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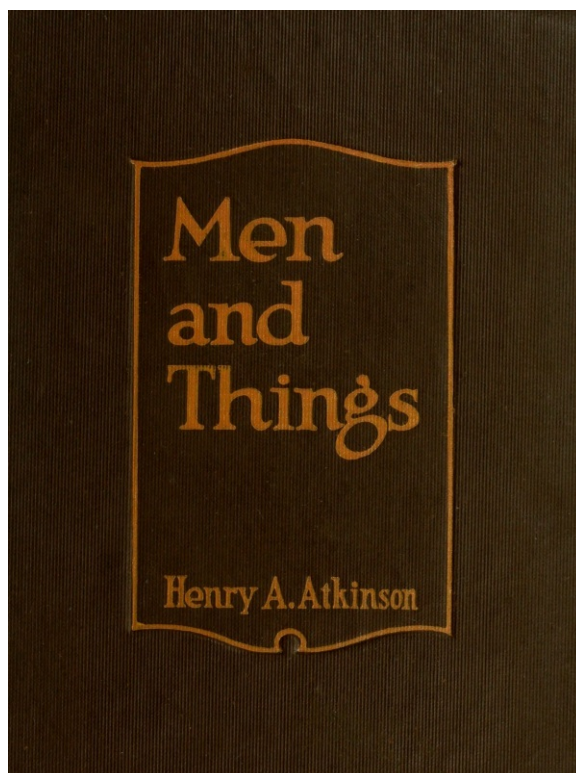
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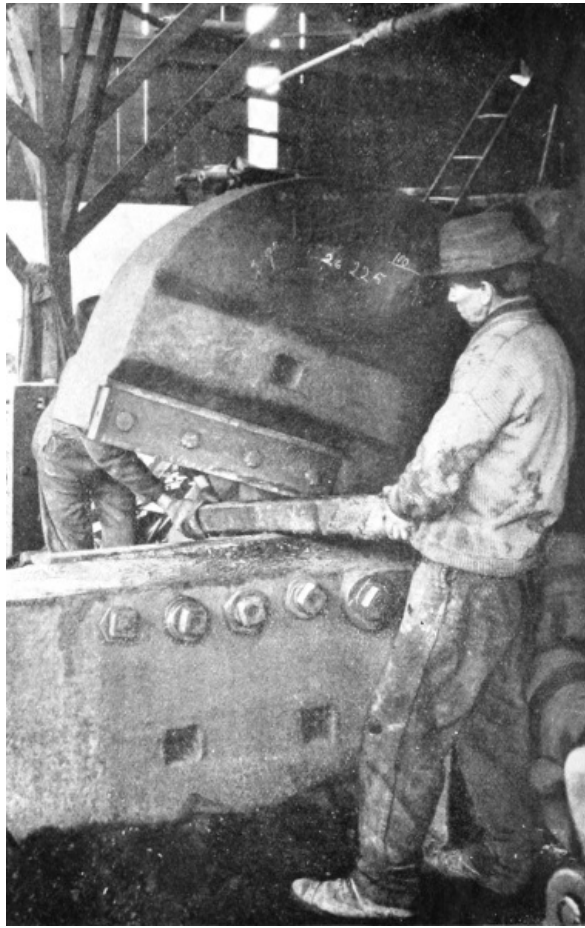
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**CUTTING STEEL FOR SHIPS WITH  
GIGANTIC SHEARS.**

These workers are the servants of civilization and  
without them we would have no such trade as we  
have to-day.

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# MEN AND THINGS

BY

HENRY A. ATKINSON

SECRETARY, SOCIAL SERVICE DEPARTMENT OF THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCHES  
AND ASSOCIATE SECRETARY OF THE COMMISSION ON THE CHURCHES  
AND SOCIAL SERVICE OF THE FEDERAL COUNCIL OF THE  
CHURCHES OF CHRIST IN AMERICA

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Send the proper one of the following blanks to the secretary of your denominational mission board whose address is in the "List of Mission Boards and Correspondents" at the end of this book.

We expect to form a mission study class, and desire to have any suggestions that you can send that will help in organizing and conducting it.

Name .....

Street and Number .....

City or Town ..... State .....

Denomination ..... Church .....

Text-book to be used .....

We have organized a mission study class and secured our books. Below is the enrolment.

Name of City or Town..... State.....

Text-book ..... Underline auspices under  
which class is held:

Denomination ..... Church Y. P. Soc.  
Men Senior

Church ..... Women's Soc. Intermediate  
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Name of Leader..... Sunday School

Address .....

Name of Pastor..... Date of starting .....

State whether Mission Study Class,  
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Chairman, Missionary Committee, Young People's Society.....

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Address.....

Chairman, Missionary Committee, Sunday School.....

.....

Address.....

TO MY FATHER  
THE REV. THOMAS A. ATKINSON

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# CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
Foreword	<a href="#">xiii</a>
I The World of Work	<a href="#">1</a>
II The World of the Rural Workers	<a href="#">17</a>
III The World of the Spinners and Weavers	<a href="#">33</a>
IV The World of the Garment Workers	<a href="#">49</a>
V The World of the Miners	<a href="#">65</a>
VI The World of the Steel Workers	<a href="#">79</a>
VII The World of the Transportation Men	<a href="#">95</a>
VIII The World of the Makers of Luxuries	<a href="#">113</a>
IX The World of Seasonal Labor and the Casual Workers	<a href="#">135</a>
X The World of Industrial Women	<a href="#">155</a>
XI The World of the Child Workers	<a href="#">173</a>
XII The Message and Ministry of the Church	<a href="#">191</a>
Bibliography	<a href="#">211</a>
Index	<a href="#">215</a>

---

# ILLUSTRATIONS

These workers are the servants of civilization

*Frontispiece*

The work which men do inevitably groups them together

PAGE

[10](#)

Not many of us stop to consider the man who made possible the white bread that we eat

[18](#)

The worker in these mills is a worker and little or nothing else

[42](#)

The workers on the sidewalks of Fifth Avenue

[50](#)

We forget the men who are toiling underground

[66](#)

The New U. S. Bureau of Mines Rescue Car

[74](#)

Commerce and transportation are dependent upon the steel workers

[82](#)

The church must preach from the text "A man is more precious than a bar of steel"

[90](#)

Living upon the canal-boats and barges are the families of the workers

[106](#)

The cigarmakers carry no moral enthusiasm into their trade

[122](#)

The casual workers are the true servants of humanity

[146](#)

In the army of laborers the girl and the woman are drafted

[162](#)

Thousands of children in America are doing work which they ought not to do

[186](#)

A Russian Forum in session in the Church of All Nations, Boston

[194](#)

The Church of All Nations provided a sleeping place for the unemployed

[202](#)

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“Ill fares the land, to hastening ills a prey,  
Where wealth accumulates, and men decay.”

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# FOREWORD

A friend said to me this last week, "There are two things that I instinctively distrust, one is prophecy, the other is statistics. Now that the war has lengthened into the fourth year and America has taken her place by the side of the Allies, I find my gorge rising every time any one attempts a prophecy and quotes statistics. All prophecies have proved false and statistics are utterly unreliable. Even the clocks have been made to lie by official decree."

Granted that my friend is pessimistic, at the same time we must all sympathize with him in this feeling. In writing this book, I have tried to keep out of the realm of prophecy and have used just as few statistics as possible. Most of the facts were secured by investigations made prior to August, 1914. I have endeavored to check up every statement with all the reports I could secure from the Department of Labor at Washington, through the *Survey* and the *New Republic*, and through other sources. I feel reasonably certain that all the statements concerning conditions will bear investigation and are substantially correct. If there are discrepancies, it will be found after making due allowance for the judgment of others, that they are due to changes brought about by unusual conditions in industry. The principles are unchanged and it is upon these that I have attempted to place the most emphasis. Concrete facts are but illustrative of the principle involved. Conditions affect cases but leave principles undisturbed. ix

I am greatly indebted to the help in research given me by Miss Lucy Gardner, of Salem, Massachusetts. As far as possible I have given credit to the proper authorities for material used. If I have failed to do so I take this opportunity of acknowledging my indebtedness to all unknown authors and authorities who have contributed in any way.

This book goes forth to the young people of America in the hope that they will find in it some small inspiration that will prove an incentive to them to give themselves to the cause of humanity, realizing that through service, and through service alone, can any one make the fullest contribution to his generation.

"Men and Things,"—a nation is great only in its citizens. The great task before the church to-day is to help to readjust the conditions existing in all industries so that men and women may labor and enjoy the fruits of their labor and profit physically and spiritually in the wealth which they help to create.

HENRY A. ATKINSON.

New York, May, 1918.

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# CHAPTER I

## THE WORLD OF WORK

One of the commonest sights in the city is that of the people going to work in the early morning; the streets are thronged with men carrying dinner pails, and girls and women carrying bundles. Many are hurrying with a worried look on their faces as if fearful of being a minute or two late. At night the same people are again on the streets with their faces turned in the opposite direction going home after the day's work. A few hours' rest, then a new day, and the same people may be seen in the same streets, hurrying to the ever unending tasks.

The country holds the same urge of work. Nothing is more interesting than a trip through the country early in the morning. With the first hint of dawn you see a thin pencil of smoke begin to stream from the chimneys of the farmhouses. Bobbing lanterns appear by the barn. You hear the clanking of chains and the rattle of harness as the teams are being made ready for the day's toil. As the morning grows older, you meet the workers out on the road with their faces set sturdily toward the field of their labor.

All night long from a thousand centers massive trains are rushing toward other centers. In each engine two men, with nerves alert and eyes peering out into the darkness ahead, guide the power that pulls the train. Every few minutes the door of the firebox is opened and a gleam of light makes an arc through the darkness of the night as the fireman mends his fire. 2

During the daytime thousands of trackmen have inspected the rails; other thousands have been at work repairing the ties, putting in new rails, and improving the grade. Telegraphers are continuously flashing their messages along the wires; their invisible hands guide these flying trains. In factories, workshops, mills, mines, forests, on steamships, on the wharves, wherever there are human beings, there is work being done. Work is as ceaseless and persistent as life itself.

**The Song of the World of Work.** You remember, perhaps, the first time that you visited a big city. From your room in the hotel you could hear the roar of the streets. That roar is made up of hundreds of separate sounds. It is the voice of work from the throat of the city. It changes with each hour of the night. Just before dawn there is a lull and the voice is almost quiet but only for a short period; then it takes on a new volume of sound and grows in intensity to the full force of its noonday chorus. What is this voice saying? It is telling the story, and pouring out the complaint, and singing the song of the world of work. The idler or the parasite is the exception. People can live without working, but such is human nature that the person is rarely found who is willing to bear the odium of being a member of the class that never toils.

**Work and Life.** "What are you going to do when you grow up?" This is a common question asked of every girl and boy. Very early in our lives we begin to try to answer this question. Our environment shapes our attitude toward life, and helps us to choose the type of work to which we think we are adapted, but, having once settled the question of the kind of work we are to do, that choice eventually determines, in a large measure, our character. Work is so much a part of our lives that it marks us and puts us in groups. All ministers are very much alike, doctors are alike, lawyers are alike, business men are alike, business women resemble each other, so do miners and woodsmen. In fact, the work that we do groups us automatically with the others in the same profession or trade. Work creates our world for us and also gives us our vocabulary. A man who made his fortune on a big cattle-ranch in the West moved with his family to Chicago. His wife and daughter succeeded in getting into fashionable society and with the money at their command made quite a stir in the social world. Foolishly they were ashamed of their old life on the ranch. They had difficulty in living down their past, and the husband never reached a place where his family could be sure of him. He carried his old world with him into the new environment. One of the standing jokes among their friends was the way in which this man told his cronies at the club how his wife had "roped a likely critter and had him down to the house for inspection." This was his description of a young man who was considered eligible for his daughter's hand. The men who have been brought up in mining communities use the phraseology of the mines. One of the most prominent preachers in America was a miner until he was past twenty years of age. His sermons, lectures, and books are filled with the phrases learned in his early life. A preacher in a fishing village in the northern part of Scotland, in making his report to the Annual Conference, stated: "The Lord has blessed us wonderfully this year. In the spring, with the flood-tide of his grace, there was brought a multitude of souls into our harbor. We set our nets and many were taken. These we have salted down for the kingdom of God." Needless to say, he and his people were dependent upon the fishing industry for a living. 3

**Purpose of Work.** Life is divided into work and play. Work is the exertion of energy for a given purpose. People accept the claim of life as they find it with little or no protest because one must work in order to eat. The compulsion of necessity determines the amount of work and the amount of play in the average life. Even a casual study of the industrial life of to-day convinces one that work absorbs a large part of the time and conscious energy of all the people. The letters T. B. M. meaning "Tired Business Man" are now used to typify a fact of modern life. Business takes so much time and effort that it leaves the individual so worn out at the end of every day that he is not able to think clearly, or to render much service to himself or to his friends. He is simply a run-down machine and must be recharged for the next day's work. 4

In one of the American cities a group of nineteen girls formed themselves into a Bible study class, and met at the Young Women's Christian Association building on Thursday nights. A light, inexpensive dinner was served and the pastor of one of the churches was asked to teach the group. All of these girls were members of the church and were engaged in work in the city. One was in a secretarial position, four were stenographers, two were saleswomen, and thirteen were employed in a department store. The hours of work were long for the majority of the class. On Saturday nights they were forced to work overtime. The average wage for the group was \$7.25 a week. Out of this they had to buy their food, pay for their rooms, buy their clothes, and pay their car-fare. Whatever was left they could save or give away just as they pleased. After the classes had been meeting for about six weeks, it developed that only four of the girls went to church with any degree of 5

regularity. Ten of them gave as a reason for not going that they were so tired on Sunday mornings that they could not do their work and get up in time to go to church. When they did get up, there were dozens of hooks and eyes and buttons that had to be sewed on, clothes which had to be mended, and the week's washing to be done. In telling of their experiences one girl said, "Sunday is really my busiest day." These girls can be taken as typical of a large number of workers, men and women. Life to the majority becomes simply the performance of labor. Work is the whole end of existence. All brightness and cheer is squeezed out by the compulsion of labor.

In a Pennsylvania coal town the employees of the company live in a little village built around the coke ovens. There is not a green thing in the whole village. A girl from Pittsburgh married one of the men who was interested in the mines. They moved to this town, and she took all her wedding presents and finery with her. In three weeks the smoke had ruined her clothes, had made the inside of her little home grimy, and the dirt and soot had ground itself into the carpets and floor, till she said, "I feel that all the beautiful life that Frank and I had planned to live together has become simply an incidental adjunct to the coke-ovens." We often hear it said that the minds of people are stolid, stodgy, or indifferent, and that they do not appreciate the best things in life. The wonder is that the masses of the people appreciate them as much as they do.

**The Purpose of Life.** A well-known catechism teaches that, "The chief end of man is to glorify God and to enjoy him forever." Herbert Spencer says, "The progress of mankind is in one aspect a means of liberating more and more life from mere toil, and leaving more and more life available for relaxation, for pleasure, culture, travel, and for games." The struggle for existence consumes so much time that it becomes an end in itself. This ought not to be. The true purpose of life is not work, nor wealth, nor anything else that can be gained by human striving, but it is life itself. Therefore, the work that people do ought to contribute to an enrichment of life. We are indebted to Henry Churchill King for the splendid phrase, "The fine art of living." William Morris said that whatever a man made ought to be a joy to the maker as well as to the user, so that all the riches created in the world should enrich the creator as well as those who profit by the use of the riches. Under the old form of production, where every man did his own work with his own tools, it was easy for him to take pleasure in the thing that he was making. The factory system breaks the detail of production into such small parts that no one worker can take very much pride in the actual processes of his work. It is not a very thrilling thing to stand by a machine and feed bars of iron into it for ten hours a day, and to watch the completed nuts or screws dropping out at the other end of the machine. The pleasure in the work must be secured from the conditions under which the work is performed—the cooperation in the production, and the feeling that the worker is a part, and is being blessed by being a part, of the modern industrial system.

**Specialization in Work.** Specialization has been carried so far that to-day there are very few skilled workers in the sense in which this term was used several years ago. Shoemakers very rarely know how to make shoes, for they now make only some one part of the shoe. The automobile industry, by methods of standardizing, is organized so that each worker performs some simple task. He repeats this over and over, but his task added to that done by the others, produces an automobile. In the glove factory one set of workers spend their lives making thumbs; another group stitch the back of the gloves. In the clothing industry some make buttonholes, others sew on buttons; some put in the sleeves, and others hem; each has a very small part to do. This specialization in industry has been carried so far that it is seldom that a worker knows anything about the finished product.

A study of the organization of labor shows to what extent specialization has been carried. One of the chief complaints of the American manufacturer is that his men and women are not loyal. There is undoubtedly ground for this complaint, but on the other hand it must be conceded that it is very difficult for a worker—in the garment trade, for instance—to be loyal to a long succession of buttonholes; and for glovemakers to be loyal to a multitude of thumbs. The lack of loyalty comes largely from the failure of the directors of modern industry to bring their workers into that relationship with the business which would give them a feeling that they are an essential part of the industry. Loyalty grows by what it feeds on. The specialization that has been going on has been the very force which has made the worker simply a part of the machine, and as such, detaches him from the business of which he ought to feel himself an integral part.

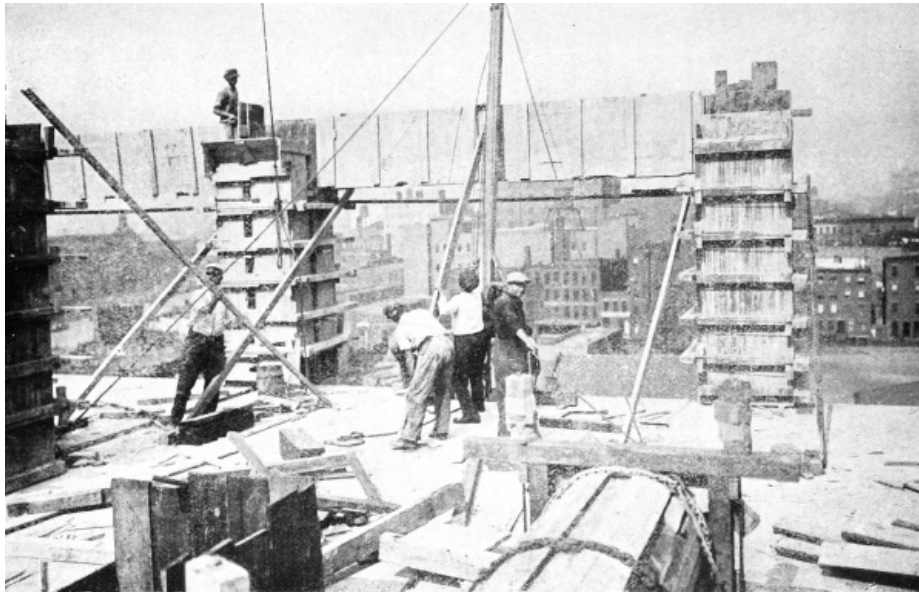
**Unity of the Workers.** The extent to which specialization has been developed has had another effect. While the process of differentiation has been carried on at a rapid pace, and the individual worker has known but little about the finished product, he has come to know a great deal about the other disintegrated units in the workshop, the mine, the factory, and the mill. Consequently, with the differentiation in the work there has been a growing solidarity or feeling of unity among the workers themselves. Evidence of this is found in the philosophy that there are only two classes of people in the world, the people who work and the people who do not work, and which is used by the revolutionary groups with tremendous force. We do not like to think of classes in America, but the forces of industrial life have created classes in spite of ourselves.

