REPORTS AND ENQUIRIES

Some Aspects of Child Labour in the United States

The Work of the Children's Bureau in 1927-1928

The Sixteenth Annual Report of the Children's Bureau [1] covers the year ending 30 June 1928. As this and previous reports show, most of the local studies made by the Bureau were undertaken at the request of State Departments, commissions, or committees, or associations interested in the welfare or care of children. The field covered by the Bureau's activities in the year under review includes maternity and infancy, child welfare and hygiene, child labour, delinquency, dependent children, and recreation. Of these activities only child labour will be considered here.

Child labour is dealt with by the Industrial Division of the Bureau, which, in 1928, continued to assemble reports on the issue of employment certificates to working children. The object of this work is to ascertain and record trends in child labour, and to gather significant facts about the age and education of children entering employment in the United States of America. Reports on certificates issued in 1927 were received from 16 States and the District of Columbia, and from 69 cities in 18 other States. It is estimated that more than half of the 14- and 15-year-old children in the United States who are at work in the occupations for which employment certificates are needed are employed in the places from which the Bureau is receiving reports. It should be recollected, however, that there are occupations in which large numbers of children are employed, such as housework and farming, which are not usually covered by State child labour laws; moreover, laws requiring working certificates are not well enforced in all States. No reports are received by the Bureau for occupations in which certificates are not required, nor, of course, concerning children illegally employed.

The number of first regular certificates issued to children 14 and 15 years old (i.e. certificates that release the child from full-time school attendance and authorise full-time employment throughout the year) showed a decrease in 1927, varying from 2 to 61 per cent. as compared with the previous year, in 11 States, 17 cities in other

[1] United States. Department of Labour: *Sixteenth Annual Report of the Chief of the Children's Bureau, Fiscal Year ended 30 June 1928.* Washington, Govt. Printing Office, 1928. 53 pp.

States, and the District of Columbia. In 4 States and 8 cities in other States the decrease followed a decline in 1926 as compared with 1925. Increases in the number of certificates issued were only reported from one State and 5 cities. It is generally believed that decreases were largely due to unemployment in 1927.

Five States and 22 cities in 8 other States which, under the law or by administrative practice, require minors 16 and 17 years old to obtain employment certificates, supplied the Bureau with reports in 1927. Most showed decreases in the number of certificates issued in 1927 as compared with 1926, undoubtedly due to decline in employment opportunities.

Though the age at which children under 16 leave school to enter employment is influenced by the policies of school attendance Departments and officials issuing certificates, and by family and community standards, in the main the age and education standards of the child labour and school attendance laws determine the proportion of children receiving certificates at 14 instead of 15 years of age. Fifteen States and the District of Columbia and 41 cities in 18 other States reported the number of certificates issued to children of 14 and 15 separately. In these places 38 per cent. of the certificates were issued to children 14 years old and 62 per cent. to children 15 years old. In the States and cities requiring completion of the eighth grade and allowing no exceptions before children could receive permits, 24 per cent. of the total receiving permits were 14 years of age; in States having this requirement but allowing exceptions 29 per cent. were 14 years of age. Reports from the larger group of States requiring less than completion of the eighth grade for children 14 years old show that 43 per cent. of the certificates were issued to children 14 years old.

Nearly all places allowed certificates to be issued to both boys and girls; in these boys constituted 56 per cent. of the total in the 14- and 15-year-old group and 57 per cent. of the total in the 16- and 17-year-old group. Even in places in which more girls than boys received certificates the girls were not much more numerous than the boys. The employments in which girls usually predominated were domestic and personal service.

Only two per cent. of the 14- and 15-year-old children were coloured. This is probably due to the fact that coloured children usually find employment in agriculture, for which certificates are seldom required by law. In cities negro girls, and to some extent negro boys, go into domestic and personal service, and though in some places certificates are required for this work evidence seems to show that, owing to lack of control, many children infringe the law in this matter.

As regards educational standards, 58 per cent. of the 14- and 15-year-old children entering employment in 1927 had completed the eighth or a higher grade, as compared with 56 per cent. in 1926; while 25 per cent. in 1927, as compared with 28 per cent. in 1926, had only completed the sixth or a lower grade. The proportion of girls and boys completing the eighth grade was nearly the same.

It is believed that the grade requirement set by law is probably the most influential factor in deciding the educational attainments of the child leaving school for work.

