAGE EARNERS AND CLERICAL WORKERS, 1934-36. Twelve cities of the South. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Bul. 640.
STUDY OF CONSUMER PURCHASES, URBAN SERIES, 1935-36. Bureau of Labor Statistics.
Family Income and Expenditure:
New York City, Bul. 643, Vol. I, Income.
East Central Region (9 cities), Bul. 644, Vol. II, Expenditure.
Family Expenditures in Selected Cities, Bul. 648, Vol. III, Clothing and Personal Care; Vol. IV, Furnishings and Equipment; Vol. VIII, Changes in Assets and Liabilities.
LABOR IN THE TERRITORY OF HAWAII, 1939. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Bul. 687.

VISUAL INFORMATION ON PROBLEMS OF THE WAGE EARNER. Division of Labor Standards. A guide to exhibits, motion pictures, slides, posters, and charts available from the United States Department of Labor.

CARE OF CHILDREN COMING TO THE UNITED STATES FOR SAFETY UNDER THE ATTORNEY GENERAL'S ORDER OF JULY 13, 1940. Children's Bureau. Bul. 268.

ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT OF CONSUMERS' CO-OPERATIVES AND BUYING CLUBS. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Bul. 665.

THIS MIGHT BE YOU. A series of 13 recordings of radio programs. Consists of dramatic episodes based on actual experiences from the lives of America's workers. They show the protection given these workers by Federal and State labor laws. Records are available to noncommercial organizations for use on the special play-back mechanisms in local broadcasting studios; they cannot be played on ordinary phonographs. To be secured from Division of Labor Standards. A small transportation charge to borrower. See WOMAN WORKER, January 1941, for similar series of 10 programs "The Pay Envelope."

Other Recent Publications

- STATE VS. MARRIED WOMAN WORKER. By Dorothy D. Crook. National Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs., Inc. New York. 1940. Summarizes court opinions and government action, upholding or denying the right of married women to work.
YOUR SON'S CAREER. Article by Lyle M. Spencer in the Kiwanis Magazine, May 1941. Could apply as well to daughters, and gives exceptionally good advice for the young person seeking a job.
BRITISH WOMEN IN WAR. By Peggy Scott. Hutchinson and Co. (London.) 1940.

¹ Bulletins may be ordered from the Superintendent of Documents, 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.