**A World Apart.** The workers live in a world apart. Unconsciously they drift together. They talk each other's language; they understand each other's point of view. In every town and city we find groups of the workers living to themselves. The work which men do inevitably groups them together; and social life centers so completely about their work that it is really the factory and mill that mark out the lines and define the limits within which the classes must live. Consequently, in our American cities we find such designations as these: "Shanty Town," "Down by the Gas Works," "Across the Tracks," "Murphy's Hollow," "Tin-Can Alley," "Darktown," "On the Hill," "Out by the Slaughter-Pen," "Over on the West Side," and "Down in the Bottoms." Just think of your own town, and you probably can add some new phrase that tells where your laboring group lives. In one Western town the community was divided by the Southern Pacific Railroad tracks. The boys in the school on the north side of the tracks were all known as "Sewer Rats." On the opposite side of the town they were known as "Depot Buzzards." Whenever one group met the other there was always a war. A friend tells of a similar condition in a Canadian village where the Scotch boys were banded against the Irish and the Irish against the Scotch. Whenever the Macks met the Micks, or the Sandys met the Paddys, there was a row. A large part of this classification is temporary and need not be considered very seriously. Underlying it, however, is the deeper fact that we have come to recognize that there is a world of the workers, and that it is a world apart. In this world of the workers the rewards and the profits of toil are barely adequate to take care of the needs of the

families of the workers.

It is assumed that in pre-war times it required from \$800 to \$900 a year to support a family in the average American community. Since 1914 the cost of living has increased approximately 60 per cent. It is estimated that even to-day with the advances that have been made in the wages by nearly all industries, 61 per cent. of the workers of America are receiving an average wage of less than \$800 a year. "Shanty Town" and that section "Down by the Gas Works" have been built of poor material and allowed to become dilapidated not because the people living there like that sort of thing, but because the returns for the labor of these people are totally inadequate for their needs. The housing and living conditions of the people who live in the world of the workers is determined by the wages which they receive.

10



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**The work which men do inevitably groups them together.**

**The Interdependence of All.** Now, if we do recognize that the world of work is a world apart, we must not fail to recognize also that behind this disintegration that has been going on, there is an integration of society more comprehensive than we have ever known before in the history of the world. While the people may be allowed to live by themselves in a part of the town that is less desirable as a dwelling-place than other parts, yet we are all dependent one upon the other. There is an old story which illustrates this point. A boy complained to his father about being poor and said that he wished that he had been born in a rich man's home. The father told him that he was mistaken, for he really had wealth which he had never considered. That night the boy had a dream. It seemed to him that there came and stood at his bed a little fellow dressed like a farmer. The boy asked him who he was. He replied that he was the soul of all the farmers that were working to produce the flour that went into bread. Another little figure appeared beside the first, a black man with a turban on his head; he was the spirit of the workers in the tea and spice gardens of India. Another black man dressed in the rough clothes of a day-laborer joined the others; he was the spirit of the workers on a Southern plantation who make the cotton and produce the sugar. Other workers appeared so fast that the boy could hardly keep up with their approach—the coal-miner, the iron-miner, the woodsman, the carpenter, and the girl workers in the flax-mills of Dublin, who produce the linen in the rough, red-checked tablecloths. When they had all gathered together there was a multitude, and all were in reality the servants of this one boy.

11

Our dependence upon each other was clearly illustrated in the shut-down of non-essential industries on certain days in the winter of 1917-18. In order to keep people from starving and freezing, the government of the United States ordered the suspension of certain industries so that the conservation of fuel might protect the lives of the people.

**The Good Neighbor.** We are "members one of another." The basic industries provide the necessities of our lives—feeding, housing, clothing, warmth, means of traveling, and the things which are part and parcel of our very being. The workers who are engaged in producing these things are true servants of humanity, and we are all under deep and abiding obligations to them. Just in the proportion that we produce something that adds to the wealth and happiness of the world, we are discharging the obligation which others by their labors have placed upon us. The division into classes, and the setting off of groups by themselves, the creating of the world of labor as a world apart, makes the practise of neighborliness a difficult thing. Now neighborliness is the very essence of Christianity. To be a friend of man ought to be the supreme desire of every individual. In the parable of the Good Samaritan Jesus defined the meaning of Christianity in terms of neighborliness. The church must answer this question: How can Christian people be good neighbors in modern industrial society?

12

**Neighbor to the Group.** We recognize the call to neighborliness in individual cases. If a man is knocked down by an automobile when he is crossing a street, people will run to help him to his feet, will call a cab or an ambulance, and he will be cared for just as carefully by the stranger as if he were a near relative. The individual idea of neighborliness is thoroughly appreciated. We have learned how to practise it. When it comes to a group, however, we find it difficult. The same men that would rush into the street to help an individual that is hurt, will live in a community and not appreciate the needs of the people living in the same block. The industrial class may be knocked down by adverse social conditions, and no one will recognize just what the situation means; or,

recognizing it, will know how to apply the remedy, or even how to offer intelligent assistance.

In a small city in Ohio there lived an old man and his wife. Their children had married and moved away, leaving the old people to shift for themselves. The man was nearly blind and his wife was paralyzed and unable to take care of herself. The neighbors used to go to see them once in a while but no one felt any special responsibility for them and the community knew very little about the conditions under which they lived. One of the neighbors remarked one day that he had not seen anybody around the house and no smoke coming from the chimney. An investigation was made and it was found that the old man had been dead three days and was lying in bed with his paralyzed wife who could not help herself, nor could call for assistance. For three days she had been suffering unspeakable agony beside the form of her dead husband. The whole community was shocked. No one could believe that such a lack of neighborliness could exist. No one was particularly to blame; it was merely one of those things that occur because the man and his wife had dropped out of the main-traveled path of the city's life. 13

The church is making every effort to meet the needs of the individual, but when it preaches the need of regeneration, it must meet the group needs as well, and the minister of a church for a world of labor must be minister to the group as well as to the individual. The world war has impressed upon us many facts, none with more insistence than this—that we are living in a very small world; and that nations, as well as groups of people everywhere, must learn to appreciate each other for what they are, and for the contribution which they are making to the well-being of humanity. Recognizing this, however, does not mean that we are all to try and think alike, to be alike, or to live alike. As Americans we are very likely to think that our way of doing things is entirely right, and that enlightenment comes in proportion to the degree in which other people copy our example in clothes, methods of living, and even our manner of speaking.

**A Specialized Program for Group Needs.** The church's program for a world of work must be a specialized program. It must be based upon a thorough knowledge of the facts incident to the life of the people, an appreciation of their view-points, and must take into consideration the ultimate ends to be achieved, the means by which these ends can be reached, and a willingness to subordinate the program of the church to the needs of the group. The program of a city church appealing to well-to-do, middle-class people, will utterly fail in the average rural community. A program for a mining community must consider the needs as well as the character of the miners, and the quality of their work. The church is sharply challenged by the specialization in industry, and by the fact that there are classes who do not hear, or at least fail to heed its appeal. In the growing demand for democracy, the church must not only be the most democratic of all institutions but it must be the leader in setting before the people the ideals and in keeping before their minds the great ends of democracy. 14

**Approach to the Subject.** In the following chapters are set forth some of the conditions under which the workers in the basic industries toil and live; also the great needs of each group and what the church is doing, what it ought to do, and what it can do. We will consider each group in relation to the contribution it makes to the life of us all. Food is a first need of each individual, therefore, we will study the rural workers first, for they are the ones who feed the world. Next we will study the makers of our clothing; then the mines, for they provide for our warmth and shelter; then the steel workers, who are the real builders of our material civilization. We are a restless race, and demand the labor of thousands of men and women to move us from place to place, so we will study the lives of these providers of transportation. We will also think together of that large group who amuse us and who labor to produce the luxuries which we enjoy. There are certain groups that we will find in each of these larger groups, such as the seasonal workers, the women in industry who toil. We will take a glimpse at these. 15

**Men and Things.** Men produce things, and often the created thing seems to become greater than its creator. We will hope through these discussions to show that man is infinitely greater than all the things which he produces. We will also endeavor to arrive at some decision as to what constitutes a proper message and ministry for the church in the midst of a world of work, so that working men and women may be protected in their toil, and freed from the incessant and always present danger of becoming slaves to the wealth they create.

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# CHAPTER II

## THE WORLD OF THE RURAL WORKERS

There have grown up on the western plains of Canada a number of large cities and a great many small villages and towns. These are the direct results of a process of civilization dependent upon the fertile soil from which vast quantities of wheat are reaped each year. Just before harvest the sea of grain extends as far as the eye can see. The first settlers built their little cabins, bought as much seed grain as was available, and planted it; doing nearly all of the work themselves. Improved methods of planting and harvesting have added thousands of acres to the wheat-fields. Railroads have been built to carry the wheat to the great shipping and milling centers. Cities such as Winnipeg have grown rich through being the connecting-links between the farmer, with his field and his wheat, and the breakfast tables all over the civilized world.

**Our Daily Bread.** The development of the grain-belt of western Canada is similar to that which has taken place in Minnesota, the Dakotas, and other Northwestern states. In California, Oregon, Washington, Oklahoma, and Kansas we find great areas devoted to the growing of wheat. The wheat that is put on the market is of two general varieties: what is known as winter wheat sown in the autumn, and spring wheat that is sown early in the spring. These great wheat areas have been called the bread-basket of the Western world. Few of us realized the importance of wheat to the life of the world until Mr. Hoover began to tell us that we must save it by having wheatless days and by eating more corn bread and war-breads of various kinds. The total annual consumption of wheat is 974,485,000 bushels, and of this amount the United States produced, in 1917, 678,000,000 bushels. The needs of the world have been figured as calling for about 20 per cent. advance upon all that is available under normal conditions.

Not many of us who live in cities stop to consider the man who made possible the roll or the piece of white bread that we eat with our meal. We forget the long day's work, the painstaking toil, and the grim struggle of the pioneers who first worked the land. We seldom think of the planting and reaping year after year, the construction of transportation, the building of warehouses, the venturing of money in mill-building, until finally were developed not only the vast farms but also cities, railroads, wheat-carrying steamship lines, elevators, and the mills that go to make up the great bread-making industry. Only when the war interfered with the processes and threatened to cut off the supply of wheat, did we begin to realize how important the wheat farm is to the very life of the nation. If bread is the staff of life, wheat is the chief material out of which that staff is made. Other grains when used for bread, as we are forced to use them to-day, are all substitutes for wheat.



Press Illustrating Service.

**Not many of us stop to consider the man  
who made possible the white bread that  
we eat at our daily meals.**

**The Cane-Sugar Makers.** If we travel in a direction a little east of south from the wheat-fields of Canada, we come to the great plantations of Louisiana and Mississippi where sugar-cane is grown. Here we find people of a different type living under different conditions. Sugar-cane is grown in fields that have been won from the swamps by hard toil. In this rich soil, cultivated and ridged by the plow, the sugar-cane is laid in long parallel rows. After it has been buried a few days it begins to sprout, and from each one of the joints on the stalk of cane there grows up a new plant. These are tilled and come to maturity in October. The stalks grow from eight to fifteen feet high and at harvest-time are cut down and then stripped of their leaves by the workers, who take them up in their hands and with a flat knife slash off the long, bladelike leaves, leaving them clean and smooth. The stalks are piled in rows to be picked up later and put into wagons, taken to the siding, loaded into freight-cars, and hauled to the mill, where they are crushed between rollers, and the juice pressed out. The liquid so obtained is then put into large vats and evaporated, leaving brown sugar and molasses. The crude or brown sugar is sent to the refinery and passed through various processes until we get the white sugar that comes to our tables. Practically all of the work on the sugar plantation is done by Negroes. These people live in small cabins and work for a very small wage, ranging from 75 cents to a \$1.25 a day. Their tiny houses, which are usually whitewashed and surrounded by a little plot of ground, are the property of the owners of the plantation. The Negro is expected to buy everything from the company's stores. The prices are high and it is rarely that one finds a family that is not in a perpetual state of debt to the owner of the plantation. 19

When the migration of Negroes from the South to the North began some few years ago, a great concern was felt in many quarters as to what the result would be. A meeting was held in one of the Southern cities and the Negroes were invited to be present. One of the Negroes said: "If you let me tell you what I think, it is about like this. We-all have been working here for about 75 cents to \$1 a day, but we never see the time when we have any money of our own. It takes more than we make for the things we use. Folks in Iowa, Pennsylvania, Illinois, and Massachusetts offer us \$15 to \$18 a week, tickets for ourselves and our families, and a free house to live in with two weeks' rations provided and in the house. Now none of us wants to leave Louisiana, and if you want to keep us here just raise our wages to \$2 a day. We would a heap rather stay here than go North." 20

**Sugar from Beets.** Not all the sugar that comes to our tables is made from the cane; in fact only a small proportion is cane-sugar. Most of it is produced from the beet which is grown in large quantities in the West. Montana, Colorado, Idaho, Wyoming, and California are the extensive sugar-beet producing states. The beets grow to an enormous size; they are planted in rows and cared for much as the beets that grow in our vegetable gardens. In California the Japanese are entering very largely into the sugar-beet culture.

The beet-fields call whole families to work. Several towns in the Northwestern states have sections made up entirely of Russians, and people from other lands, who have been attracted by the opportunities for employment offered by the beet industry. One family consisting of a father, mother, thirteen children, and the mother's sister worked all last summer in one of the beet-fields. The youngest child was only five years old but he put in long hours every day. This family is typical of many. The statistics regarding child labor in the United States show that the vast majority of children employed in gainful labor are the children in the rural districts. Thus sugar comes to your table through two sources: from the workers, including a large number of children, in the beet-fields and the workers on the Southern plantations. 21

**The Corn Belt.** In the Middle states we have the great corn-producing areas. A great deal of the philosophy of this region is summed up in the reply of a farmer to the question as to why he was planting more corn than usual. He said: "So that I can feed more hogs."

"What will you do with the hogs?" he was then asked.

"Sell them and buy more land to plant more corn to raise more hogs to buy more land."

The price of hogs and the price of corn, in normal times, keep on a level with each other. When corn is high pork is high, and when corn falls we find that pork falls with it.

**Food and the Land.** It is impossible within the limits of this book to give more than a glimpse of a few of the great food-producing industries of America. The packing-houses and canneries contribute their share to the feeding of the people; but when all is said and done, we get back to the fact that even in this age when factory and city make claims, all values finally rest on the land. The growth of our cities has emphasized their dependence upon the country. People in the city must be fed, and the food comes from the soil. It is now claimed that the gravest mistake made by Kerensky, a leader of the Russian revolution, was in not giving sufficient attention to the food question in Russia. After the revolution became a fact Kerensky tried to spur the army to greater activity, but the people, unused to the new ways of freedom, failed to keep up the processes that would produce food. The railroads were congested; fuel was scarce; lacking fuel—the railroads and boats still further failed in their undertaking. The result was that the food supply became less and less in Petrograd and other centers. Behind the lines hungry people grew restless. Leon Trotzky would not have succeeded in overthrowing Kerensky but for the hunger of the people. These people were willing to accept any change of government because there was at least a hope, however desperate it might be, that the new government would furnish the food which they needed so badly. One writer dealing with this subject said: "Oratory and precepts failed to feed the hungry people." 22

We have heard over and over again the phrase, "An army travels on its stomach." It is also true that the civilian population of a country lives and labors on its stomach. Food is the foundation of life. "Give us this day our daily bread" is the first demand of man upon God and upon his fellow man. The solution of all our problems depends finally on the question of bread. "Who shall be king?" The answer to this question is very likely to be, "The one who will give us bread." The peace of the world must finally be based upon an appreciation of economic values. Justice means that conditions will be such that in each nation food for all the people will be produced in abundance. 23

**The Country and the City.** Much has been said of the freedom and independence of farm life. The producer of food is a real benefactor of the race. The farmer works in the open air and lives a simple life, and so gains an opportunity for developing the very finest traits of human character. But when we compare the



changes that have been taking place in the rural districts, we find strong reasons for the exodus from the country to the city. The city offers a more interesting and profitable life which makes it difficult to maintain the center of attraction on the farm. The history of humanity began in a garden and ends in a city. The word "city" comes from the old Latin word which means the citizen, the place where the citizen lived.

The city is really the center of authority and governmental power. It offers the best and at the same time the worst; has the best in intellect, which it attracts and claims for its own, and it has the best in amusement and entertainments. We have heard people say: "The country is a good place in which to rest and work, but the city is the place to have your fun." The city has the best and the worst of morals, and the best and the worst health conditions. Side by side with the city mansion are the tumble-down hovels and the cramped, narrow tenements that are a disgrace to our land. The robust, strong man pushes his weaker fellow to the wall. The worst forms of disease and the most acute physical suffering are found in the city. In the city there are many intellectual giants and many half-sane intellectual weaklings. The man dwelling in the country has a greater independence than these. He can at least have three meals a day, and knows how to take care of himself. Hundreds of thousands of people in our cities have just brains enough and just education enough to do one thing; if hard times throws one of these out of his job, he is left utterly helpless—a derelict on the sea of humanity. The culprit is safer in the city than in the thickest forest. Men without character and women without principle huddle together in its sordid districts. The tides of the city wash up queer specimens to the light of day, and reveal to the passer-by the saddest and most gruesome sights, and the worst types of humanity. 24

The best in the city is matched by the worst. Philanthropy cures, or tries to cure, what rogues have created. Just as the incentive to goodness in the city is highest, so the temptations to the opposite course of life are of the strongest. The artificial life creates new and unusual wants, and together with the excitement caused by city conditions, makes temptations hard to resist. The city is the rich man's paradise and the poor man's hell. The lure of the city is strong upon us all. There are a thousand voices calling us there; and this is impoverishing our rural districts and making the question of food a more serious one every year. In the country one can plod along and with the present prices be independent, but this does not satisfy. The men of to-day think in thousands where their fathers thought in terms of hundreds. Hundreds of dollars are made on the farm and millions in the city. The city calls every young man and young woman. Everybody who is at all familiar with the small towns knows that one of the hardest facts which must be faced is that just as soon as the young people finish school they leave for the city. Church work is made hard by the continual drain on the best life in the community. 25

**The Tenant and the Absentee Landlord.** Over against this question of the lure of the city there is that of the tenant farmer. The Industrial Relations Commission, making its study of the rural conditions in America, finds that there is a very grave danger that America will produce a peasant class like that of some of the European countries. The independent landowners are decreasing; in Mississippi 62 per cent. of the land is tilled by tenants, in Louisiana 58 per cent., and Kansas 36 per cent. So many of the owners of the farms have moved to the city that the actual production of food has been left to the people who are known as "birds of passage." Most of these tenants are here to-day and gone to-morrow. The retired farmer presents the problem of the absentee landlord. The tenant farmer suffers under the handicap of his limitation, and his poverty is often his undoing. The absentee landlord of the farm enjoys the fruits of the labor of another. We must not forget, however, that the retired farmer has contributed his share toward the development of our nation. He has helped to make his community. The man who actually remains on the soil to produce the food is producing less, and takes less interest in his community, than the man who owns the land and who made a success of production in years gone by. The tenant does not cultivate the land as intensively as it can be cultivated; he does not attempt soil conservation, and takes but little interest in the community and its institutions.