Information concerning occupational groups was received from a much larger number of States and cities than in 1926. Children entering manufacturing and mechanical occupations numbered 42 per cent. of the 14- and 15-year-old group; 27 per cent. entered mercantile establishments, and the remaining 31 per cent. went into public messenger service, or errand and delivery work, domestic and personal service, office work, and miscellaneous occupations not classified. More boys than girls went into manufacturing and mercantile occupations, while in office work there was a relatively larger proportion of girls. Messenger service employed very few girls and personal service very few boys.

Many States issue special temporary certificates for employment during school vacations and out of school hours; the object of these is to enable children to work without leaving school. It is customary to require the same evidence of age as for regular certificates but to waive the educational requirement, as the certificate does not release the child from school attendance. In a number of places more certificates of this kind than regular certificates were issued; their use, however, depends upon the amount of short-time employment available and also upon the extent to which issuing officers succeed in persuading children qualified for regular work permits to accept temporary permits and to remain on at school.

Other reports completed by the Bureau during the past year include a survey of children engaged in street trading in eight cities and a report on industrial home work in New Jersey. These are summarised below.

Child Street Traders in the United States [1]

In the progress of child labour reform street trading has received comparatively little attention. This is due to several reasons. Perhaps the chief of these is that the street trader, unlike the factory worker, runs no risk of having his education cut short as the work is performed mostly outside school hours; therefore the school attendance laws pass him by. The same is true of those laws framed to protect children employed in industry and commerce which take into consideration children paid to work for an employer. Then there is the romantic conception that the newsboy or bootblack may be a destitute orphan or the sole support of a widowed mother; while the fact that a few who began as street traders have risen to success and even eminence has been known to mislead even sincere friends of children. Finally, the public, seeing the street trader at work, is apt unconsciously to assume that it knows all about the

[1] Department of Labour, Children's Bureau: *Children in Street Work*. Bureau Publication No. 183. Washington, Govt. Printing Office, 1928. 353 pp.

occupation, forgetting that street work, like all social problems, involves many factors not apparent to the casual observer.

There exist no comprehensive surveys of the work of street traders in the United States. For this reason in 1922-1923 the Children's Bureau of the Federal Department of Labour began a study of the extent and conditions of street work among children under 16 years of age in seven cities [1], selected firstly, because they represented communities having different types of street-trades regulation; secondly, because local co-operation was assured; and thirdly, because they were in different parts of the country and differed industrially in the composition of their populations.

The cities were revisited in 1926 or 1927 in order to ascertain whether the situation had altered. In none had any important changes taken place.

Practically every form of street trading would seem to have been considered, the report dealing with newspaper sellers (the bulk of it is devoted to this occupation), newspaper "carriers" (that is to say, children employed to deliver newspapers from door to door to subscribers), pedlars, bootblacks, magazine carriers and sellers, and a small miscellaneous group [2].

The Workers and Working Conditions

Newspapers Sellers.

Most street workers are employed in connection with the sale and distribution of newspapers, and though the age at which children enter the majority o loccupations is gradually rising this is not the case with the newsboy. In each of the cities surveyed children of 6 and 7 sold newspapers, and from 11 to 21 per cent. of them were under 10 years old. In three cities more than one-sixth were under 10. This was not due to the fact, rather generally believed but shown to be erroneous, that small boys make the most sales; it was because managers, faced with the necessity of selling without delay the most perishable of all products, would distribute papers to boys so small that they had to stand on tip-toe to reach the counter. In all seven cities the sale of newspapers by young children was restricted by State laws or local ordinances, but these were everywhere disregarded to a greater or lesser extent, and at the best the effort to enforce them was feeble.

Though the hours of newspaper sellers were regulated by street trades ordinances or by law, very little attention was paid to these provisions. Boys at school usually sold evening papers, which came

[1] These were: Atlanta, Ga.; Columbus, Ohio; Newark, N.J.; Omaha, Nebr.; Paterson, N.J.; Washington, D.C.; and Wilkes-Barre, Pa. Troy, N.Y., is also included in the study of newspaper carriers.