**Study of a Rural Community.** It is interesting to make a study of the rural community and to compare present conditions with those of the past. Such a study convinces one that the success of the church is closely bound up with the economic situation of the community. An investigation was made in three townships in the central part of Wisconsin just a few miles from the state capital.<sup>1</sup> The land in this section is rich, the homes of the people are comfortable, the barns and sheds substantial, and everything about the farms well kept. Fences are up and all the buildings are neatly painted. The land produces anything that can be grown in a temperate climate: peas, grain, barley, potatoes, oats, hay, cattle, sheep, and hogs. Other parts of Wisconsin produce more milk and butter; but the large herds of Holstein cows and the number of creameries and cheese factories found in this part of the state convince the visitor that no small part of the farmer's income is derived from this source. 26

<sup>1</sup> Survey made by Social Service Department of Congregational Churches, 14 Beacon Street, Boston.

The state university is the Wisconsin farmer's best friend. Through its instruction at Madison, its extension department, experimental stations, and institutes held throughout the state, it shows this friendship; and the splendid economic conditions found in rural Wisconsin prove that this friendship is not wasted. The land in these townships is valued at \$100 to \$150 an acre, but upon inquiry at a dozen or more farms it was learned that no one knew of any farm land that was for sale.

About 2,500 people live in the three townships described. Sixty years ago nearly all the people were Americans, many of them having emigrated from New York State. In later years the Americans have been supplanted by Germans and Scandinavians. The old settlers now lie at rest in the beautiful cemeteries which are taken care of by the communities with the same care and affection that is bestowed upon private homes and grounds. Many of the descendants of the first settlers are scattered far and wide throughout the United States. The Rev. Hubert C. Herring, Secretary of the National Council of the Congregational Churches of the United States, and one of the best known among home missionary leaders in America, was born and spent his early life in this section of Wisconsin. The school he attended is at the country cross-roads and near the school is the Presbyterian church which he joined. Dr. Herring's first efforts at oratory were practised upon the neighboring 27

boys and girls in the Philomathean Society, a country debating society, at that time a leading social and literary organization among the people of the community. Ella Wheeler Wilcox, one of the most popular and prominent of the magazine and newspaper writers, and who is well known to every reader in America, was born in this same township. Twelve other people who are influential nationally and internationally were born and reared in this community.

Most of the people hold their own farms and most of them have money on interest in the bank. The few families who rent farms are working, planning, and saving so that they can buy land and own their farms. The school-buildings are adequate and the grounds well kept; the teachers are efficient and intelligent; and the high school maintains an advanced standard. The young people go directly from these schools into the state university. Here, then, we have the material conditions that would seem to guarantee success in the work of the church. There is no poverty, and very few people can be said to be living on the fringe of the community. There is no overcrowding on the part of the churches, for there are only two American churches and they have a parish twelve miles wide and fifteen miles long, and the pastor serving both is the only English-speaking preacher in this whole district. Now what are the facts? One of these churches was closed for a number of years and now has services only once in every two weeks; the other was also closed for a number of years. One church has a Sunday-school with fifty members and a Christian Endeavor Society of thirty-six members; the church service is attended by twenty-five to forty people. One of the men in the community said: "Many of the people are foreign and have their own churches, of which there are seven in this district; but they have their troubles, for the children are breaking away from the old churches as they have broken from the old languages, and are beginning to come to our Sunday-school." The community has a good moral record. There has never been a saloon, except at one point, and the two saloons that were located there were voted out years ago. The people are home-loving and law-abiding, but the two churches are not as successful as they were fifty years ago when they were filled at every service.

The first minister in the district was a graduate and honor man of Williams College, and the church was the center of the community life. People looked to the church, were helped and inspired; it sent out teachers, preachers, and other men and women trained in thoughtfulness, to enrich the world. Contributions of such a range cannot spring from the conditions in which the church finds itself to-day. What are the reasons? Some of the people blame the universities. When the young people return from college they seem to take no interest in the church. But the universities are really not to blame. The church fills so small a circle in the community that when the young man has finished his course at the university he cannot fit himself back into the narrow groove of the church activities. In sixty years the old methods of farming have changed. Tools and machinery are of another type. Conditions on the farm are totally different, because the farmers have recognized that new methods are demanded. When the old settlers have their picnics and reunions, one of the older men shows the young men how they used to "cradle" the grain. It is an interesting thing, but compared to the modern reaper the cradle is simply an archaic tool, and no man would think of harvesting his crop with it to-day. The fields of the church life of rural Wisconsin and in other sections of the country are "white to the harvest," but the ministers are forced to use the old-fashioned "cradle" in harvesting the whole crop. The university is showing the church its opportunity and at the same time pointing out its failure. In the particular locality under discussion the churches have no program. Religion is limited to a very small part of life. The farm demands all the time of the people during six days of the week. On Sunday the work clothes are changed for Sunday clothes and part of the day given over to the church. This is religion. The line of demarkation between the sacred and the secular is much more clearly drawn in the country than anywhere else. The average minister of the country church is much more a man apart from the rest of the community.

The program of the church must be made a part of the whole life of the people. The church out in the districts where the people live who are producing the food for the world is responsible in a large degree for the pleasures of the people. Country people find it difficult to think in terms of the community. It is hard for them to cooperate. The church must shape its program with a clear understanding of the great facts of the community life, and appeal primarily from this standpoint and not simply from that of the needs of individuals.

Another rural study shows a community where 80 per cent. of the people were living on land owned by somebody else. There were five churches, and each of them was struggling for a pitiful existence. Less than 20 per cent. of the people had any connection with the church or any other organization. A minister was sent into this district to make a study of the situation with a view to possible work by the home mission board of his church. In his report he stated that the needs there were just as pressing and demanded just as much statesmanship as any field in India or China. He was furnished with sufficient money to put up a good church building, and the plans of the building provided for social and game rooms. He brought a doctor into the community and attached him to the church as a lay worker. He promoted an interest in better farming methods, and began with organized groups a course of lessons in thrift. Gradually this minister gained the interest of the boys and girls through baseball, basket-ball, singing school, and other community exercises and agencies. People began to come to church. They wanted to hear this preacher, for as one of the farmers said, "A feller who knows enough to talk about the things that we are interested in must know something about heaven. I want to hear what he's got to say." The church in this community succeeded, but its success was primarily dependent upon the program that considered the economic needs of the people, and studied to find a remedy for the bad, and to build up the good.

**Socialism's Message to the Church.** Socialism has been sneered at as being a "stomach philosophy." There is ground for this criticism, for a great deal of socialism is purely materialistic; but the fact that it interests itself in the feeding of the people is not a serious fault. Socialism has emphasized many things that the church has failed to appreciate. Consideration of the food problems and of the economic basis of our civilization is something that the church cannot afford to ignore. The great mass of workers who are producing the food of the world are truly ministers to the needs of humanity.

**The World of Rural Workers.** Figures are dull or they would be marshaled here to show that the producers of the world's food live in a world to themselves. There are many divisions in this world, and many cross-sections of the life of the people. That the rural church is not succeeding is evident. Its sons and

daughters of the past generation are the leaders in the world of finance, art, commerce, and letters; but are the conditions within it to-day such that may produce sons and daughters to fill the places of those who are now occupying the positions of trust and honor? The call and the opportunity of the church are urgent in that great part of the world of work which produces the things that we eat. Shall those who feed others themselves be denied the bread of life? It is a call for leadership, for statesmanship, for planning, for devotion, for sacrifice, and for heroic service.

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# CHAPTER III

## THE WORLD OF THE SPINNERS AND WEAVERS

"Now when we cross this bridge, look north and you will see the soul of our city symbolized in brick and mortar." These were the words of a business man who had taken an afternoon off and was showing his friend the wonders of a New England city that had grown up about the textile industry. The soul of the city, as he thought of it, lived in the huge mills lining the banks of the canal which runs through the city. When his friend looked, he saw more than the mills. He saw a road beside the canal paved with cobblestones and, on the other side, the company houses overshadowed by the mills and factories. The towers and huge smokestacks threw shadows that completely covered the houses where many of the workers lived.

So thoroughly is this city dependent upon the mills and their output that a brilliant writer in a recent work of fiction said of it, that if there were bridges and a portcullis you could easily think of their being raised to protect the mills against an invasion from the workers; just as in medieval times the feudal castles were protected by the moat and bridge. The bells in the many towers and the siren whistles of the mills call the people from sleep in the morning, telling them when to begin work and when to quit. Within the mills are long lines of machines set in parallel rows down which the workers easily pass. Each worker tends eight to twenty machines. Here is a broken thread to be tied, and there a new pattern to be set up. The clatter and roar of the machinery is unceasing. It is a part of the composite voice of labor that is sounding around the world. As the shuttles fly the finished fabric is rolled up ready for inspection, and, when passed, goes to the market, and later is made into garments. 34

It is a huge task to clothe the modern world. No one realizes how much it means until he looks into the work of the textile-mills which have grown up in our own and in other countries. Cities like Lawrence, Lowell, and Fall River, Massachusetts, are what they are because of their great factories. In these places they produce miles of cloth every week.

**Men and Clothes.** Of all the animals in the world man is the only one that provides himself with artificial covering. All the others have perfectly fitting coats provided by nature, and these coats are adapted to the conditions under which the individual animal is forced to live. Man calls in the help of plant and animal life to supply himself with clothing for his protection against the cold of winter and the heat of summer. He also uses clothing as an adornment. We have come to consider clothing as a badge of civilization and a mark of man's superiority to all the other animals. Those races that pay the least attention to clothing are the lowest in the scale of civilization. Such races are found in South America, in Central Africa, and on some of the islands of the South Seas. There is scarcely a trace of civilization to be found among them. They have a kind of community life, but they live in a most primitive fashion. Their food consists chiefly of roots, plants, fish, and game which can be easily secured. They have rude shelters or crude huts; wear very little clothing; and their religion is a belief in witches and evil spirits. Where they have idols they are of the most hideous workmanship, representing in a most grotesque way bad influences and vicious passions. 35

**The Materials.** The first clothing man wore was made from the skins of animals and from the bark of trees. Later on it was learned that wool could be spun, and that by using crude needles cloth could be sewed together. Wool, silk, cotton, linen, paper, and many others materials have come into common use. All of these are produced by groups of people of whose working conditions we are in ignorance and whose very existence is unknown to most of us. Among civilized people the use of wool has grown to such an extent that the sheep-raising industry has become one of the biggest businesses in all sections of America. The sheep-herder lives a lonely life and yet rarely complains, and is never happier than when out in the fields with his charges. At shearing time the sheep are brought into a shed, and after a few futile struggles in an effort to escape the process, they sit quietly head up while the fleece is taken from them. When they go into the shed they are grimy gray; after the shearing when they leave it they are a light yellowish white. Thousands of people are employed in the wool industry; in securing the product, spinning it, weaving it into cloth, and making it into garments for our use.

Silk has been used for many centuries in the manufacture of garments. A Chinese legend tells of a wife of one of the early emperors of China who lived more than thirty-five centuries ago and who learned to make silk from the cocoon of the caterpillar. From this discovery has come a great industry. The caterpillar lives upon the leaves of the mulberry tree, and it has to be fed and tended with infinite patience. The process of gathering the cocoons and of preparing them for spinning is a business that can be learned only by years of apprenticeship. Caring for the caterpillar is a task that does not always appeal to people, and yet it is one that engages the attention of a large number of workers. 36

Cotton was first used in India, but its cultivation and manufacture developed in three continents at just about the same time. In a Vedic hymn written fifteen centuries before Christ reference is made to "the threads in the loom," which indicates that the manufacture of cloth was already well advanced. Cotton was used in China one thousand years before Christ. It was held to be so valuable that a heavy fine was imposed upon any one who stole a garment or any piece of cotton cloth. Alexander the Great found cotton in use when he invaded India, and tradition says that it was he who introduced its use into Europe. In Persia cotton was exclusively used before the days of Alexander. Thousands of years before the invention of machinery for the making of cotton cloth Hindu girls were spinning cotton on wheels, making it into yarn, and using frail looms for weaving these yarns into textiles. The beauty of the fabric was so striking that they were known as "Webs of the Woven Wind."

**Cotton and History.** Cotton has played a large part in the history of the United States. It was just one hundred years after the discovery of America that the first cotton plant was introduced into the land. The short-staple cotton plant did not mean much until 1814 when an enterprising New Englander assembled in one building the several processes of spinning and weaving. His shop at Waltham was the first complete cotton factory in the world. The South made the mistake of turning its attention to the planting of cotton and allowing 37

the North to do the manufacturing. Cotton became an important factor only when the cotton-gin was invented. This was in 1833. When cotton became profitable, Negro slavery took on an added meaning. The value of cotton was really the factor that led men to demand that slavery should continue as a national institution.

**Why Increase Production?** Having secured the material suitable to be made into cloth the next step was to improve the process of manufacture. The first wool that was woven was rolled in the hand, made into threads, and woven in a very crude loom. The task was a tedious one, and the cloth was produced very slowly. But, as time went on, man by practise learned more about weaving. He had been weaving linen from flax in the days when the Pyramids were being built in Egypt, but it was not until the power-loom was invented that cloth-making could be carried on as a profitable industry. Early man had just about all he could do to provide himself with food, shelter, and the clothes that he needed. To-day these things are provided in quantities sufficient for all and with little exertion. Hence, we find the basis for the division of labor. A machine for spinning cotton can produce enough thread in a very few hours to make clothes for the families of all the men who are interested in operating the machine. This thread is then turned over to the operator of the power-loom; the machinery is started and the cloth begins to roll itself up into a huge bundle. Very soon enough is produced to clothe all of those who are interested and occupied with this operation. The cloth is then turned over to the garment-makers and the process of fashioning the clothes is carried forward so that each individual has his or her part to perform; and in a very short time there are enough garments fashioned and finished so that all the garment-makers can be provided with clothes. Now comes the question that is so often asked. If there is plenty of clothing for everybody, why should some people not have clothes enough? If a man interested in the production of cloth makes more than enough for him to wear, why should he go on working? The answer to this is that, in the modern world, man must trade off his specialized product in order to satisfy his own needs and those of his family.

**The Machine.** The enterprise of clothing the world is made possible by machinery. Man has never produced more marvelous results than in the development of the intricate, huge, and costly machines which fashion the fabrics from which we make our clothes. These tools give man a thousand hands where before he had only two. If each person did only a moderate amount of labor the people of every country that employed machinery would be provided with all the necessities of life. A supply could be insured without overworking any one, and a few hours' work each day would be enough. In that time all that is necessary for each individual would be produced. The machine, then, is the instrument that increases the possibility for leisure; by the multiplied productive power it increases the number of things that a man may have, and at the same time it enlarges his possibilities for leisure. We accept the machine as we accept the weather. As a matter of fact it is not at all certain that since the machine has been with us we have been any happier because of the enormous production of our times. The machine has carried on the divisions in our industrial life. The new methods and improved devices save labor, time, and energy. At the same time they increase the output. A man's hand is no more mighty than it was centuries ago, but backed by the tireless energy of machinery he can with slight effort turn out a production that a story-teller would not have credited to the mightiest giants of mythology.

The United States Bureau of Labor tells the story in figures. Five hundred yards of checked gingham can be made by a machine in 73 hours; by hand labor it would take 5,844 hours. One hundred pounds of sewing cotton can be made by a machine in 39 hours; by hand labor it would take 2,895 hours. The labor costs are proportionate. The increased effectiveness of a man's labor aided by the use of machinery, according to these reports, varies from 150 per cent. all the way up to 2,000 per cent. Hence, we see that the machine is not so much a labor-saving device as it is a production-making device. As has been said already, it is man's energy and strength multiplied many times. The machine has become so potent that the question is, "What relation shall the created thing be to the creator?" The machine sets the pace. The man or woman working with it must follow. It is exacting, implacable, produces through long hours; is set up in the midst of high temperatures, and is utterly indifferent to the fate of the individuals operating it. It works at night, it works by day and under conditions which are humanly impossible; but human beings are forced to keep the pace. The textile cities of America with their rows of tenements are practically built by the machinery in the mills and factories. The system has grown up, and men and women are forced to adjust themselves to this system. The welfare and happiness of the individuals working at the machines are very likely to be matters of secondary importance to the value of the production of the machinery itself.

**The Workers.** At the present time in the United States there are about 1,000,000 people employed in all the textile industries and about \$500,000,000 a year paid in wages. About one and three quarter billions is the total value of the production. The worker in these mills is a worker and little or nothing else. The struggle for mere existence takes so much of his time that he has slight opportunity and but small inclination to take part in any social or civic affairs. He usually lives in a tenement or in a barrack type of building provided by the company for which he works.

**The Southern Mill Village.** In the Southern mill towns the companies usually own all the houses in which the people live. These houses are generally one-story buildings with a porch extending along the entire front. All of them are alike, and most of them are painted gray or drab. The streets of the mill village are unpaved and in most places cut into gullies by the rains. In a few places running water, bathtubs, electricity, and other modern conveniences have been provided, but these are the rare exceptions. More often the houses are barren of all comforts, and living is reduced to the lowest possible terms. The mill village has ordinarily but one store and this is owned or controlled by the company. The food eaten by the people is of the simplest kind; corn bread, pork side-meat, and coffee make up the staples of diet. Nearly all the members of the family work in the mill. At an investigation made by a state commission in Atlanta, Georgia, one of the men testified that he, his wife, five of his children, and his wife's sister all worked in the mill; there were three younger children who stayed at home, the oldest one of the three acting as housekeeper and nurse. The improvements that most people expect as a matter of course, such as fire-proofing, sanitary plumbing, lighting, heating, storage, bathing, and washing facilities are utterly unknown. If you spent a day in one of these mill villages, you would find one or two members in almost every family sitting on the porch of the house and away from work because of sickness. If a neighbor happens to pass, you would hear some such conversation as this: "Howdy? How are you feeling?"

"Poorly, thank you, I have never felt worse in my life; my victuals just don't seem to agree with me, an' I just feel like I was of no account." The vitality of the people is being sapped by the insanitary conditions under which they live. It was discovered some years ago that hookworm is the cause of the illness that has been preying upon these workers for generations. The dangerous worms thrive in the midst of filth. A clean-up of the village and the building of better homes almost certainly eliminates the disease and its cause.

The people of the mill village find most of their recreation in the near-by city. Nearly all of the principal Southern cities have a number of these villages contributory to it. In many a home the only piece of finery is the tawdry dress made up in what is supposed to be the latest style—certainly the most exaggerated style—and usually in the most striking colors. This is the Sunday dress of the young lady of the house. When she is ready for her day off in the city, her costume will be completed by the addition of a hat of the most marvelous and striking make and color.

**The Motion-Picture's Contribution.** The motion-picture theater has been a godsend to the people of the mill village. Most of these workers are very ignorant. Hard living and incessant toil have deprived them of the opportunity of attending school, and even if there were the will to get an education, the schools have not been accessible in many instances; consequently, the people have merely the rudiments of an education, and many of them can neither read nor write. Hundreds of homes in these villages have no books except an almanac and a Bible. The needs of the workers are almost overwhelming, so that one hardly knows where to begin even to tell about the changes that must be made in a community before much benefit can be secured in the lives of the individuals. The motion-picture has brought to these workers scenes from the outside world and has enlarged their ideas of life. Any one can understand the lesson a picture teaches.



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**In the cotton-mills a worker is a worker  
and little or nothing else.**

The motion-picture furnishes amusement and recreation, and it gives a glimpse of larger aims and new motives. The girls who dress up in their fine clothes and gaudy hats and go to the city whenever they have a chance are trying to express themselves. Inherently they have fine traits of character, but out of their ignorance and lack of experience they are unable properly to balance the proportion of color and style and make these to fit in with the facts of every-day life. There is no one to teach them; they are unable to go to dressmakers for advice, and the people with whom they associate admire the kind of finery that they wear. But when they see these pictures presented on the screen they get a chance to know how people in other places really live and act. As one girl said: "I only learned how to be a lady when I got to see ladies' pictures at the movies."

**Improvements.** Some of the mills have built model villages, have furnished good schools, churches, playgrounds, and other recreational features. There have been discouraging failures made in attempting to lead the people to accept the better things; but the failures are insignificant when compared to the successes that have been achieved by the companies that have really had the welfare of the workers at heart. One mill owner has put in the finest kind of equipment in the homes of the people. The hours of labor have been materially reduced: first they began with eight, now they have seven, and this reformer says that he believes that they will

be able to reduce the hours still further and make the six-hour day the standard. He intends to put on four shifts of workers for each twenty-four hours and believes that he will get a better result than could be achieved even with the eight-hour day. It is interesting to note that this man, by paying higher wages than others and by reducing the hours of labor, has been able to secure permanence among his workers; and at this period when other mills are shorthanded, he has all the labor that he needs. "It is not philanthropy but good sense" is his way of defining the splendid work he is doing. 44

**Workers in the Northern Textile Cities.** In the Northern textile cities we find a different situation, for most of the workers live in tenements. The stores, shops, and theaters are built and operated with the demands of the workers, rather than their needs in view. In one of these textile cities the average wage is \$11.25 a week. Consider the case of just one family living in this city under these conditions. The family lives in a tenement with barely room enough for the father, mother, two daughters, and a son. The mother is devoted to the home; the father is a loom-fixer in the mill and a member of the union. All attend the Congregational church on Sundays. This man has been able to send his children through grammar school. His wages are above the average for the kind of work he is doing. The two girls started work just as soon as they finished school. The son also went to work, but he was so tired of the town where he had always lived that he went to New York and secured a position there. Everything went well for many years, and the prospects, while not bright for the future, were not especially dark. Then trouble came. First, the father was sick, and his illness dragged on through the whole winter, but by spring he was able to go back to work. It was the beginning of the slack season, however, when he applied for his old position. He went to work, but the wages were not as good as they had been when he left. The daughters found that in order to have any society they had to spend more money for clothes. "You can't expect us to dress in a dowdy fashion, for if we do we never will have any friends," was their assertion. Ten dollars was the wage of one of the girls and eight dollars the wage of the other girl. This amount did not go very far toward supporting them and buying the necessary clothes, and gave but little chance for a good time. Nothing was left to help the family fund. Before the winter was over a strike was called and the father lost his position. The family now became dependent upon the funds of the union to which the father belonged and the small amount the girls could squeeze out of their wages. 45

The winter passed as do all other mundane things and the strike came to an end. Those who were members of the union were not allowed to come back. The managers of the mill proclaimed that they had won a great victory for democracy and that the mill should be operated strictly as an "open shop." The father found that "open shop" meant a closed shop to him until he tore up his union card and promised not to join any other labor organization. This he did in order to go back to work. He was forced to it, but he never quite gained the confidence of the foreman, for he was a marked man. Added to the hard struggle for existence with its attendant worries there is an increasing feeling of bitterness in the heart of this man, because he knows that he is being discriminated against for his former membership in the trade union. The family lives on, as thousands of others in the neighborhood are doing, but there is hostility toward the factory and all it represents. Not all the workers in the mill have this experience. Some have managed to save, and by good fortune have been able to save enough so that they are fairly comfortable and independent, owning their homes and living in comparative ease, although very simply. We must not think for a moment that there is only one side to this life and that always a disheartening one. The challenging thing, however, is that the men and women who are actually operating the machines are nearly all living harassed lives, with a heavy burden of trouble and worry, and are not finding the pleasure that should come from work well done. 46

**The Machine and Human Happiness.** The machine has been hailed as a savior from trouble and want. It promised happiness and well-being to all mankind. This promise has not been fulfilled, for instead of the prophecy of the future being one of cheer growing out of the development of the machine, it is rather one of warning. The machine has subordinated the man; thrust him aside and denied him a fair share of the things he has helped to create. As one of our keen-minded writers has said, "The machine has developed a new kind of slave and doomed him to produce through long and weary hours a senseless glut of things; and then forced him to suffer for lack of the very things he has produced."

**The Church and the Factory.** What about the church in the midst of the factory city? The minister is no longer the most important personage in town. The business man dominates the life of the community. The mill has pushed itself into the place of influence once held by the church. In one of the New England cities a factory has been built around three sides of one of the oldest established churches. The church still remains, embraced by this factory. It is a fit parable of the present situation in the mill town. The church has a place but industry holds the outstanding position. 47

One of the most interesting pieces of work undertaken in recent years was that of a pastor in one of the mill villages in Georgia. He built the church; put in club rooms and provided features that would appeal to the people. At first the cotton-mill owners were favorably disposed toward the undertaking. They supplied a portion of the money toward erecting the building, and made a regular contribution for the support of the enterprise. The rector of the church soon found that the young people did not attend the social functions as much as he had hoped that they would, and they were conspicuous by their absence from the Sunday services. Upon inquiry, in addition to the usual reasons given by people for not attending church, he found that it was principally the economic factor that was at work against the church. Low wages and long hours left the people without energy enough to take part in anything that had to do with their culture or spiritual welfare. The sad thing about it was that the minister soon found to his deep sorrow that even his questioning of the people was resented by the authorities, who began to refer to him as a trouble-maker and a busybody, and eventually he was forced to resign his church and leave the community.

How is the church going to meet this situation? The church must continue its helpful agencies, open its club rooms, offer opportunity for play, for service, and for worship. But it must do more than that, for it must be the champion of the people, help them to secure a fair degree of leisure, and then direct them in a wise spending of their leisure hours. Unless the church can do this, it can never be the instrument for leading men and women in these communities to accept Jesus as a personal Savior from sin. 48





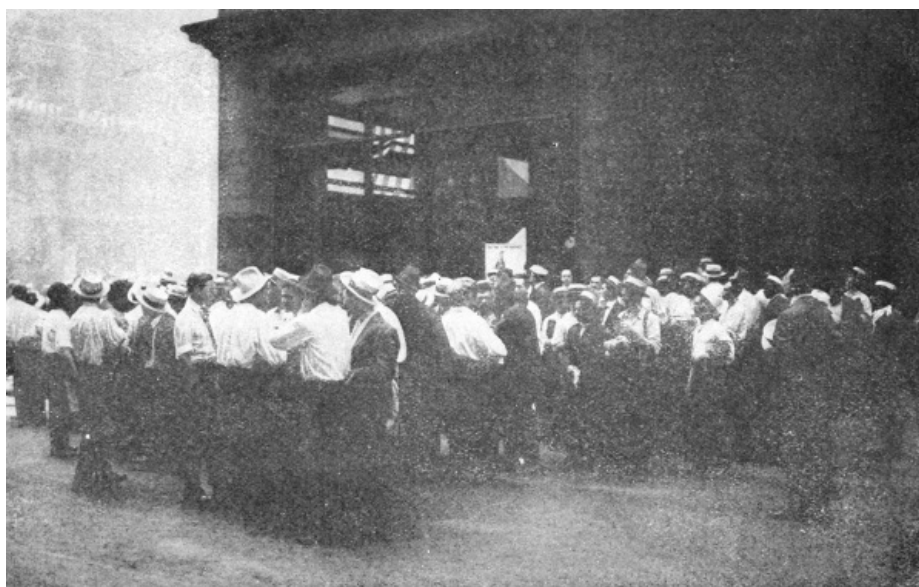
## CHAPTER IV

### THE WORLD OF THE GARMENT MAKERS

Fifth Avenue in New York is one of the world's great thoroughfares. Years ago it was devoted exclusively to residential purposes. The wealthy people built their homes along the lower end of the street. As the city grew, these people followed the avenue north until at the present time the finest homes in the city are located in the neighborhood of Central Park in the upper reaches of the street. Between Fourteenth Street and Washington Square there are now a number of business houses, two fine old churches, and a portion of the city that still retains the residential quality of dignity and worth. From Fourteenth Street to Fiftieth Street the avenue is given over almost exclusively to business. From Thirtieth Street to Fifty-seventh Street are found the finest shops and stores in New York City. Below Thirtieth Street this stately avenue, and the numbered cross streets for many blocks running east and west have been invaded by great skyscrapers known as loft buildings in which is being carried on the greatest garment-making industry in the world.

The workers in the garment trade in New York are nearly all Jews and Italians. At any time of the summer and winter thousands of these workers will be found spending their leisure on the street between twelve and one o'clock. When the workers are free it is almost impossible to pass along the sidewalks of Fifth Avenue from Fourteenth to Twenty-third Street. This solid mass of men and women, all speaking a tongue that is unintelligible to American ears, pass round and round, back and forth, up and down, a resistless tide typifying the steady resistless rise of labor to a position in society where it must be considered.

These big loft buildings occupied by the garment-making industry have been constructed in recent years, and so rapidly have they been erected that the storekeepers and business men of upper Fifth Avenue have formed an organization and are exerting every effort "to save the avenue from this advancing tide of foreign workers."



Press Illustrating Service.

**When the workers are free it is almost impossible to pass along the sidewalks of Fifth Avenue from Fourteenth to Twenty-third Street.**

Many shops and department stores have been forced to give way before the onward sweep of this enterprise. The area in New York occupied most exclusively by the garment workers is about a mile long and about one-half mile wide; in this district there are thousands of workers employed exclusively in making garments of one kind and another. The Garment Makers' Union has a membership of 60,000. How much do we know about these workers? When the Triangle Shirt Waist Company's loft caught fire and scores of girls were burned to death or killed by jumping from the building, the country was shocked, but up to that time we had not known that thousands of girls work every day behind closed and locked doors. We have almost forgotten the incident. Where was the factory? What was done about it? The girls were, however, our servants working at the task of furnishing us with clothes!

**Fashion and Clothes.** In the last chapter we considered the workers who produce the material from which clothes are made. The question that is still of vital significance to most of us is, how shall we make our clothes? "I have not a thing to wear," is a very common statement, yet it does not mean what it says, for the people that use this complaint most frequently are the ones who have literally trunks full of clothes. What they mean is that they have nothing in the latest fashion. Fashion is a hard taskmaster. Some one has said that the length of the stay of a society woman at any hotel can be determined by the number of gowns she brings with her to the hotel. "She would no more think of wearing the same gown twice to the same place than she would think of insulting her best friends," was a woman's description of her companion to prove that she was a "real lady." The frequent changes in style bring rich returns to the manufacturers of clothing and call for a ceaseless outgo by people who feel that they are obliged to follow the dictates of fashion. "I hate rich people," said a little shop-girl.

"For every time I see a woman wearing a fine dress I cannot help thinking how hard I work and how useless the dress is for any practical purpose."

**Dressmaking in the Home.** Dressmaking was at one time carried on entirely within the family. It was a domestic employment. The only garments that were made outside of the home were men's clothes, and the journeyman tailor was a skilled mechanic. He made the entire garment himself; but even in this industry very often the work was carried on in his home and all the members of the family assisted more or less.

**The Sweat-Shop.** The sweat-shop, in most cases, is a home that has been turned into a factory. The father or mother goes to the manufacturer of clothing and agrees to furnish so many pairs of pants or waists or shirts for so much money. The worker carries these garments to the home and all the family go to work upon the job. Many of these homes are one-room affairs, so that in many instances the work is carried on in the room where the cooking is done; where the meals are eaten and where the family sleeps. Legislation has done much to eliminate the sweat-shops, and sweating as a system is under the ban. Every church and every individual in the church ought to know all about the work of the National Consumers' League. This organization inspects factories and workshops and issues a stamp or label that is attached to all garments made under clean, humane, healthful, and fair conditions. Information can be secured by writing to Mrs. Florence Kelly, 289 Fourth Avenue, New York. Look for this label when you buy any garment. 52

Low wages make possible the continuation of the sweat-shop system. In a family where the wage-earner receives less than enough for its subsistence, or for some reason or other the earnings are decreased to a rate at which the family cannot live, it becomes necessary to supplement the family income. Wife and children go to work, boarders and lodgers are taken into the home, and the standardization of living is so lowered that normal conditions of home life are impossible. In a study made of the garment trades it was found that in the homes where work is being done for a profit only about 11 per cent. of the husbands in these families earned \$500 or more a year, while more than one half of them earned \$300 or less a year. 53

**The Task System.** A study of conditions in the dressmaking industry was made by the United States government. The results of this study showed that we never can get back to the old state of affairs. We have entered into a new period of production and this must continue. The task system prevails in a large number of the garment-making shops. By the task system is meant that the work on a garment is done by a team of three persons consisting of a machine-operator, a baster, and a finisher. Every three teams have two pressers and several girls to sew on the pockets and buttons that are necessary for the completion of the garment. There is essentially a fine adjustment within the team, so that each one completes his work in time to pass it on to the next one as soon as the latter is ready to receive it. A certain amount of work is called a task, and this amount is supposed to be done within a day. Forced competition has gradually increased the amount of the task, until frequently even with the most strenuous activity the task cannot be completed without working twelve and fourteen hours a day. The wages paid are based upon the utmost that the best individual in the team can do in a day.

This system came in with the influx of the Jews into New York in the early eighties. These workers, with their intense desire to accumulate money, get on in the world, and then be emancipated from hard work, are peculiarly adapted to the system. Just as soon as a few of the workers save enough money they become proprietors of small factories. Another thing that enters into the situation is the characteristics of the people themselves. Jews are a restless race and resent the rigid routine and supervision of the factory, but the comparative freedom in a small shop under the task system appeals to their desires to get on in the world and gives them a degree of freedom which they cannot have under the factory system. The task system lends full opportunity for the cupidity of worker and owner to exploit other workers, and in the end every man in the shop comes to be looked upon as an opportunity for more profits. 54

**The Modern Factory.** Another stage in the evolution of the clothing industry is found in the factory itself. Just as the task system was an improvement over the sweat-shop in the home, so the factory is a big advance over the task system. The factory has grown very rapidly owing to the demand for tailor-made clothes, to the continual change in the styles, and to the large supply of cheap labor always at hand. In recent years the demand for men's and women's ready-made clothes has so increased that now large department stores which formerly sold only cheap grades of ready-made clothes are stocking up with expensive garments in order to cater to the class of customers who used to order their clothes directly from the custom tailor.

This movement toward standardizing the clothing industry aids the factory in overcoming the competition of the smaller shops. There is going on a sure but slow movement toward the elimination of the bad conditions in the garment trades, and the factories are increasing because people of even moderate means are demanding higher-priced and better-grade garments. "I got such a wonderful bargain to-day, you just ought to see the shirt-waists that are being sold for one dollar and seventy-five cents. Why, you couldn't even buy the material for that price, to say nothing of the work and trouble of making it." This is an accurate report of a conversation overheard on a street-car one evening. It sounds familiar to you, now, doesn't it? When you got your bargain, did you ever consider the girls who work to make you that waist? The manufacturer is not alone responsible for bad conditions. It is impossible for him to pay good wages and continue in business unless he can sell his goods at a decent profit. If you force him to compete with the sweat-shop, you drive him out of business and subsidize the sweat-shop at the same time. 55

Our selfishness in desiring to get the best possible bargains makes us thoughtless partners of the exploiters of the men and women who are working to make our clothes. Progress costs money, time, and thought. We are all bound together and go forward or backward with the group. Next time you buy a dress or a suit, try to picture the girls and men who worked on it. Consider the hours of labor which they spent and the responsibilities that rest upon them; then figure against the price which you are paying a fair proportion of the cost for wages to these workers, and ask yourself would you be willing to make the garment for that price? If you would not, providing, of course, that you had the skill, you are not playing fair with your sister and brother who live somewhere and are being cheated out of a decent wage.

**Groups by Races.** The workers in the garment industries in New York live in groups made up not by 56

industrial conditions or interests so much as by racial interests. The Jews tend to live in certain quarters of the city confined to themselves, and the Italians have their quarters also. As a family accumulates a little money, plans are made to move out of these sections in lower New York and to settle in different surroundings in the upper part of the city, on Lexington Avenue or in the Bronx.

**Seasonal Work in the Garment Trade.** In spite of the tremendous advance made in late years in these industries in matters relating to conditions of work, such as the eliminating of excessive overtime, shortening of the regular hours of labor, and raising rates or earnings, the matter of unemployment is still a serious problem. The garment trades are affected by seasonal demands. Everybody wants a new suit at just about the same time. "If I cannot have my spring suit by Easter, I would just as soon not have it at all," was the complaint of a young girl whose family was trying to make retrenchments during war time. The improvement in conditions has been marked; but in no way has it been found practicable to lengthen the work season. And since payment by the piece is widely prevalent in the clothing industries, in the case of home workers a record of the time and the payment is not strictly kept, and statistics are not available.

**Health Conditions.** The health conditions among the workers in the garment industries show an interesting relationship to the wages paid and the method of payment. The United States Public Health Service, reporting on conditions among the garment-workers in New York City, states that the strain was more prevalent where wages were paid on the piece basis than by the week or other time basis. With the increased use of machinery another series of health hazards appears, according to this report. These are the result of fatigue and overstrain caused by the close application to the same process through long hours. The monotony of the work contributes to the bad industrial conditions. At its best the wage of the garment-worker is pitifully small. Among the girls, especially, there is keen competition. They cut one another down, and they underbid and undersell each other. The average wage paid barely affords a living. One little Italian girl in a recent shirt-waist strike in New York said, "Me no live verra much on forta-nine cent a day." This wage of forty-nine cents it must be said is not usual, and is largely the result of the ignorance of the girl, but there are others like her who are forced to go to work unprepared and therefore are unable to earn a better wage.

In many communities there still lingers the employment of the women and children in home trades, making garments under sweat-shop conditions. The contractor who formerly depended for his living upon letting out his work to the sweat-shops has largely disappeared; but there are still many homes in which work is done and no serious attempt has been made as yet to reach the evils incident to it. Here the workers are driven by the pressure of poverty to labor under conditions and for wages that destroy life, and to work their children in the same manner. Here disease breeds and is passed on to the consumer.

A recent study of the home conditions shows that the worst abuses of child labor linger in this remnant of family work. No child labor law that has been passed in the United States seems to be adequate to the situation. To control this there must be a special provision made in the factory laws of each state regarding the work done by families in their own homes. Several of the states do provide in their laws that no work for pay shall be done in the homes except by the members of the families themselves. Other states provide that this work shall be done under certain conditions, and standards are required of the factory. Massachusetts issues a license to the family to do work in the home, and like New York, requires a "tenement made" tag attached to the article; also holding the owners of the property responsible for any violation of the law. At the Chicago Industrial Exhibition a picture was shown entitled "Sacred Motherhood." It was that of a woman nursing her child and driving a sewing-machine at the same time. It was a terrible portrayal of unchecked, unregulated industry, which does not stop to reckon the effect upon the future, but imperils the well-being of both the mother and the child.

**Labor Disturbances.** The fundamental cause of the troubles in the clothing industry in Boston prior to the spring of 1913, was similar to that in the same industry in New York before their abolition by concerted action of the employers and employees in the spring of the same year. There have been serious disturbances in the garment trade in Chicago, New York, Boston, Philadelphia, and other cities. The difficulty was right in the trade itself and many of the causes of discord will continue for some time to come.