[2] The last two groups have been omitted from the present notice, as the occupations are either confined to a very small number of children or present no special features.

from the press at about the time school was dismissed. They usually continued to sell until about 6.30 or 7.30 p.m., when the demand would drop off. Whether or not work was continued after 8 p.m. depended on local conditions, but in all the cities except Columbus at least a few newsboys were on the streets on school nights until 10 p.m. or later. Saturdays presented a special problem, as late selling is the rule on Saturday nights. This is because Sunday papers are issued on Saturday evening in time to reach the theatre and restaurant crowds, and yield a larger profit than the daily papers. In all the cities except two a large proportion of the newsboys worked on Saturday nights until at least 10 p.m., and in three many of them worked until midnight or later. This often followed many hours of work on the streets, as, with papers appearing almost every hour, many newsboys made an all-day affair of selling papers on Saturdays, leaving home before noon and in some cases not returning until 2 or 3 in the morning. Some did not return at all, spending the night in the distribution rooms so as to be out on the streets early on Sunday mornings with the papers.

The hours worked were long. For boys working on school days, that is to say, from one-half to more than three-fourths of the sellers, the average number of hours' selling on school days was between 3 and 5 in four cities and between 2 and 3 in two cities. The average week was between 16 and 24 hours in four cities and between 8 and 16 in three cities. In all cities combined it was approximately 16 hours. Including their 25 hours of school work, slightly more than half the sellers were working 41 hours a week or more.

The weekly earnings in four out of the seven cities were between $3 and $5, in two between $2 and $3, and in the other between $1 and $2. The proportion earning at least $5 a week was 24 per cent. in Paterson, 27 per cent. in Omaha, 28 per cent. in Washington, and 44 per cent. in Atlanta, where profits were unusually large. More than half the boys in three cities contributed at least a part of these earnings to family support, but the proportion thus contributed was not ascertained. It is pointed out that this does not necessarily reflect upon the need of the families for the money as most of the children were foreign born, and this class expects help from their children even should the family be fairly prosperous. The majority of boys helped indirectly by buying some part of their clothing or other personal necessaries.

Questioned as to the reason for selling papers the majority of boys did not give actual want as the motive, but interviews with parents made it clear that the desire that their children should earn money was the cause of many boys' being at work. Another reason was the lack of recreational facilities; this tended to make boys unable to resist the lure of the streets.

There would seem to be ample evidence to support the charge, frequently made, that the moral risks of this occupation are considerable. These risks principally arise in the distribution rooms, which are frequented by men of a very low type. Concerning health risks, no conclusive evidence was obtained that newspaper selling

was especially unfavourable to health, but it is suggested that the long hours combined with lack of sufficient sleep, the want of proper meals, the over-stimulating environment and the exposure to all sorts of weather—all inseparable from newspaper selling—are likely to have serious disadvantages on the physical side.

Newspaper Carriers.

Boys delivering papers from house to house, known as "newspaper carriers", were a little older than those selling papers. This work is neither unduly fatiguing nor inordinately stimulating. It is performed at regular times, is paid a fixed sum, and does not in any particular manner expose the worker to temptations or bring him into contact with bad influences.

A large proportion of the boys were under 12 and a few were under 10 years old. None of the ordinances applicable to newspaper selling in the cities studied applied to carriers. In New York and Pennsylvania the State law applied and imposed a minimum age limit of 12 years, but so little attempt was made to enforce the law that the persons most concerned were generally unaware of its existence.

Hours of work, except in the case of morning papers, were unobjectionable. Boys with routes for evening papers usually finished before 6 or 6.30 p.m., so that their work, except for a short time in the winter, did not keep them out after dark or interfere with the family life. A few boys on morning routes reported that they started on their rounds as early as 3.30 or 4 a.m., and though those on morning routes were mostly older boys, some under 12 and a few under 10 years old were doing this work. On Sundays almost all carriers worked in the morning and in many cases the hours were very early.

As the carrier's round usually takes about an hour, most worked less than two hours on school days and many less than one hour. On Saturdays the hours were longer, and on Sundays they were longest of all. But the great majority of carriers in each city worked less than 12 hours weekly.

Many newspaper carriers delivered loads of 100 papers weighing 50 pounds. Some carried these loads in canvas bags slung on their shoulders, others used handcarts. Carriers who received a regular wage were usually paid only a small amount; between $1 and $2 a week was a common wage.

Pedlars.

Each city included in the survey had at least a few children who made a practice of going about the street with something to sell, or who accompanied hawkers on their rounds. This work varied with almost every individual. In some cases it amounted to very little, as when a boy from a comfortable home spent a few hours weekly selling flowers from his own garden. But in other cases children were found working every day, or every day except Sunday,

for very long hours. By far the greater number worked at least two hours on school days; in one city 55 per cent. of the pedlars worked three hours or longer daily in addition to time spent at school. On Saturday the great majority worked at least 5 hours a day, and 10 or 12 hours or more was common. These hours constituted a great hardship for boys accompanying hawkers, and especially for those expected to carry heavy containers of fruit or vegetables from wagon to door all day.