Among these causes of disturbances are long hours, low wages, poor sanitary conditions, sub-contracting, unequal distribution of the work, work in tenement-houses, failure to state the standard price for piece-work, playing of favorites in the giving out of the work, lack of cooperation between the employers and the employees, prevalence of the piece-work system, and the difficulty of determining what shall be paid or what constitutes a just basis for computing hours and wages.

For instance, three girls work in one factory and are put upon work that is to be a test upon which a new wage is to be based. One of the girls is put to work upon a certain task in shirt-waists. They are made of thin material; the thread used is very fine and the stuff shirrs easily, so that it is almost impossible to make any speed. The second girl is put to work upon a pile of plain waists. The third girl has a still different task. Each girl at the beginning of the day has an equal amount of work to do. They all put in the same number of hours and expend approximately the same amount of energy; but at the end of the day one of the girls has finished her task, the other has probably two hours' work to do on the day following, while the third girl, the one who was working upon the thin waists, has more than a day's work ahead of her. It will be readily seen that it is almost impossible to determine what pay would be a fair price for making shirt-waists, or for doing any part of the work connected with the making of these garments unless a different and more equitable basis of reckoning is established.

**Cost and Selling Price.** Another matter that enters into the situation and complicates it is the fact that there is a different selling price put on each garment. Of course, we must all recognize that wages cannot be made except in proportion to the selling price of the garment. No business can be run unless it is able to make enough on its products to pay a decent wage. The cost of production, including the cost of materials, a fair price for the superintendent, and a proportion of the general overhead cost of the factory must be charged against each garment, together with a proportion of the interest on the investment and the approximate cost of the wear and tear on the machinery. Add to this the cost for advertising and marketing the garment. All of these things have to enter into consideration, and the wages must be determined by the amount of money that will be

received for the finished garment. Now, how are we to bring about a just settlement of this vexed question? There is only one way in which it can be done, that is, by bringing the workers themselves into partnership with the firm. Just as long as the destiny of the worker is in the hands of the foreman and there is no chance for these workers to be heard, or to have any voice in the decisions that are made, so long there will be fruitful cause for trouble.

**Arbitration.** The experience of the Massachusetts Board of Arbitration warrants the conclusion that there is a proper and very useful sphere of activity for a permanent State Board of Arbitration. A number of questions arise from time to time in almost all trades which do not require a detailed knowledge of the industry on the part of the arbitrating body. There are, for example, questions of discharge in alleged violation of a clause in an agreement covering discharges. There are certain other controversies which both sides are willing to have decided by the application of standards which are matters of fact ascertainable upon investigation. For instance, in many piece-price controversies, both sides are willing to have the questions decided on the basis of what competing manufacturers pay for the same operations under similar working conditions; but each is unwilling to accept the figures presented by the other side in support of its contention. This has been done by the Massachusetts Board in the boot and shoe industry, and recently in a textile case. The Arbitration Board should be given all the powers in the way of compelling the attendance of witnesses and testimony under oath, and the production of books and papers, which it requires to secure the information necessary to reach a decision.

61

**The Religious and Social Problems.** Twenty-five per cent. of all the effort put into the processes of industry and commerce is concerned with the supply of clothing. Most of the clothing is made under conditions which determine the life and welfare of such a large proportion of the people that we find in the garment-making industries themselves a distinct and definite challenge to the religious and social agencies. There are some fundamental considerations which must be borne in mind and which will help us to see the problem as it affects the workers. Most of those in the garment trades are foreigners unused to our way of thinking. At noon on Fifth Avenue and again at night as the workers leave for their homes, the newsboys sell papers printed in Yiddish characters almost exclusively, and only a few English papers are sold for several blocks below Twenty-third Street. In religious matters the garment-workers represent three groups: those who are devoted to the faith of their fathers and who are Jews in the truest sense of the word; those who have drifted away from the old faith in the rush of life in America, and, antagonistic to the domination of the Roman Catholic faith, have not been attracted or won by the Protestant faith; and a third class composed of those who are bitterly hostile to all religions because of the corruption of the church as they view it, because of the social injustice of which they are the subjects, and which is identified in their own minds with the church and religious leaders.

62

It is an interesting thing to visit a social center in either Boston or New York. Ford Hall or Cooper Union serves as a good illustration. Here the majority of the people are Jews, radical through and through. They are intelligently awake and thoroughly skeptical. The Bible is not an open book to many of these people, and they have not learned to read history or current events with an open mind. Social conditions and economic pressure make it almost impossible for them to render a straight and just judgment. They have monstrous misconceptions of Protestants and the Protestant religion, for they see for the most part only the worst side. America means to them, instead of freedom, hope, and independence, only extortionate profiteering.

**The Gospel for the Garment-workers.** How can we overcome this prejudice? How can we give these people an adequate and intelligible interpretation of the gospel? We must respect their faith. It will not solve the problem to make proselytes of a large number of our new Jewish citizens. We need to be definite, concrete, and practical, and to leave controversial matters and philosophical discussions out of the situation. We need to cultivate more reverence in our American churches, and a finer regard for the associations and experiences of the past of these people. As these words are being written, I can see from my window the tower of a church surmounted by a cross. It is the Judson Memorial Baptist Church on Washington Square. Sunday after Sunday there are gathered together large groups of people. Most of them live under sordid, cramped conditions, but they find in this church a ministry that appeals to them. The church is more interested in making good Americans out of these people, and in interpreting America to them than in securing their membership in the church. And rightly this church is justified in its attitude. By ministering to the people it is gaining their allegiance to the principles of Christianity as it could in no other way.

63

To sum up the chapter, the making of garments, like other industries we have considered, is highly specialized. It has been taken out of the hands of the American group. The old-fashioned dressmaking and tailor shops have given way to the huge lofts where many factories are turning out clothing for men, women, boys and girls in large quantities. The workers are all city dwellers. They are all foreigners, most of them Jews, with a large intermingling of Italians. To meet their needs and to interpret the gospel to them the church must first of all come to know the conditions under which they live. It must create a public opinion that will demand an adjustment of the difficulties in the trade itself and then in the homes of the people. In the community in which they live it must show that the members of the Protestant churches are the best of friends and neighbors.

65

# CHAPTER V

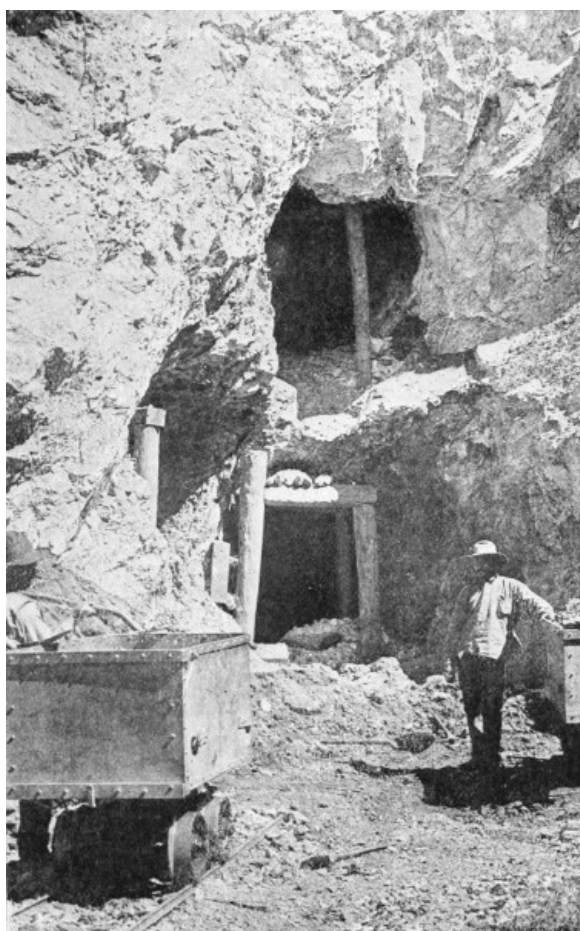
## THE WORLD OF THE MINERS

According to the old Greek story Prometheus stole fire from heaven and thus drew upon himself the anger of the gods, because with fire he was able to work miracles and do wonders that rivaled the gods themselves. The metals of the earth are the instruments in the hands of man for accomplishing the material wonders that mark our time. Our age has been rightly termed the steel age, but, as we shall see in subsequent chapters, this period has its important and unique character only because man knows how to use fire, and because he has coal at his command.

**The Riches of the Earth for Man.** It is not surprising that the ancient Hebrews taught that God made everything for the benefit of the human race, and that man was the child of his supreme favor, for in every place over the entire earth are found the things essential to man's happiness and comfort. Even in the most desolate regions, with very few exceptions, a man is able to make his way against adverse elements. The most valuable minerals are coal, iron, copper, zinc, lead, gold, and silver. Of course there are many others that are mined and used extensively. The supply of coal produced for 1916 in the United States alone was 67,376,364 tons of anthracite coal and 502,518,545 tons of bituminous coal. During the first nine months of 1917 the mines produced 57,778,097 tons of anthracite coal, which is an increase of 7,847,681 tons over a similar period in 1916, or an increase of about 16 per cent.

66

In the United States the absolute necessity for coal was never felt so keenly as during the winter of 1917-18, when the Fuel Administrator shut down all the business places for five days and declared workless Mondays as a measure of relief. The war has demanded extraordinary measures, and these have been taken with a vigor and decision that have been really startling. The call for metals made by the warring nations has been so great that mining is now carried on at a furious rate. One of the Western mining papers uses as a slogan, "Get the ore while the prices are high." The reason that the Germans hold so stubbornly to northern France is because of the rich coal and iron mines in the region. For years following the war there will be an extraordinary demand for an increased output of coal, iron, copper, and zinc, in fact, for all of the metals. The task of rebuilding the areas will demand not only ingenuity, but all the resources of all the nations combined.



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**We forget the men who are toiling  
underground.**

**The Producers of Coal.** You have no doubt seen the women and children with their baskets picking up coal along the railroad tracks on the edge of the city. That small basket of coal will probably be all the fuel that many of them have. It is a common sight to see the little foreign boys bringing home packing-boxes and the lids of boxes that they have begged from the stores to take the place of the coal they cannot get. Those among us who

live in steam-heated apartments, or in communities near the coal-fields or wooded areas, do not realize what a constant struggle is required on the part of the poor people in the cities to keep coal enough in the stove to prevent the family from freezing. "The only times I was really warm enough last winter," said a Slovenian woman in Chicago, "was when I went to church, and then I had to keep my head muffled up." It was said of a group of Italians in Boston, "The men go to the saloon, the women to the church, both for the same purpose,—to get good and warm."

67

Just as we sometimes fail to realize how many people are working for us to make our clothes or to produce our food, so we forget the men who are toiling underground to dig the coal and mine the iron upon which we are so dependent for our every-day living. The city dweller especially is dependent upon the supply of coal that comes to him through retail sources, but in order to bring that coal to the city there has been a long line of workers, each one putting his hand to the task of producing the necessity.

**Where the Coal Is Mined.** If you should visit the coal-mining community, you would first of all be impressed with the desolation of the place. The village is an ugly, straggling affair with nothing to add to its beauty or hide its deformities. Nearly all the houses are built alike, two and three rooms being the average size. In all probability not one painted house is to be found in the whole town, unless possibly it is the front of a saloon on the main street. In many of the old-time mining communities the fronts of the saloons were all painted blue. Whether or not this was done to match the color of the patrons' noses, no one seems to know. The fences are of rough pickets and so broken and out of repair that, as one person visiting the coal town for the first time said, "The pickets look like broken teeth in an old, dried-up skull." There are very few flowers or gardens, and the deep black mud of the winter-time, the black smoke, and the dust of the dry season during the summer deepen the sense of desolation one feels in the midst of these villages. The schoolhouse is a poor one-room affair; and if there is a church, it has a weak organization and is housed in a building that is little if any better than the average in the community. Very few coal-mining towns in Colorado have a church of any kind. The Home Missions Council looked into this matter some years ago and reported extensively its investigations.

68

The Cœur d'Alene mining district of northern Idaho is rich in ores, but poor in cultural and religious opportunities for the people. In a region lying along the north fork of the Cœur d'Alene river there are half a dozen small towns where there is not a church, and it is rarely that a minister visits the region.

**The Mining Areas.** Never before have the common necessities of life seemed so important as they do now. Canada produces large quantities of minerals, the chief of which is copper. The production for 1916 of all the minerals was valued at \$177,417,574. The coal and principal metals produced in Canada, with their respective amounts for the year named, are as follows:

Copper	119,770,814 tons
Nickel	82,958,564 "
Lead	41,593,680 "
Zinc	23,315,030 "
Silver	25,669,172 "
Coal	14,461,678 "

To transport this amount of coal (the smallest tonnage of all) there would be required 482,056 freight-cars. This would make a train almost 4,000 miles long, a distance greater than from Nova Scotia to British Columbia.

69

The mining areas in the United States are fairly well defined. Practically all of the anthracite coal comes from central and northern Pennsylvania, only a little being mined in Colorado. The largest bituminous coal-fields are found in Virginia, Illinois, Ohio, Tennessee, southeastern Kansas, southwestern Missouri, Colorado, Alabama, and some in the west-central part of Pennsylvania. Iron is mined in the northeastern part of Minnesota, northwestern Wisconsin, upper peninsula of Michigan, Tennessee, Georgia, western Pennsylvania, and in southeastern Kansas. The copper regions are in the upper peninsula of Michigan, Arizona, and northern Idaho. The chief lead district is the Joplin district of southwestern Missouri. This region is matched in large measure by the Cœur d'Alene of northern Idaho. Lead and zinc are almost always found together. Gold and silver are mined on the Pacific Coast, and in Colorado, and northern Idaho. Some gold is found in all of the Rocky Mountain states and small amounts in Georgia. There is scarcely a state in the Union but what produces to a greater or less amount all of the metals that go to make up the mineral wealth of the United States.

**The Miners of King Coal.** Coal is mined in three ways: by sinking a shaft and then running tunnels out from it following the vein of the coal; by driving a tunnel straight into the heart of the mountain; or by scooping it up with a steam shovel and loading it into cars. The first two methods are used in all the mines of Colorado; the latter method is used in the mines in southeastern Kansas and southwestern Missouri. In a mine where the shaft is sunk the hoist is directly over the mouth of the pit. The cages are just like elevators and drop to the bottom of the pit; there the loaded cars are pushed upon them and at a signal the car is brought to the top of the superstructure above the mine known as the tippie. The car is unloaded automatically and runs back upon the cage, and is lowered into the mine as the second car is brought up to the surface very rapidly. At the bottom of the mine and following it out along the vein of coal there are little railway tracks. The cars on these tracks are pulled by mules. Some mines have electric cars, but the mule is still the motive power in general use. These mules are sentenced to the mines for life. Stables are made for them by digging a cave in one side of the main shaft or tunnel, and here in the underground mine the mule lives, moves, and has his being. Sometimes the animals are brought to the surface and turned out to pasture. It is really pathetic to see with what joy they accept the light, air, and freedom of God's good world above ground.

70

The only light in most of the mines is that given off from the little lamps carried on the caps of the miners. It is a weird sight to walk through a mine and see the bobbing lights; to catch the sound of pick and shovel in the tunnels that cross and recross each other at intervals; to hear the creak of the wheels, the slamming of the doors; and to see the mules as they strain at their task like phantom engines hauling the loaded cars of coal. When the men go to work in the morning, they are checked in and let down in the cage; when they come up they are checked out. In the morning when they check in they are white; at night they are black. Thus the color

71

line is completely eliminated by working in a mine. The work is done in little rooms or pockets. Each miner has to work out his own room. He drills the hole, puts in the charge of powder; and when he has everything in readiness, fires the charge that brings down the coal; then he and his partner (for two men work together, one is called the miner, the other is known as the buddy) shovel the coal into the cars, and push them out into the main line of the mine tramway track. The miner and his buddy may be both white men, or the miner may be a white man and the buddy a Negro. They look alike as they work in the semi-darkness and the common tasks eventually make them appreciate each other for what they are and what they do.

The miner has to follow the vein. He must put in the braces to protect himself against the falling roof, must remove all the stone and slate, and mine only clean coal. This he shovels into his car. It is weighed and tagged, tally is kept, and at the end of the day he is credited with so many tons and is paid accordingly. When the vein is thick and the miner can stand upright, his work is hard and monotonous enough; but when the vein is thin, it is necessary for him to stoop or to lie down in order to get the coal. This makes the work hard almost beyond human endurance. It is no wonder that mining greatly affects the character of the men involved in it. No one can spend eight or ten hours underground every day doing that kind of work without having the place and the work stamp itself upon his mind and his character. Life underground spoils even the temper of a mule! 72

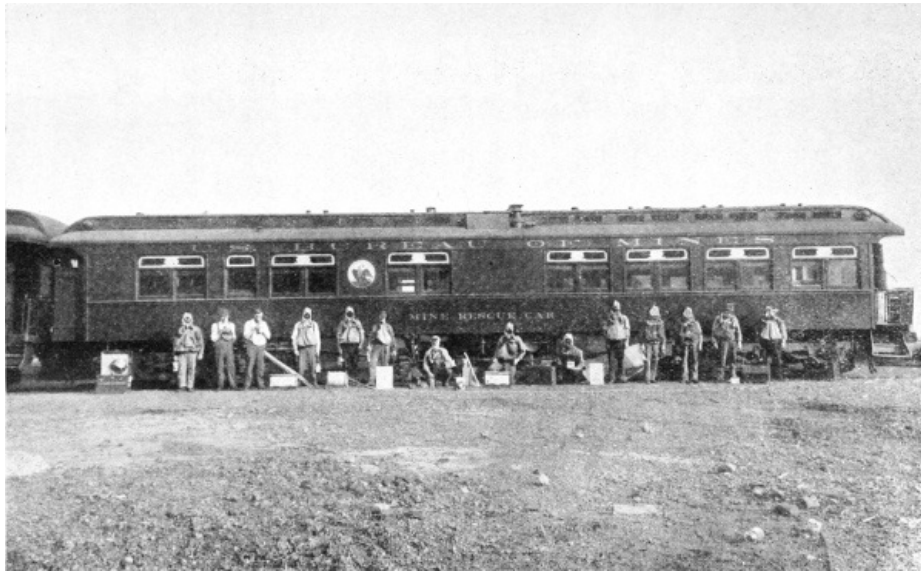
**Accidents.** Mining develops the spirit of adventure. There is always a risk. Mining is a dangerous operation and is classified as extra hazardous. There is continual danger from falling stones, and the miner is always gambling with fate. A study of the coroner's report in any country where mining is carried on supplies concrete evidence that a large number of men are killed in the mines from one cause and another. There is the danger from the deadly carbon-monoxide gas and another danger from the explosion of the coal-dust. As the coal is mined a certain proportion of it is ground into powder, and this fills the air and becomes a powerful explosive. Precautions are taken in most cases. The mines are sprinkled and state and national governments have done much to make mining safe, but at the best the occupation claims an unusually heavy toll in life and limb.