Among the children selling miscellaneous articles the danger of peddling lay in its being used as a cloak for begging. This attitude was sometimes encouraged by parents; one mother boasted that her two children, aged 7 and 8 years, had made as much as $7 in two days selling sweets; while two small boys selling bananas supported their stepmother and father, the father saying that the children made more than he could.

Bootblacks.

The occupation of bootblack is believed to be disappearing, but in all except one of the seven cities some boys were found in the occupation.

The average age of a bootblack was 12 years. Almost all were foreign born, chiefly Italian, but a few among them were negroes. The work is done under much the same conditions as newspaper selling, except that the boy is more his own master and therefore receives less discipline. In one city bootblacks were generally out all day and on Saturdays sometimes worked far into the night. In another 40 per cent. worked six or seven days a week; 37 per cent. worked 3 hours or more on school days and 43 per cent. worked at least 8 hours on Saturday. The weekly hours of 22 per cent. were at least 24, or over 48 if school time were counted. On school-day evenings 19 per cent. were out until 8 and 10 p.m.

Girls in Street Trades.

That street work is believed to be specially undesirable for girls is indicated by the fact that most regulations fix a much higher minimum age for girls than for boys, usually 16 or 18 years. The investigation revealed 118 girls 6 to 15 years old employed in street trades in six of the seven cities, while 25 others reported that they were selling articles for premiums. Ninety-two girls were pedlars or newspaper carriers; only a few sold newspapers.

Laws regulating Street Work

Legal regulation is said to be not nearly so general in street trades as in industrial occupations, nor so fully developed. Laws applying specifically to children engaging in street work were found in only 20 States and the District of Columbia. Local regulation through city ordinances has supplanted State legislation, the ordinances following the same lines as the State laws but having, on the whole,

lower standards and less specific administrative provisions. Minimum ages for boys are considerably lower than for industrial employment and little attempt has been made to regulate maximum hours, owing to the irregularity of hours of street work and the difficulty of enforcing such a regulation.

Fifteen State laws required permits or badges for street trading, usually issued by some school authority. But the requirements for badges fell below those for children seeking work permits for industry. Two laws required no evidence as to age and only seven needed a medical examination. Enforcement was usually in the hands of issuing officials, but there was less centralisation of authority for enforcement and inspection than under the regular child labour laws. Many cases were found in which school officials were issuing badges in a perfunctory manner; in one instance the school superintendent had delegated this work to the circulation manager of the largest local newspaper.

Street work being an unstable form of employment and usually carried on outside school hours, inspection was difficult even in places where the inspector was aided by a well-administered badge system. Constant patrolling of the streets and visiting of newspaper distribution offices is essential if the law is to be respected and the inspector to become familiar with the boys legally qualified to work.

The principal legal restriction on street workers is the night-work prohibition. This was often found to be poorly enforced, either because the inspecting system generally was weak or because the inspectors, being school officials, could not patrol the streets day and night.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Selling newspapers, being done outside school hours, would not seem to retard a boy's education. Although the investigation showed that some boys were retarded, too many factors in home and school environment were involved to enable conclusions to be drawn. Nor are conclusions reached as to its physical effects, as the extent of the enquiry did not justify this.

The moral influences surrounding the work are thought to make it a dangerous occupation for children. Distributing rooms are said to attract men from whom newsboys may learn at first hand the very technique of crime and moral perversion. These boys have a delinquency rate several times higher than that of other groups, and although this is put down in part to home and other influences, it is believed that the life newsboys lead at impressionable ages helps to account for it. This leads to the conclusion that newspaper selling by children should be regulated in the same way as other forms of child labour. The age minimum should be as high as public opinion will consent to, and prohibition should be aimed at, as soon as possible, for boys under 16. Where employment is permitted for boys under 16 night work should be prohibited; this would automatically restrict the daily working hours.