According to statistics regarding deaths of miners during the years 1907 to 1912, it is shown that 23.2 out of every hundred died from accidents; and among the metalliferous miners 24.7 per cent. of all deaths were caused by accidents. A great many industrial accidents are due to failure on the part of the management to make proper provision against accident, and to keep abreast with the increase in efficiency of the machinery and output in the matter of precautionary measures. Also it is now known that industrial accidents are caused by excessive fatigue, carelessness, and ignorance on the part of the workers themselves. Taking all of these things into consideration, however, we must realize that a large proportion of the accidents and fatalities in the coal-mines are inherent in the business itself. 73

**Returns for Labor Received by the Miners.** Coal has to be dug where nature put it. Therefore, the mining village is almost certain to be located in a desolate region, and thus the miner and his family will be denied many of the good things that other people enjoy, because of the conditions under which they are compelled to live. We hear a great deal about the enormously large wages paid to the miner. Unfortunately this condition is not true; for the stories we hear of the big wages the miners receive are very largely fictitious. In the Colorado mines it is shown by actual study of the statistics taken at the time of the last great strike in 1914, that the average wage for the miner when actually employed was \$4.58 a day; but other figures given at the same period show that other miners were paid an average wage of only \$2.61 a day. It is impossible to get at the facts as to wages.

The miner is forced to buy his powder, oil, pay doctor's fee, blacksmithing charges, union dues, and other expenses. These are deducted, so that the wage is reduced to the point where perhaps not more than one per cent. of the entire number of workers receive as much as \$25 a week. In fact, the wage is so small compared to the difficulties of the work and the hardships of living, that the miner finds it almost impossible to move freely in order to better his condition. The result of this situation has been that, whereas formerly nearly all the miners were English-speaking men, they are now practically all non-English-speaking immigrants. In the camp at Ludlow, where the miners lived after they and their families were driven out of their homes in Colorado during the strike of 1914, there were twenty-two nationalities, and they were living together in some sort of amity. 74

**Workers in the Metal Mines.** The workers in the metal mines have a problem different from that of the workers in the coal-mines. The copper country of Michigan located on Lake Superior in the upper peninsula is the most famous metal-producing region of the United States. These mines have been operated for half a century; and for the most part a humane policy has been followed and, consequently, the cities and towns in the region have developed some civic pride, and have an unusually high reputation for orderliness and morality. There are very few of the bad features which one is accustomed to find in such communities. The district has approximately forty-two mines and the products from these mines amount to fifty million dollars a year. The shafts of these copper mines are the deepest holes that have ever been dug in the earth as far as we know. The "Red Jacket" mine is almost a mile and a quarter deep. The shaft of a copper mine is pierced every one hundred feet by levels or tunnels. The trams run in these levels to the chambers where the rock is cut and are known as stopes. Drills are operated by compressed air; the miner bores the holes, places the dynamite charge in readiness, and touches off the charge as he leaves his work at the end of the shift. The broken rock is picked up during the next shift, loaded into the tram-cars by the trammer, and then dumped into the skip or little car by means of which it is raised to the surface.



Press Illustrating Service.

**The new U. S. Bureau of Mines Rescue Car is manned by a mining engineer, a mine surgeon, a foreman miner, a first aid miner, and a clerk.**

In the Cœur d'Alene field the process of mining in the lead and zinc mines is very much the same as that in the copper mines of Michigan. The Cœur d'Alene region of northern Idaho is a district in itself. It might almost be called a province, it is so extensive. The drills that are used by the miners are protected in some cases by a stream of water which pours off the end of its point as it comes in contact with the rock. This prevents the dust from flying and being breathed by the worker. These drills are just now being introduced. The old-fashioned drill had no such protection and is called by the miner the widow-maker, because of the gruesome effect on the worker. 75

**Wages.** The wages in the Calumet district as well as in the Cœur d'Alene section are not, and never have been, adequate to the needs of the men, nor are they proportionate to the returns received from the work that these men have been doing. Wages must be considered on the basis of comparative value. The type of the worker, however, and the risks incurred, and the opportunity for improving the worker himself must all be taken into account. When we remember the enormous profits made on the metals, especially within the last few years, we will find that the increase in the wages of the men has not been enough to meet the increased cost of living. Wages have advanced about 20 per cent. and living expenses 140 per cent. Some welfare work is being undertaken in almost all of the mining communities. But welfare work cannot supplement poor wages, nor does it do away with the feeling of unrest always present in the community and which threatens to break out in rebellion and throw the whole district into disorder.

**The Church and the Miner.** The pastor of the miners' church told the story of the desolation in the life of his people. He said: "There are no chances for cultural work. When I talk about the higher life the people listen to me as if I were giving a lecture on Mars. It is something that is more or less interesting because I am able to make it interesting, but there is no special personal interest in it. All of my people live in this desolate and isolated village. There is nothing attractive anywhere around. The superintendent and a few of the English-speaking workers live five miles away in a place that calls itself a city. There are five other villages like mine; no one from the other places ever comes here except on business. Every Saturday night most of the men go to the 'city.' On Saturday, or pay-day evening, the stores, amusement places, saloons, and the principal streets of that center are filled with a heterogeneous mass of people of all races and there is a regular babel of tongues. The destroying forces work havoc with my people. Now what can I do to meet the conditions?" Listening to him I wondered and went away still wondering. In these places where men are working to produce the coal for us, and the metals that form the foundation-stone of our civilization, there must be something more than merely the touch of charity; there must be worked out a plan by which true brotherhood may become a reality. We are accepting the gift of these men, the things that they produce at such risk, and we are forgetting the men themselves. They are serving our interests and we have a responsibility for them, but what are we doing to meet the situation? 76

At the close of the Colorado coal strike a plan was inaugurated for bettering conditions throughout the state. This plan has much to commend it to the public favor. It is not wholly democratic and it has many features that can be criticized. Even viewed in the best light it fails to solve the fundamental difficulties in the situation—but it is a long step ahead of anything that has ever been done before. One of the miners, while discussing the plan, said: "It is all right as far as it goes. The best thing about it is that the company promises to allow us to join our union. When we get the district organized 100 per cent. we will put some real democracy into the plan." 77

The features of the plan may be stated broadly in these four propositions:

First of all, the men working the mines are to be recognized as partners in the enterprise and are to have a voice in the management of the mines. They elect their representatives who meet with the representatives of the company and together they work out their own problems.

Second, the bad conditions which are chronic in the mines and which have disturbed the peace are to be corrected as far as possible.



Third, the physical conditions in the village are to be improved. Better houses are to be built and they are to be painted. Provisions are made so that the miners can have gardens.

Fourth, special arrangements are made for the establishment of better schools, Young Men's Christian Association with club privileges, and help is given in organizing and maintaining churches and other religious agencies.

All of these things point to a better day that is coming, and is a great advance over the attitude taken by the old-time mine owner who replied to a committee which warned him of impending trouble, "Let them start something if they want to find out who is boss." 78

The battle has not been won, and will not be won, until the church makes a demand for industrial justice its chief object, and makes democracy really applicable in every mining district and community throughout the whole nation.

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# CHAPTER VI

## THE WORLD OF THE STEEL WORKERS

"The sky-line of your cities is the monument of your civilization." These words summed up the impression of an Oriental visiting America for the first time. He had seen everything of America that could be shown during his two months' visit. Boards of trades in the various cities entertained him. Figures concerning miles of pavements, hundreds of miles of trolley lines, millions of dollars in the various banks, thousands of bales of cotton, millions of tons of coal, iron, steel, potatoes, rice, wheat, corn, and all the rest of the things that go to make America great had been quoted to him. He was apparently impressed by what he saw but did not become enthusiastic, and accepted every statement with becoming politeness. No one could tell what moved him most. When he summed up his total impressions and expressed his opinion, it showed that he had really formed a most exact judgment of that which makes the true material basis of our national life. The skyscraper building is the only important contribution that America has made to the art of architecture. This structural development, which is so truly American, has been made possible only because we have learned how to use steel for the framework of the gigantic construction.

**The Steel Industry.** Interesting statistics as to the extent of the steel industry have been compiled. The United States and Canada together produce about half of the world's output. According to the last figures, there are employed in the iron and steel industry of this country 1,426,014 workers. At the present time the capacity of all the shops is taxed to the utmost and hundreds of new factories have been erected. Canada and the United States are cooperating in the production of ships. The huge bridge works are giving over all of their machinery and time to the building of new boats to carry men and food in support of the Allied armies in France. 80

**The Use of Steel.** Steel is made by melting iron and combining it with a certain proportion of carbon. The softest grade of steel contains less than one per cent. of carbon, the hardest contains about thirty per cent. Iron furnishes almost every useful thing that is necessary to our life in the community. When we have food and clothes, we are then ready to take up the routine of living a part of the common life of our city or town. Iron is used extensively in building our homes. The house is held together with nails made of iron; its plumbing, its lighting, its heating are all made possible by the use of steel.

Possibly the building in which we work is a steel building, if not, it may be made of reenforced concrete and this form of construction is dependent upon the use of iron. The product toward which we are contributing our industry, whatever it may be, is dependent upon commerce, transportation, and communication; and these great branches of activity are dependent upon steel. Iron can be melted and cast into a thousand different shapes. It is used to make the most simple kitchen utensil and the largest and most complicated machinery. Again, it is melted in larger quantity, combined with carbon, and put through the rolling-mills. By this process it may become steel rails, or be made into plates and huge sheets that form the protective outer skin of the great ships of war. It is rolled out thin and corrugated to be used as sheeting for houses, and sides of freight-cars, and roofs of houses; or it may issue in things as delicate as knitting-needles or the finest springs which form the adjustment and motive power in the most costly watches. It is used in the construction of buildings that tower up hundreds of feet above the level of the street, and is the only thing that has been found so far that can be used successfully for such a purpose. At the same time this most necessary substance is formed into pliable rope and used to draw the miner and the minerals he mines from the depths of the earth, and to keep the elevators running up and down in hotels, office buildings, and apartment houses. The finest cambric needles are first cousins to the great guns with which the Germans were able to shell Paris from a distance of seventy-five miles. 81

The advance in recent years in invention and new processes as applied to the manufacture of steel has brought about more changes in the industrial life of the world than any other thing. The cities of the future will all be steel cities. We have already built our cities twice—once of wood and once of brick—and we are now building them of steel. An advertisement in a hotel in a Middle-Western city reads: "This hotel is built without a stick of wood. We could roast an ox in the room next to yours and never disturb you." Steel mesh is replacing lath in ceilings, and ornamental steel ceilings are replacing plaster. In subway systems quantities of steel have been used for tunnels; the elevated railroads are prolonged bridges. Williamsburg Bridge between New York and Brooklyn cost \$20,000,000, and 45,000 tons of steel were used in its construction. One pound in every ten of all the steel manufactured is made into wire. The Brooklyn Bridge cables have each 6,400 strands of wire. Other wires made of steel have approximately a dimension of one tenth the thickness of a hair. A carpet tack is an insignificant sort of thing, but one factory in Chicago produced 3,000,000 pounds of these tacks in a year. Steel goes into furniture, is made into barrels; utilized in art work, so that the value of common iron when refined and drawn out to the highest possible utility makes steel the most precious of all metals to-day. Watch-screws cost \$1,600 a pound and hair springs twice this amount. 82



McGraw-Hill Company.

**Commerce and transportation are dependent upon steel, and to-day there are employed in the iron and steel industry of this country, 1,426,014 workers.**

**The Making of Steel.** The workshop of civilization is now on the west side of the Atlantic because of the vast manufacturing establishments producing steel on this side of the ocean. The so-called Bessemer process in making steel has brought about a change that is almost as revolutionary in its far-reaching results as any of the great revolutions in the past. Within thirty years American resources have been developed, and American methods have been reorganized with such amazing rapidity that the United States has to-day, together with the natural advantage, the means at hand for utilizing its almost inexhaustible supplies of fuel and iron. The world needs these supplies and America is glad that she is able to do her part in supplying them.

Steel has been made for centuries, but until a few years ago, the process was slow and costly, and the tools with which the men worked were really treasures. In those days a pocket-knife was a thing of great value. The railroads used iron rails but these soon wore out. If it had been suggested that steel be used a protest would have been made on the grounds that steel is too expensive. Trains had to be shortened; coaches and locomotives built of light material because iron rails and bridges could not stand the strain. As land in the cities became more valuable and taller buildings were needed, stone and brick not proving adaptable and too expensive, the Bessemer process, which manufactured steel cheaply and in great quantities, came to meet a long-felt need. Iron was plentiful but the process of converting it into steel had not been mastered. The great difficulty in manufacturing steel is to get just the right proportion of carbon mixed with the iron. The Bessemer system takes all the carbon out and then puts back into it the quantity that is needed. Tons of molten iron are run into an immense pear-shaped vessel called a converter. Blasts of air are forced in from below. These unite with the carbon and the impurities such as sulphur and silicon are destroyed. There is a roar and clatter and a terrific din. A great bolt of red flame shoots forth many feet from the mouth of the converter. Its color changes from red to yellow and then to white. When the flame becomes white the workers know that the carbon and other impurities are all gone; and this is the signal for the blast of air to be turned off. Then a quantity of special iron ore in melted form, containing the right amount of carbon to convert the whole into steel of the desired degree of hardness, is poured into the purified molten iron in the converter. This huge converter is perfectly poised upon pivots so that it can be moved with very little effort. The molten steel at the next stage is poured from the converter into square molds and the blocks resulting from it are called blooms. These are then started through the mill, passed under and between rollers of different shapes and kinds, and drawn out into plates, rails, or beams.

**The Steel Factory or Rolling-mill.** One of the foremost pictures in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York is a picture of a steel-mill. It seems to be a prosaic subject but it makes an appealing picture, and one typical of our modern world. Some one has described a steel-mill as a modern materialization of Dante's *Inferno*. The sky above Pittsburgh, Birmingham, and other steel centers is aflame at night as the process of manufacturing is carried on in the miles of buildings that contain the workers and the machinery. To step into one of these steel factories even in broad daylight is to step out of the world of reality into the semi-reality of a new and unknown world. Most of the men work stripped to the waist. The long ribbons of red hot steel writhe and twist about the length of the room. The jangle of chains mingles with the creaking of the machinery above our heads. The sparks are flying and a bluish haze hovers about the heads of the men like some unholy halo as they move back and forth appearing as gnomes in the unnatural light of the place. There is a peculiar odor that we instinctively associate with the blacksmith shop that used to stand at the side of the street on the way between our house and the butcher shop where we used to be sent every day for the meat for dinner. Everything moves with feverish haste. No one lags. Every man knows his task and does it. He must keep up.

The days are unusually long in the steel-mills. It used to be that the men worked twelve hours a day and seven days a week. This has been changed now in most of the mills, but even yet there is a great deal of twelve-hour work and a great deal of Sunday labor. The rumble of the cranes above the heads of the gnome-like men at work in the building fills our ears with an unearthly sound. The peculiar glare of the gigantic open hearth changes at frequent intervals as the white cascade of molten metal announces the beginning of the shaping

process of the new rail or the new plate for some new man-of-war, or the beam that is to live for centuries in some skyscraper. These men working in this mill are kneading the metal into shape, for as it goes under the rollers it is pressed and twisted until the final process is completed.

**Accidents.** If it was a lucky day when we visited the steel-mill there were no serious accidents. Men are being continually hurt in the works. A report concerning one says: "John Schwobboda and Joseph Mikelliffyky were standing near one of the hearths. Something went wrong, and instead of the steel coming out in an orderly stream it broke out and before these two could get away they were caught in the midst of the stream and absorbed by the burning metal." This thing has happened many times. The percentage of deaths due to accidents and injuries during the last ten years among soldiers and sailors of the United States has been about twelve to the thousand; in the same period with the workers in the steel-mills it has been about sixteen to the thousand.

86

**Wages and Conditions of Labor.** The toil is strenuous and the hazards great; the hours are long and the product is of almost incalculable value. What do men get out of it? They are the servants of civilization and without them we would have no such trade as we have to-day, we would have no commerce and no progress. Steel is king. When the price of steel is up to normal, times are good; when the price of steel is down, times are bad. A Pittsburgh man said that steel is the elevator which carries civilization, "The world goes up or goes down with the price of steel rails." The workers are the subjects and the slaves of this king. They are giving their lives as well as their time in fealty to him. Yet how little the average person knows of the lives of these men.

A genius for mathematics has estimated that if the 587 rolling-mills in the United States were set end to end in a circle around Pittsburgh it would be 100 miles in diameter. Inside of this circle can be formed another circle three quarters as large if we set end to end the 532 smaller steel-mills and 3,161 puddling furnaces, where the iron is first melted and made into bars called pigs. There are 577 open-hearth works, or factories that manufacture steel by another process much slower than the Bessemer, but having certain advantages because the process does not have to be carried on so rapidly. These works would make a third circle 50 miles across. The 410 other furnaces of various kinds would form a fourth circle 35 miles in diameter. If all the Bessemer converters were made into one great big converter and put in the center, it would be a mile in circumference and would pour a river of molten steel every hour.

87

The furnaces are fed literally mountains of ore every year. The families dependent upon the iron and steel trade for their living, if gathered together, would form a state more populous than Illinois. The steel business thinks its own thoughts, prints its own literature, and very largely makes its own laws. There is no trade on the face of the earth equal to it. The results of the present world war hang in the balance. The needs come back definitely to the steel industry. If we can get more workers we can get more steel. If we get more steel, we can build more ships, and if we can get more ships, we can get more soldiers, more ammunition, and more food with which to fight the war for democracy.

The year 1916 was the most prosperous one which the American steel trade has ever known; manufacturers especially were driven to the limit of their capacity. The purchases amounted to startling proportions. Wages were increased so that the workman shared in a measure in the general prosperity. Three advances were made, each time approximating 10 per cent. The workmen are paid on a sliding schedule thus benefiting by the rise in the value of the product they make. Never have workmen received such wages as are now being paid to the workmen of America. But over against this increase in wages must be considered the increase in the cost of living, and also the base line, or average wage in days before the war upon which these increases are figured. Hours are still very long and no process has been devised for making the work very much easier or less wearing upon the individual worker. Investigators who made their report in 1912 said that during the year 1910, the period covered by their investigation, 29 per cent. of the employees in the blast furnaces and steel works and rolling-mills ordinarily worked seven days a week; 24 per cent. worked eighty-four hours or more a week. This means a twelve-hour day seven days a week.

88

These long hours were not confined to the men in the blast-furnace department, where there is a real necessity for continual toil, but to a large extent to the other departments, where no such necessity existed, except the necessity of making all the profits possible from the workers. When the shift was made from day to night work or from night to day work, the employees making the shift were required to remain on duty without relief for periods of from eighteen to twenty-four hours consecutively. No one can visit a steel-mill and not feel that there is something merciless in the way the workers are being goaded by invisible forces to keep their speed at the topmost notch. The very nature of the work is such that men are forced to labor at high tension. The mill stops for nothing either day or night. "You must draw or be dragged to death," said one of the workers.

A steel employee in South Chicago made good wages but was a hard drinker and with his companions spent most of the evenings in the saloons so that there was rarely a night that he went to bed sober. A friend of the family had a chance to talk with him about the situation and tried to argue with him to show him the folly of drinking. His reply was, "Why, who cares? The mill drives me all the day long and dries me all up. I have to draw, draw, draw, or be dragged. By the end of the day there is only one thing that I want and that is beer."

89

A large proportion of the workers in the steel-mills are immigrants. There are Magyars, Poles, Slovaks, Croatians, Italians, as well as Austro-Hungarians, and all the other races mixed in. Many of the men are single, or if they are married they have left their wives in the old country. The wage is very largely based on the needs of a single man. Nearly all the families take boarders. This reduces the cost of living and in some of these families, the "boarding boss" as he is known, is the head of the household consisting of himself, his wife, his children, and anywhere from four to sixteen boarders or lodgers. Each lodger pays the boarding boss a fixed sum, usually two or three dollars a month for lodging, cooking, and washing. The food is bought by the boss and its cost shared individually by the members of the group. A study was made of a community in Johnstown, Pennsylvania, and it was found that the food consumed was cheap beef, bread, and coffee. Some of the people used vegetables sparingly. The Italians ate only a small quantity of meat, but used large quantities of vegetables, spaghetti, bread, and olive oil. The Austro-Hungarians used vast quantities of meat.