As there are health risks, due to the strain of exposure to all weathers and to work outside school, a physical examination, such as is required by the best child labour laws, is advocated. Adequate penalties should be imposed for breaches of the law, and they should be placed upon the child, the parent, and the newspaper publisher or dealer. Moreover, the law should punish publishers and others for permitting boys to loiter about such places as distributing rooms. The badge system is regarded as the best aid to enforcement, and it is believed to be important that enforcing officials should seek the co-operation not only of the boys themselves, but of their parents, of newspaper publishers, and of the school authorities. Finally, economic factors, such as the removal of the need for children to help in the support of their parents, should not be overlooked, while public opinion should be educated and made aware that the regulation of such a calling is in the best interests of children and of society.

The allied occupation of newspaper carrying is considered to be relatively unobjectionable and not to offer such possibilities of danger as would seem to justify the application of the stringent measures advocated for newspaper selling.

Of peddling it is said that no excuse exists for the child pedlar on the streets. The public is conveniently supplied with all the commodities offered by these children, the work is demoralising to the child, and its connection with begging and vagrancy is established. It should be specifically prohibited by street-trading laws and ordinances, and the prohibition should include children accompanying an adult pedlar.

The abolition of the child bootblack is also advocated, as the work has all the disadvantages of newspaper selling and some others in addition. Its suppression should be all the easier as neither the public nor any class of employer has an interest in keeping the bootblack on the street.

Children in Industrial Home Work in New Jersey [1]

The investigation upon which this report is based was made by the Industrial Division of the Federal Children's Bureau and was one of several studies made by the Bureau relating to the employment of children of school age in New Jersey.

The State of New Jersey, the report points out, has an importance in industrial home work far beyond the extent to which its own manufacturers make use of the home work system. This is because its nearness to New York and Philadelphia, both centres employing home workers in large numbers, provides an ample and convenient supply of labour for home work, and because employers in these places, by sending the work to New Jersey, are beyond the jurisdiction of the laws of their own State and can seldom, if ever, be prosecuted.

[1] Department of Labour, Children's Bureau: *Child Labour in New Jersey.* Part 2: *Children engaged in Industrial Home Work.* Bureau Publication No. 185. Washington, Govt. Printing Office, 1928. 62 pp.

In many respects the New York and Pennsylvania laws to regulate home work are stricter than those of New Jersey ; the first two both regulate home work through their child labour laws, but in New Jersey not only is the child labour law not construed to apply to work done for factories at home, but the so-called " sweatshop " law which regulates industrial home work does not regulate the employment of children, or place any penalty for the violation of its provisions on the employer. This law requires licences to be obtained before home work may be carried on in any tenement or dwelling house, and before a licence may be granted certain provisions relating to sanitation and health have to be complied with, while the manufacture of certain articles is prohibited. But the penalty for violating the provisions of this law falls, not on the person giving out the home work, but on the owner, lessee, or occupant of the building where the work is carried on ; it is, therefore, extremely difficult of enforcement. Factory inspectors inspect for home work ; but, through lack of staff and of funds, little was done until the State Department of Labour made a study of the subject which drew public attention to the extent of home work in New Jersey and the amount of child labour connected with it. As a result of the investigation special efforts were made to license all places where home work was being done, but this did not get over the difficulty that the persons giving out home work could not be prosecuted, while the situation could not be controlled by prosecuting the home-working families who, as occupants, were liable under the law. To discourage the employment of children parents were prosecuted under the New Jersey child welfare law, and notices were printed on the licences to the effect that they did not permit child labour. At the same time an attempt was made to have the " sweatshop " law amended so as to impose penalties on the employers, but it was unsuccessful. This was the position in 1923, in which year 8,742 licences were issued to families in 242 cities and towns throughout the State. A very considerable number of families, in addition, worked without licences.

Scope and Method of Study

The Bureau's study was made in 1925. The method adopted was to canvass children under 16 years old attending the public schools in selected localities and to ascertain the names and addresses of those who did factory work at home. Visits to the homes of the children were made and manufacturers, contractors, and other interested persons or agencies were interviewed. Only public school children were interviewed, not those in parochial schools, though these form a considerable portion of the school population. Moreover, even reports from public schools could not be considered complete, as some working children failed to report.

Seven carefully chosen cities in New Jersey were visited and work histories were obtained for 1,131 children in 628 families. All the manufacturers and contractors who gave out work to these families who could be located were interviewed ; the numbers reached 158

manufacturers and 99 contractors. Aid was also given by the State Department of Labour and by certain social agencies.