**Houses and Homes.** The housing conditions among the poorly paid steel workers are invariably bad. In a

part of Pittsburgh known as the "strip" the living conditions are bad almost beyond belief. The reason given for this situation is that the wages are so low no better is possible. The standard of living among all the steel workers is low. Comfort or ordinary provisions for decency are almost entirely lacking in nearly every steel-producing district. The housing conditions are congested, the children play in the streets, and only the cheapest and most dangerous forms of recreation are open to the young people. A large proportion of the workers are members of the Roman Catholic Church. The men, however, for the most part have no use for the church and rarely if ever attend. The women cling to it, since they are naturally more devout. 90

The children suffer from the hard circumstances in the laboring communities. The mothers have generally gone to work too early in life to give proper vitality to the child. The lack of conditions that make for decent home life brought about through inadequate incomes of the fathers and the overcrowded housing conditions taxes life heavily by infant mortality, and mortgages the future health and morals of the children, thus threatening the future efficiency of the state. Investigations conducted by the Children's Bureau in Washington show that the chances of life for a baby grow appallingly small as the father's earnings grow less. For instance, the cases of one thousand babies in eight representative cities were studied. The returns show that in families where the father earns less than \$550 a year every sixth baby dies; while in families where the father's income is \$1,050 or more a year only one baby in sixteen dies.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> See "Infant Mortality," a pamphlet issued by the Children's Bureau, U. S. Department of Labor, Washington, D. C.



**The church in this age of steel must preach from the text, which interpreted in modern times will be, "A man is more precious than a bar of steel."**

**The Church and the Homes of the Workers.** The disorganizing influence on the social and industrial life incident to the war accentuates the importance of protecting mothers and children. The churches have a remarkable opportunity here, for it is to the homes that the church makes its first and strongest appeal. Jesus set a little child at the very center of his system for regenerating humanity and saving the world. 91

The church must produce and train skilled leaders who can direct affairs; it must set in motion forces that will counteract the evil in these industrial communities; and must help to create public sentiment so that the city that allows bad housing to exist and the industry that forces it will be looked upon as murderers of little children. Playgrounds, recreation centers, and the strict enforcement of all the laws that protect the home must be urged upon the church as a part of its program. Without these the gospel fails.

**The Church and the Workers.** Another feature incident to the life in the steel-mills is the apathy that develops in the workers themselves. Their attitude toward life is characterized by a dumb, brutish fatalism. The editor of a paper in one of the steel cities when discussing this attitude of mind remarked: "A Finlander cares less about being killed in the mill than I do about having my tooth pulled." It is almost impossible to enforce the necessary precautions. Life becomes of little value to the worker pressed as he is for production. This thing called steel looms big and human; life looks small in proportion. Jesus, appealing to the rural-minded people of his day, said that man is more precious than a sheep. The church in our great steel centers must often and persistently preach the gospel from this text which interpreted in modern times will be, "Man is more precious than a bar of steel."

**Progress Toward Justice.** The process of adjustment between manufacturing, the cost of labor, and the selling price of the material is a difficult one. Labor conditions have been such, and competition so keen, that it has been very difficult to safeguard the men employed in this industry. Union labor has had a hard time to establish itself. Nearly all of the mills and factories are run as open shops. Of late years, however, it has been found that there must be closer cooperation between the management, the owners, and the workers; and certain concessions have been made and new elements have been introduced into the system which are 92

bettering conditions. It is now possible for the workers to have shares of the common stock of the United States Steel Corporation. The workers are suspicious of this scheme as well as of all other forms of profit-sharing and welfare work because they believe that it leads to a deepening of the dependence of the worker upon the concern for which he works, and thus hinders the coming of industrial democracy. It must be said, however, for a plan which makes it possible for the employees to buy stock in the concern, that it is a step toward democracy if it is democratically carried out. The difficulty at present is that only the better paid, higher class of laborers in the steel-mills can or will take the stock. Until the wages of all the laborers are increased to the place where each one can have a decent home located in a desirable part of the city, and a degree of leisure so that he can give some time and attention to other things than the mere process of making steel, the distributing of stock will not go far toward settling the labor difficulties that so often embarrass the great steel companies.

**A Successful Experiment.** Democracy means that each worker shall have a voice and a vote in determining the conditions under which he works as well as some share in the ownership of the business. The only answer to the argument against democracy is a successful experiment in democracy. A manufacturing plant in a democratic country must recognize in these days that the only scheme that will succeed must make for a larger control of the business by a larger number of the people employed. The Baker Manufacturing Company, of Evansville, Wisconsin, has carried out a stock-owning, profit-sharing plan with great success. Since 1899 the lowest additional wage paid to the employees has been 60 per cent. and the highest 120 per cent. based on average wages. Every employee has a vote in the company, and the annual meetings are held in the town hall. The stock issued each year represents real value, for every dollar of it is put into material improvements in the shop and its equipment. I visited Mr. Baker some years ago and he told me of the success of his plans. Just before I left I said: "Mr. Baker, do you think that you have been wise in putting so much effort into the creation of this new form of industrial organization?" He replied: "Well, I am past seventy years of age and have all the money I can use conveniently. I enjoy life and have the friendship of my workmen. I do not need to station detectives about my home to protect me while I am asleep; and another thing, we never have had a strike in this town. We are all friends and fellow workers." Surely these are the things that accumulations of money cannot produce and their possession is beyond value. What has been done in this factory connected with the steel trade ought to be possible everywhere.

**The Church and Its Approach.** The scheme of adjustment is a difficult one, and the church is not meeting the situation in any adequate way. Its task is before it and must be attacked with persistence, with skill, and with patience. This means, first of all, that the church in the communities where the steel workers live must find a method of approach through the home and the school to the heart and the life of the people. Until this is done, it will be futile for the church to even attempt to minister to the people in the deeper things of life.



# CHAPTER VII

## THE WORLD OF THE TRANSPORTATION MEN

"Here, boss, jes' take fo' dollars' worth of ride out of this here bill." This was the response of an old Negro riding on a Southern train when asked for his ticket by the conductor. Without a word the conductor gave him the change from a ten dollar bill and a ticket to tuck into his hat and which allowed him to ride to a town approximately two hundred miles distant. When the train reached its destination the old Negro began to fumble in his pockets and then he picked up his bundles and slowly got off. Three hours later, as a train coming in the opposite direction stopped at the station, the same Negro got aboard, paid his fare back to the starting-point and arrived early in the morning. Going up the street he met the judge of the district, who said to him, "Hello, John, what are you doing out so early? Where have you been?" "I ain't been nowhere, Judge; I jes' been doing a little traveling." This is not an isolated case by any means. I told this story as I had heard it to a conductor on another road and he said it was a very common thing to have fifteen or twenty white people as well as Negroes "ride out" the mileage covered by a five dollar bill.

The American is the most restless person in the world. We are always on the move and a large amount of our traveling is purposeless. We simply travel because we like to be going somewhere. This trait in us is a survival from a long past age in man's development. This primitive love of change is strengthened by the economic pressure under which most of us live. Early man wandered from place to place in search of his food. Modern man does the same, the only difference being that he does not now look for his food ready to his hand, but looks for a place to work, so that he can earn money with which to buy his food. "We have been married twelve years," said a vivacious little lady, "and I have lived in six states. It seems that my husband is always getting a chance to better our condition, and we both have come to look forward to a move about every two years. If we just live long enough, we will have lived in every state in the Union."

But transportation as we understand it to-day refers to the moving of freight, express, and mail, as well as to the moving of men and women. Man himself was the original burden-bearer and became the first transportation system, carrying combined freight and express. He simply took his bundle on his shoulders and used his legs as the means of moving from one place to another. Then he used other men to help carry his loads. There has been much speculation as to how the stones used in the building of the Great Pyramids were brought to the desert and put into place. Many theories have been advanced. One of the latest is that the Pyramids are made of concrete and that they were poured rather than quarried. However the material was secured, or in whatever way the work was accomplished, we can be sure of one thing and that is that all of the material was carried by men. They were the slaves of Pharaoh and this was the usual form of the transportation system of Egypt. There were auxiliary lines which employed camels, asses, and some horses; but the slave was the principal carrier just as he is in Africa to-day. The rivers and the oceans were used as highways of travel, but the boats were very crude affairs and the slaves chained to the seats and pulling on heavy oars formed the motive power. The oars were made in graduated lengths, one bank above another. The three-tiered Roman boat was known as the trireme and it was the great-grandfather of the ocean liners with their triple screws. It is a long development from the primitive methods of travel and burden-bearing in the early days of Egypt to the great transcontinental railway lines and the ocean steamships of our day!

**Progress and Transportation.** The word progress carries within it the implication that there is a road over which the race of men is passing. The roadmaker has always been the pioneer of civilization. The advent of steam and the perfecting of railroads marks a period of development throughout civilization itself. Some one has said that it would be far more interesting and informing concerning the facts that will transpire in the next one hundred years, if we could see the railroad map showing all the transportation lines in the different continents to be published in the year 2018, than if we could have a map that would simply show the national boundaries. A nation may be compared to a human body. The railroad lines are the arteries along which flows the life-blood of the nation. Industry is the center of a nation's life, and it pumps commerce over the rails and thus keeps the body growing and in a healthful state.

**Age of the Engineer.** The great world war has been characterized in many ways, but perhaps the best characterization of all is that it is an engineers' war. Eliminate the work of the engineers, civil and mechanical, from this war and it could not have been fought. For that matter the last seventy-five years of the world's history has belonged to the engineers. Ninety per cent. of all our comforts, conveniences, and practical achievements is due to their work, and what wonders have been wrought in this time! The engineer has accomplished more in the field of transportation than in any other realm. Transportation, represented by the railroads, the steamships, the automobiles, and the better roads that have been built to accommodate them, makes up the chief differences between our age and all those ages preceding.

**The Railway Systems.** There is being operated in the United States at the present time 230,000 miles of railroads. The mileage which they cover if stretched about the earth would belt the globe nine times. The total mileage for the whole world is about 700,000; all of Europe has 215,140 miles. The United States and Canada together have almost half the total mileage of the world and as much as all of Europe and Asia combined. In 1915 the railroads of the United States carried 976,303,602 passengers and moved 1,802,018,177 tons of freight. The railway companies employed 1,654,075 men and women. The average hourly pay for these workers, figured on the basis of the eight-hour day, is twenty-six cents. Railroading is a most difficult and dangerous occupation, and yet there is something in the work itself that appeals to the worker. "Once a railroad man, always a railroad man," as one brakeman put it.

There was a railroad wreck on the Southern Pacific line just south of Livermore, California, some years ago. The engine fell over into a creek and the engineer was caught underneath, and pressed down into the soft sand. It was eighteen hours before he was rescued; his chest was crushed and he was horribly burned but by some miracle he lived. The railway company gave him a pension in recognition of his faithful services of about twelve

years, and he was able to live on the income without working. This invalided engineer was idle for almost ten months; he then went back to the company and asked to be put on an engine again. He was not considered strong enough to run a passenger engine, but was supremely happy when put in charge of a switch engine in the train-yards of Sacramento. He said, "It was the happiest day of my life when I pulled the throttle, and again felt the engine begin to move out under my touch and control."

**Casualty Lists.** In the year 1916, the steam railways of the United States injured 196,722 people and killed 10,001. The electric railways for the same period injured 4,606 and killed 518. Of these persons, 4,928 were killed while riding as passengers, or while at work in the performance of their tasks. The remainder were killed while walking upon the railway tracks or in other ways trespassing.

One bitter cold day a Lackawanna train from New York going to Buffalo was nearing a little village near Binghamton when the brakeman, muffling up his ears, stepped out on the rear platform to be ready to signal as the train stopped at the near-by crossing. The train stopped and then gave four blasts on the whistle calling in the brakeman. There was a delay and the conductor went back to find out why the brakeman did not come, but could not see him anywhere down the line. The train was late and running badly, so instead of backing up to look for the brakeman, the conductor gave orders for the train to go ahead and reported the fact at the next station. Two stations beyond word reached him that the body of the brakeman had been found beside the track. He had stepped out on the rear platform just as the train rounded a curve and the platform being slippery he lost his footing and was thrown off and killed instantly. The brakeman's family was protected because he was engaged in interstate commerce, but one more human being was lost in the performance of his daily task. The inventions such as patent coupling devices, block signals, and the vestibule cars, have done away with a great many accidents, but in the very nature of the case, there will always be danger in the work done by the men who operate our trains. 100

**The Human Factor.** The railroads of the country are made as safe as possible by installing wonderful devices which work automatically. The tracks are inspected, old ties replaced by new ones; bolts are tested, yet in spite of all the excellent devices to secure safety, accidents occur in sickening succession. An entire circus company was recently wiped out by an accident on the Michigan Central Railroad. The members of the circus were nearly all asleep when a train from the rear plunged through their cars killing nearly one hundred and injuring over one hundred others. The wreckage caught fire and many of the bodies were cremated. Reports would indicate that this accident was one of those unavoidable things that happen so often in railroading. 101

Experiences in speaking before groups of railroad men prove that the question of danger is always before the minds of the workers. These men literally carry their lives in their hands. For after all, no matter how perfectly the track may be laid, and in spite of the fact that the signals are all set, there is always the human factor to be taken into consideration. The flagman may not go back far enough from the train that is stopped so that the one following can be brought to a halt before crashing into the train ahead. Another thing that enters into the situation is the fact that men who are working surrounded by constant perils are likely to become careless. "I carry with me a sense of responsibility for the life of every man, woman, and child who rides on my train." This was the statement of a conscientious railroad engineer. "But," he continued, "I am in constant fear that my train will be wrecked through the carelessness of somebody else." This man recognized a need that is essential in securing safety in traveling on our railroads, that is, a sense of corporate responsibility; by this we mean, that the entire group of men, all the workers and all of those who are responsible for the operation of the roads should feel the same sense of responsibility that the individual engineer feels. To secure this condition the railroad companies must realize that they are dealing with human beings; and that the men who furnish the human element in the railroad equation are entitled to a voice and a share in the management of the line. 102

**Wages and Hours of Work.** When the railroad employees threatened to strike in 1917 and asked for an eight-hour day and an increase of wages, there was a great deal of discussion as to whether the companies or the men were in the right. Most people sided with the companies against the men, because there is an idea among the people that the railroad men are the best paid employees in any of our industries. Contrary to the general understanding, the railroad employees for the most part are not well paid. The government has recognized the need for increased wages and has made advances to nearly all classes of railway employees since federal control went into effect. The average rate for a normal day's work for engineers in the freight service throughout the eastern territory is \$4.85, conductors \$4, brakemen \$2.67, and firemen \$3.25. These are the best paid of all the railroad employees. Tower men, who have in their care the lives of millions of passengers as they protect crossings, receive from \$40 to \$50 a month. Telegraphers, train dispatchers, track inspectors, and other employees, outside of the four great brotherhoods, made up of the engineers, conductors, brakemen, and firemen, are very poorly paid. And even the wages for the best paid and most skilful operators, the brakeman and the fireman, for instance, are so low that it means that in order to earn a living wage they must make a great deal through overtime.

The effect of this low wage is shown in the number of employees who are changed every year. In the first nine months of 1917 in the eastern territory three men were employed for every one job filled. This is known as the turn-over in employment and it is unusually high because the wages are below standard, the hours long, and the work hard and dangerous. There is a continual change in the operating forces and a consequent lack of efficiency. Another consideration to be taken into account in studying the wages and lives of railway workers is that of the effect of the work upon the workers. An engineer must put in years as a fireman before he can secure the right to run an engine, and then a dozen or fifteen years is about the length of time that he can depend on keeping his job. He is fortunate indeed if he earns a good wage for this length of time. The wear and tear on muscles, nerves, eyes, ears, kidneys, and heart is almost certain to break down the strongest body in a few years. Some few men stand the strain and hold on for twenty years but these are the rare exceptions. 103

**Fictitious Values and the Railways.** The railroad business deals in a commodity that may be termed public service. Almost more than any other business it is dependent for success upon the good-will of the public. The earnings of the railroads have been enormous and even if their operating expenses are high, there have been big profits made, and these profits have been taken up to a large extent in paying dividends upon fictitious



values. This is the most serious situation that threatens the railroad system of the United States. For instance, a road is built and a certain amount of money put into the equipment and rolling stock, such as engines, coaches, and freight-cars. The employees are hired and the road begins to do business as a regular passenger and freight carrier. Out of its total receipts it must pay a fixed amount for up-keep, for new equipment, and for wages, besides the interest on the money it has borrowed. The balance that is left from the amount of money received by the road and the amount it must pay out marks its own profits. This is given to the owners of the road. 104

For many years the railroads felt that they needed special legislation; and money was spent in buying up legislators, in corrupting city councils, and in gaining the influence of noted men who would agree to return certain favors to the road for certain concessions given. A common practise in connection with this was the giving of free passes to all statesmen and newspaper men. In addition to this the railroad property became valuable as a factor in the stock market, and new stock was continually being issued. This stock would be sold and in many cases no new equipment put into the road, so that at the present time some of the railroads of the United States have three or four times as much stock as they have actual physical value for their stock.

A good illustration of this business situation would be that you as owner of a house worth \$4,000 should make or form a cooperative housekeeping company and sell shares in this new company, basing the value of the total amount of shares upon the \$4,000 that the house is worth. You could sell forty shares each for \$100. This would be perfectly legitimate and a good business transaction, because at any time every share would have back of it one-fortieth of the total value of the house. But suppose instead of selling forty shares, you should capitalize your house at \$40,000 and sell 400 shares at \$100 a piece, instead of the forty shares. The extra valuation would be known as watered stock, because there would be no real value attached to it. You would be selling something that neither you nor anybody else possessed. 105

It is said that the term watered stock came from the practise of one of the early financiers who brought cattle from the West to sell in the New York market when New York was a very small city. He drove the cattle a long distance on the last day, and then gave them salt the night before arrival, so that they were inordinately thirsty. Just before they were sold and weighed he would let them drink all the water they wanted, so that the man who bought them was paying for a great deal of water in addition to the actual amount of beef he received. The result of this financial device known as watered stock has been disastrous for many of our railway companies, and the plight of the United States railroads has been a scandal for years.

**Regulating the Railroads.** The legislature of nearly every state has tried to remedy the railway situation. The commissions in the various states have frequently found themselves in each other's way. The Interstate Commerce Commission appointed by the United States government for the purpose of regulating railroads is one of the most efficient bodies in the entire government and has rendered remarkable services. The citizens of the United States are individualists and believe strongly in letting each business adjust its own difficulties as best it can. With the growth of the world commerce without, and the development of the country's trade within, however, many men are coming to believe that the only way out of difficulties is through a larger degree of government control, tending finally to government ownership of all the means of transportation. The strongest argument in favor of government ownership is the success of the Interstate Commerce Commission. During the last ten years there has come about a very radical change in the relations existing between the various railways and the general public. During the period between 1850 and 1900 the railways were masters of the situation; and the financiers who built and operated them were despots, more or less benevolent or the opposite according to their personal temperaments. The railway presidents during that period really regarded their roads as private property to be managed as they saw fit. This theory built up a great railroad system in the country, but the theory is not big enough to meet the new national demands that are put upon the common carriers of the day. The railroads are now pleading with the public to recognize them as public institutions primarily interested in serving the people. 106



Press Illustrating Service.