The Home Work System

Industrial home work is distributed in New Jersey not only by manufacturers within the State but also by those of neighbouring manufacturing centres, chiefly New York City. Of the 158 manufacturers interviewed 102 had headquarters outside the towns included in the study and 91 were outside the State of New Jersey.

The establishments themselves ranged in size from the very small undertaking with only one or two inside workers to the factory with several hundred employees. The number of home workers, from one to 400 per establishment, bore no relation to the number of inside workers. Those obtaining work directly from the manufacturers and contractors visited numbered at least 4,680. More actually worked on the materials sent out, as in most cases the individual obtaining the work represented a family of home workers, and in some cases was a contractor who distributed the work to other persons.

The methods of distributing varied with the different industries. Only about a third of the manufacturers interviewed gave out work directly to the home workers ; about half gave it out through contractors and about one-sixth used both methods. Contractors are of two types, home contractors who act primarily as distributing agents, though they may have a small improvised workshop in their own homes to which outside workers come, and factory contractors who are in reality manufacturers themselves. The latter receive their material from manufacturers ready to be put together, and after making it up in their workshops or factories, send it out to the home workers for the finishing processes.

The Home Workers

The workers were recruited largely from the women of foreign-born families. This is because for a woman immigrant the work is simple and easily learned and, as it does not bring the worker into contact with the public, she is at no disadvantage through ignorance of the language and customs of a new country. Once begun it tends to be continued with the co-operation of most of the members of the family, and many foreign housewives come to regret this. The predominance of foreign families was characteristic of all the seven cities visited, and 87 per cent. of the foreign families and 79 per cent. of all the families studied were Italian.

The work is usually done by persons of all ages and all degrees of skill. In the 628 families visited 63 per cent. of the workers were children under 16 years old. The mother generally initiated and directed the work, pressing into the service as many other members of the family as she could. The mothers themselves also worked many hours a day, in addition to the time spent in household duties

or in caring for the children. Other members of the family, including brothers and sisters of 16 years or over, fathers, and occasional relatives, comprised only 10 per cent. of the group. The work lends itself readily to the employment of children, and one of its outstanding features is the tendency of parents to use their children's labour. Only very simple processes are sent out from the factory, and these are simplified still further in the home until even the very youngest children can perform them ; thus in the carding of safety pins, children too young to fasten the pins in the cards can open them in readiness for a more skilled worker. In one household visited three children of 9, 4, and 3 years old opened safety pins, while a grandmother, an aunt and two children of 9 and 10 years old carded them. Such a division of labour is easily applied to all occupations and it speeds up the work to a surprising degree, while the children so employed become more and more skilful. In some instances (109 children out of the 1,131 interviewed) the work was done by children without assistance ; most of these children were 12 years old or over.

Of the 1,131 workers interviewed almost one-fourth were under 10 years old and more than half were 10 to 13 years inclusive. A little more than one-fifth were 14 years or more. Nineteen were only 6 years old and six were even younger. Three out of four working children were girls. Girls, it was explained, were easier to manage and boys, even if under the legal age for employment, could procure work in the streets and outside which they found more attractive and more remunerative than work at home.

Most of the families confined themselves to one kind of work. By far the largest number of children (44 per cent.) worked on men's clothing; the next largest group (10 per cent.) worked on women's clothing, and the remainder were employed on various kinds of work, of which the most important were making powder puffs, stringing tags, making artificial flowers and dolls' clothes, work on handkerchiefs, lace and embroidery, making bead jewellery, and carding buttons and safety pins. In addition it usually fell to the lot of the children to fetch and deliver the work ; this often meant carrying heavy loads a mile or more with perhaps two or three flights of stairs at the end of the trip. Of the 470 children who worked on men's coats, 198 had helped to carry them ; more than half were under 12 years old and about a fourth were under 10. Three small children of 11, 9, and 7, years old were found each carrying loads of at least 20 coats on his head, the bundles so nearly covering the child that, viewed at a short distance, the coats appeared to be moving along by themselves.

Hours and Night Work

Work was done both during school vacations and in term time. Most of the children worked only on weekdays ; only 20 worked every day of the week including Sunday. Owing to the irregularity of the work many children could give no definite information about hours. Data were, however, obtained from 715 of the 1,065 children who worked in term time and for 448 of the 736 children who worked

in vacation. Of the children working in term time 372 (52 per cent.) usually worked at least two hours daily and 189 (26 per cent.) worked three hours or more daily. Two hundred and sixty (71 per cent.) who worked two hours a day or more worked as a rule at least five days a week and some six or seven. It is to be noted that these hours are in addition to those spent at school and on the housework that usually falls to the lot of girls in working families.

Even children working less than three hours a day frequently worked at night. Of the 1,033 children who worked during the school year and reported night work 475 (45 per cent.) said it was customary for them to work in the evening after supper whenever work was available. Only 336 however were able to furnish reliable data concerning night work. Of these the working hours of 153 (46 per cent.) were usually two or more and of 67 (20 per cent.) three hours or more ; the large majority were employed at least five days a week and more often six. There were 145 children, of whom 108 usually worked five days a week, who worked as late as 9 p.m., and 52, of whom 40 worked at least five days a week, said it was quite usual for them to work as late as 10 p.m. Twenty children worked until 11 p.m. or later and all but 6 worked at least five days a week. Some instances of extreme hours were reported ; thus, 38 children were employed five hours a day in addition to work at school, and 12 of these worked six hours or more.

The hours of children working in vacation were longer than those employed in term time, though less so than might have been expected. Of the 448 children reporting work in vacation 62 per cent. usually worked two hours or more a day and 40 per cent. worked three hours or more. Night work was done a little less frequently, only 34 per cent. reporting work after supper. But night work in the summer vacation was usually done out of doors and in daylight, and could not be compared with the same work done at other seasons by artificial light in a closed room, where the entire family would be congregated in order to save the expense of heating the other rooms.

In addition to hours spent in working much time was taken up in going to and from the factory and in waiting there for work to be distributed. Frequently an hour or more would be so consumed.

Older children usually worked longer hours than the younger ones. This was partly due to the younger children being unable to concentrate on the employment for long periods, and partly to the fact that the minor processes done by such children took less time those done by the older ones.

All sorts of methods were used to keep the children at work. Some parents set definite assignments for them to do each day ; some coaxed or bribed them ; some kept up interest by arousing a spirit of rivalry among the different members of the family ; one mother used home work as a punishment, and a few beat their children if they would not work.

Earnings of Home Workers

Earnings were exceedingly low. Manufacturers make use of home workers because they can pay them less than factory workers,

and home workers are anxious to eke out a meagre family income, and having no other work to which they can turn in the intervals of household duties, not only accept the low wages in preference to none, but take them as a matter of course. Competition among families to obtain work helps to keep wages down and even to lower them. According to the statement of one of the workers, if contractors and manufacturers, in distributing a new type of home work, found home workers were making too good wages, they would reduce the rate until the wages did not exceed 10 cents an hour. Manufacturers reported that they had no trouble in getting workers; women begged for the work, and commonly there was not enough to go round.

The rates of pay varied with the work to be done. Of 356 children who were able to give any information as to their individual earnings, 67 per cent. earned less than 15 cents an hour, 40 per cent. less than 10 cents, and 12 per cent. less than 5 cents when working at their best speed. Group earnings were similarly low, only 22 per cent. of the 368 families earning as much as 40 cents an hour, though the number of workers in the family ranged from two to six, and with a few exceptions included an adult and frequently two. Of 334 families who kept an account of their yearly earnings from home work almost half reported that they had made less than $100 in the 12 months.

Condition of Workplaces

Many of the families visited lived in overcrowded quarters and few had a room to devote exclusively to the work in hand. Many had not even a cupboard in which to keep the materials, which were littered about the floor and in all sorts of places. The large majority of the houses were clean and in fairly good condition, but some were extremely neglected and others filthy. Rather more than three-fifths of the 628 families visited carried on their work in the kitchen, which was often the living and dining room and occasionally bedroom as well. The remaining families had a living room, a dining room, or some other place in which to work. Twenty had unused rooms or cellars, or small sheds in the back yard. Two families worked in the public hallway of the tenement building in which they lived, and in 39 the work was done at the houses of neighbours or relatives or of the contractor.

Each mother interviewed was asked if any illnesses had occurred in the family within the three years preceding the interview. Twenty-seven homes were found in which work had been carried on while some member of the family was known to be suffering from a communicable disease, and several others in which it had been carried on while infectious diseases were believed to be present, though a definite diagnosis was not obtained. Among illnesses of this kind were measles, chicken pox, whooping cough, tuberculosis, scarlet fever, erysipelas, influenza, syphilis, and gonorrhea. Other cases of communicable disease may have occurred whose existence parents were unwilling to reveal through fear that their work might be taken from them.