**In New York harbor and on other waterways, living upon the canal-boats and barges, are the families of the workers.**

**Railroads and Churches.** The railroad situation is too complicated for us to attempt a solution of it in a

church study class. It will demand years of experimentation and a degree of personal service on the part of the best and ablest men of our nation. What the church can and must do is to try to estimate the value of the principles that are involved in the railroad development and management. This can be done by following the story of the railroad as told by the writers in the public magazines of the last ten years. The history of our railroad legislation is also available for us in the records of the Interstate Commerce Commission. Each study group should write to Washington and get the literature issued by this commission. Much of it will be found to be dry reading, being largely a compilation of statistics; and these statistics dealing in figures so large that they mean very little to us. The recommendations, however, and the conclusions are of practical value and will be found to be extremely helpful in the wise and just conclusion regarding our attitude toward the railroad as a national institution. 107

**Other Means of Transportation.** The work of the men engaged in transportation is not by any means confined to the workers on the railroads. In our cities there are thousands of men employed on the street-cars, elevated railroads, and subway railways. The interurban traction lines employ hundreds of thousands of men. A careful study has been made of the situation affecting these workers by the Department of Labor of the United States, and its report is based upon facts ascertained from actual conditions found in all the principal cities of the country. Without exception the street-car men, including conductors, motormen, linesmen, and ticket-sellers, are poorly paid. Many of the cities are paying the men much less than a living wage. What do you know about the conditions in the street-cars in your own city? Where do the men who operate these cars live? What about their families? A motorman on one of the elevated railway lines of Chicago shot himself a few years ago. The note he left said: "I have four children and it is impossible with the rising cost of living for me to maintain my home on \$2.12 a day. I have a Life Insurance policy for \$2,000 and this is worth more to my wife and children than I earn at present." The street-car lines in most of our cities are owned and controlled by capitalists living in some other city, and they are operated, not for the benefit of the city, but simply for profits. The frequent strikes on the street-car lines are the direct result of this foolish policy of our cities of allowing themselves to be exploited by groups of business men who have no interest in the city, but hold toward it, its citizens, and its own workers, the attitude of a set of political and social freebooters. A few places only have attempted municipal ownership, and in these cases it has met with a large measure of success. The lines owned and operated by the San Francisco municipality have proved so successful that the business men are all enthusiastic over the policy. 108

Another group that aids in providing transportation is made up of the men on boats on the lakes, rivers, and canals; those who come to our shores from other nations traveling by sea in foreign boats; the sailors on our merchant marine; and the thousands of workers on the docks and lighters in our harbors. In connection with this great work, Andrew Furuseth, president of the International Seamen's Union, stands out as a remarkable figure. He is a Scandinavian by birth, and worked his way up from the simple life of a sailor before the mast until he is now the best known sailor in all the world. Mr. Furuseth has a great heart, and has fought long and hard for his fellow workers; he might be rich to-day, but as head of the union he accepts only the pay of a first-class seaman and is literally giving his life for others. At a meeting of the City Club in Rochester which he addressed some years ago, one of the gentlemen present turned to his companion and said: "Just look at Furuseth. In every line of his face there is written a chapter of the tragedy and pathos of the men who go down to the sea in ships." 109

The sailor has been practically a prisoner always. When he signed his work papers he put himself under the control of an absolute autocrat. Until recently the master of a ship at sea recognized no authority greater than himself, and when the boat landed at any port, no matter what the treatment might have been, the seaman could not desert, otherwise he would be arrested and imprisoned. Furuseth protested against this inhuman treatment, and through a long period of years kept demanding that seamen, "the last slaves" as he called them, be made free. Finally his efforts were successful and on March, 1915, there was approved by the Congress of the United States an Act which promotes the welfare of the American seaman in the merchant marine. It abolishes arrest and imprisonment for desertion, and it secured the abrogation of treaty provisions between the different nations which guaranteed that American sailors would be treated as felons if they deserted in a foreign port. It also provided additional safety at sea for all persons upon a boat; one of its provisions being that there shall be carried on every passenger-carrying steamer or sailing vessel enough life-boats so that each passenger and each man of the crew will have a seat and a chance for escape in case of an accident. It is interesting to note that this Act was passed as a direct result of the sinking of the *Titanic*.

**The World of the Transportation Men.** The transportation men live in a world apart. How many sailors do you know? How many street-car men? How many railroaders? Have you ever wondered where the conductor on the street-car upon which you ride so often lives? "Yes, we have a little church, but it is over across the tracks where the railroad men live, and I always attend the Presbyterian Church here." This was the excuse given by a gentleman for not attending the church of the denomination to which he had belonged before he moved into a new community near Chicago. We do not want a church to be known as the Railroad Men's Church or the Sailors' Church or the Street-Car Workers' Church. This is not the way to be the best kind of a neighbor. What we do want is for the church everywhere to take an interest in these men who are providing for our transportation and also carrying the necessities of life for all the world. We come into personal relationships with many of them in a business way, and they all do much to add to our wealth, our happiness, and our comfort. We in turn as individuals and as members of the church should acquaint ourselves with the conditions surrounding them. 110

For instance, in the waters of the New York harbor, living upon the canal-boats which move in and out carrying coal, hay, and other rough freight, are the families of the workers, and in these families there are approximately 5,000 children. They are at one place to-day and another place to-morrow. These people have no citizenship in the best sense of the word. Many of the men do not vote because they live in no locality long enough to register. The questions of schooling, of church privileges, and of all social contact are serious ones. Yet how many people in New York City, or for that matter in any of the smaller towns and villages where these boats land, have ever once thought of the status and social conditions of these men, and women, and their 111

children? Things we know. The things which the boats and the railroads carry and that other thing that looms so large, the profits that are made from transportation, are regarded as very important; but we have paid scant attention to the men who produce things and carry them from place to place.

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## CHAPTER VIII

### THE WORLD OF THE MAKERS OF LUXURIES

"I would not like to work in a candy store," said a young lad, "because then I could not have the fun of buying candy." A visitor to Atlantic City stepped into one of the shops to make a purchase. She said to the little girl in charge, "It must be delightful to be able to live in Atlantic City and work right here on the boardwalk." "You may think so," replied the girl. "But I guess if you put in all your time in this store, and had to come to work at eight in the morning and work until nine at night every day; and all the time saw these thousands of people passing along outside, going up and down, with nothing to do but just enjoy themselves, you would not think it is such a snap." Two boys were playing the game of "wish." When the turn of the youngest came, he said, "I wish that I worked in a chocolate factory, then I could have all the chocolate I wanted to eat." When we become acquainted with the people who are at work producing the luxuries, we find a common and far-reaching disillusionment. The hardest work in the world is to work when other people are playing, or work hard ourselves just for the purpose of giving other people enjoyment. And yet there are literally hundreds of thousands of people who spend their lives in producing luxuries.

Oliver Wendell Holmes used to say that if he could just have the luxuries, he would not care anything about the necessities of life. This was a whimsical way of stating a fact that is common to all experience, that is, that life is enriched by the luxuries we enjoy. I asked a man of the typographical union what he considered the one thing that had done most for the advancement of printers. He replied, "Pianos in their parlors." By this he meant that when hours were decreased and wages increased, printers began to have something to hope for; and with a margin of money they bought luxuries, and in the margin of time enjoyed them. Thus they laid the foundation for future development. 114

**Luxuries.** What constitutes a luxury? This is a difficult question to answer. Some people think that it is a luxury to take a bath. In fact, many of the monastic orders put special virtue on foregoing the use of soap and water. An old gentleman living in a little town near Chicago who owned a great deal of the property in the town, fought every effort to put in water-works and a sewer system. As the climax of an impassioned speech at a public meeting in which he had denounced the extravagances of the present time, he said: "These new notions of our young people are going to ruin us. My daughter made such a fuss that nine years ago I put a bathtub in our house, but I never use it and I guess I am about as healthy as any man in town." One of the religious sects forbids its members the use of buttons on their clothes, as they are regarded as useless luxuries. They fasten their clothes together with hooks and eyes. Cutting the hair, shaving the beard, wearing gold and silver, adorning the person in any way, all of these things are considered luxuries by some persons. Luxury is really a thing that we can get along without. But at best it is a relative term, for what one person would consider a luxury another would consider a necessity. 115

**Growth by Wants, Not Needs.** A merchant in Memphis had a carload of supplies arrive early one Saturday morning. He was very anxious to get the goods unloaded so that he could release the car. He started out to get help, but every Negro on the street had some good excuse why he could not help. Meeting an old fellow on the corner he said to him, "Look here, Bob, what is the trouble with all these Negroes? Not one of them wants to work and yet they all seem to have plenty of time and nothing to do." "It's just like this, Boss," replied old Bob. "All the worth-while niggers is out working, 'cause you see they's got to support their Fords. These here fellers ain't no good; don't want cyars and won't work nohow when the sun shines on both sides of the street at de same time." In this statement we have summed up the philosophy of all workers. It is only when we desire something better than we have and are willing to work for the thing desired that we begin to advance. Luxuries are the things that are not essential for mere existence, but they are the things that are of infinite value in enriching and adding to the meaning of life.

**Classes of Luxuries.** Luxuries can be roughly divided into two classes, those that are harmless and those that are hurtful. The extra dress, the piece of cake, the sugar in our coffee, the coffee itself, and in fact a great many of the things we wear, eat, and drink are luxuries. The line between these things and necessities is such a thin one that it is hard to know just when a thing ceases to be a necessity and becomes a luxury. Most things are harmless in and of themselves, and it must be acknowledged, luxuries have the effect of increasing the value and meaning of life. There are, however, luxuries such as beer, wine, whisky, brandy, and other alcoholic stimulants used as beverages, also tobacco used as snuff, for chewing or for smoking, which add nothing to life; but on the contrary must be classed with the habit-forming drugs so injurious to the race. In this chapter we are considering luxuries from the standpoint of production, and not the moral value involved in their use. Therefore, we must think of the workers in the brewery, the cigar and cigaret makers, the makers of artificial flowers and willow plumes as all belonging to the same class. They are the ones who are making the things that are not absolutely necessary for our existence. Were the production of bread to stop we could not live. Iron, steel, coal, and transportation are all part and parcel of our very existence, but we could get along very well if not another artificial flower, cigar, or fancy dress were made. 116

**The Cigarmakers.** The cigarmakers living in Tampa and Key West form the most complete compact group of workers to be found anywhere in the United States who are interested solely in producing luxuries. Tampa is known as "The city that furnishes the world's smoke." Last year this city shipped (in round numbers) 300,000,000 cigars! Havana and Key West have always been considered the principal cigar cities, but the production in these latter places has been declining for a number of years, while it has been increasing in Tampa. It was a clash between the Cuban and Spanish workers at Key West which led the first manufacturer to move from that city and build his factory at Tampa. To-day there are 15,000 Cuban and Spanish workers employed in Tampa in making cigars. A person could live in the city, and by restricting his business to certain districts, from one year's beginning to the end would never hear a word spoken in any language except Spanish. The city is a foreign city, and a city of workers producing a luxury that all the world demands. Since the time 117

that Columbus sent his men to explore the island of Cuba in November, 1492, and found the natives "carrying and smoking firebrands" made from loosely rolled leaves of a weed which grew extensively on the island, until the present time men everywhere have found enjoyment and pleasure in the narcotic value of tobacco.

**The Making of a Cigar.** In its manufacture a cigar goes through a process dependent upon the knowledge and skill gained from years of practise on the part of the worker. The tobacco that is used in making the best cigars still comes from the island of Cuba. It is grown very carefully, cured, baled, and shipped under bond to the United States government. The bales as they are received at the tobacco factory weigh from 80 to 120 pounds. The tobacco is of two qualities, that to be used as a filler (which makes up the body of the cigar), and that which is known as the wrapper or the outside covering. From the time that the tobacco begins to grow until the cigars are packed in the boxes ready for shipment the weed requires special care and attention. As the bales of tobacco are brought into the factory they have to be piled in a certain way. Some of them are piled high, some of them low, some on their sides, and some on their ends; all depending upon the quality and conditions of the leaves. 118

The tobacco is cured by a process which adds to its value; and the curing must be carried on with precision, for a faulty method will spoil the best tobacco that can be grown. Any one who has visited Tampa is impressed with the humidity of the atmosphere. The climate of Cuba is more nearly reproduced there than in any other city in America, and because of its equable temperature, it being neither too hot nor too cold, the city has become famous as the manufacturing center for cigars.

The cigarmakers sit at long tables in parallel rows throughout the room. In one room in a large factory eight hundred workers sit as close together as possible. The tools of the trade are a flat, broad-bladed knife, a hard block, a gage, and a rule. This gage is simply a hole bored through a piece of board and as the worker makes up the cigar, from time to time he puts it through the hole in the board to see that it is the proper size and places it against the rule to see that it is the proper length. Should it be too large it must be rolled tighter, if too small it must be loosened up a bit. Much depends upon the way a cigar is rolled. "I learned to make a cigar in three months," said a Cuban cigarmaker, "but it took me two years to learn how to put an end on it." This is the real test, and until a machine is invented which can turn this trick, the hand-made cigars, rolled, and finished according to the old Spanish method, will hold first place.

**The Reader in the Factory.** The Tampa cigarmakers are all either Spanish or Cuban, and in conversation they gesticulate with their hands to such an extent that it is impossible for them to talk and work at the same time. Hence, the manufacturers are very sympathetic with the old custom of maintaining a reader in the factory. This reader has a little balcony from which he reads to the employees while they are at work, making his selections from current magazines, newspapers, novels, telegrams, dispatches from abroad, and extracts from books on national history. It is an interesting sight to see a factory of four or five hundred workers busily engaged in plying their trade, and listening at the same time to a story read by the paid reader, who, with coat off and suspenders hanging, gesticulates and shouts at the top of his voice. One of the readers in a Tampa factory has held his position for twenty years. He reads daily from the New York *Herald*, translating the news articles into Spanish as he reads them. The reader is well paid, for each worker gives him twenty-five cents a week; and it is reported that some of these men receive as high as \$300 a month. The workers decide what shall be read. Some years ago there was a strike in one of the factories occasioned by a protest on the part of the women workers against the reading of an especially vulgar novel. The management ordered the reading of this novel stopped. The men then laid down their tools and refused to go back to work until they were assured that the story would be continued. Among the cigarmakers the tradition is that the custom of reading grew out of the desire of the early workers for a more liberal education than was offered by the church and its schools. 119

**Wages and Unions.** The wages of the cigarmakers are based on the piece-work system. An expert may make as high as \$35 a week; the average is a little higher than in other employments using the same grade of labor. Some years ago, when a bitter strike was conducted in Tampa, the question of wages was one of the grievances of the men but was not the real trouble, for the problem in Tampa now as well as then is racial and psychological rather than economic. The strike was settled on the basis of an agreement called the "equalization agreement." This provided for the appointment of a board to be composed of three manufacturers and three cigarmakers who would meet regularly, hear complaints, and make adjustments. Most of the workers belong to the union, and under this agreement there is a fair degree of peace in the industry. 120

One great difficulty is that the workers in the cigar industry carry into their trade no moral enthusiasm. They are doing something that is not absolutely requisite for human welfare, and while they make good money, they have no commanding purpose to impel them to carry on their work. The people live simple lives for the most part. On Saturday nights the streets of the city are filled with people, and every one is in a holiday mood. The majority of the cigar workers in Tampa are communicants in the Roman Catholic Church and it is the finest building in the city. It is constructed of marble and decorated with magnificent windows. The church takes little interest, however, in social or economic matters. One of the workers said to me the last time I was in the city, "When the business men forced us back to work, and through their private army guarded the city with sawed-off shotguns, the church was back of them. All the priests want is our money." To the cigarmakers a church is a church whether it be Catholic or Protestant. They remember the days in Cuba under the domination of Spain when the priests held them in a kind of bondage of fear, and made it easy for the political forces to exploit them. In America they do not intend to give the church a chance at them. 121

The Cuban is easily pleased; very emotional, and more inclined to be fickle than the American or Englishman. A few years ago the butchers of Tampa raised the price of meat. Just at that time there happened to be a representative of the Industrial Workers of the World in the city. He gathered some of the people together in East Tampa, harangued them regarding their wrongs, and called a second meeting. He aroused so much enthusiasm that nearly two thousand of the cigar workers quit their jobs; procured sticks, and bought beefsteaks and stuck them on the end of the sticks. Carrying these over their shoulders as though they were banners, the whole mob marched through the streets to the City Hall, where they demanded of the startled mayor, that he force the butchers to reduce the price of beef. The mayor gave the necessary order and the

people then dispersed and went quietly back to their homes. Union organizers complain that it is very difficult to maintain a union of any strength among the cigar workers in Tampa. "They are very enthusiastic for a time, but it is difficult for them to persistently and constantly follow the union rules," said one of the leaders.

The city of the cigarmakers swarms with children, many of these youngsters play in the street, and as the climate is warm most of the year, during the summer they wear very little clothing. Until recently there was no provision made for organized play among the children of the city. Even now the provision is totally inadequate. 122

**The Protestant Churches.** The Protestant churches have attempted to do what they could among the cigarmakers; but the needs have been so great and the equipment so inadequate that the best results have not been secured. In West Tampa there is a very interesting piece of work being conducted by the Methodist, the Baptist, and the Congregational churches. One of the churches has a plant consisting of a church, a school, and a house that is used as a social center for the entire community. For many years two homes were operated by this church; one for boys and one for girls. Some seven hundred children attend the school in connection with the church. The services on Sunday are in Spanish, and while it has not been possible always to secure a large attendance from among the people, still there is usually a representative and interesting group present. A man who served as pastor of the Cuban church was for a number of years a regular worker in one of the big cigar factories. This gave him a peculiar relationship to the community. He was accepted as a friend and equal; and was listened to with reverence and respect where another man would not have secured a hearing.



Photo from National Child Labor Committee.

**The workers in the cigar industry carry into their trade no moral enthusiasm, for they are doing something that is not absolutely requisite for human welfare.**

**Some Results of the Work.** A little girl in the community where one of the church homes is situated was arrested for being a vagrant. Her face was dirty; she was barefooted and wore a torn, buttonless, brown gingham dress that was positively filthy and which was held in place by a safety-pin fastened in such a way as to give the whole dress a weird, elfish look. The child's picture was taken on the day that she was arrested and committed to the care of the church. This picture is a typical portrayal of childish rebellion against life and all that it holds in store for the human race. Her mother was a worthless woman, and the child had never known a father. All her life she had really lived on the streets of the city. Her case was brought before the Juvenile Court; she was put on probation and given into the care of the workers in one of the little Protestant churches. She objected to having her hair combed and refused to wash her face. Those in charge of the home were almost in despair of being able to do anything with her. However, they won her confidence by allowing her to go to a party where they had a phonograph and motion pictures. They told her she could have all the cake and lemonade she wanted; so once in her life under happier conditions she had a chance for simple enjoyment and to be her natural self. From that time on she began to take an interest in herself and to gain in intelligence. Two years later she had her picture taken and it was exhibited as the picture of the typical Cuban girl, for she had developed into a perfect little beauty and showed capability. This story illustrates better than almost anything else the infinite possibilities in the Cuban people. 123

Some one said of the cigarmakers in Tampa that they were not Americans and never could be, and further stated: "They are interested only in their theaters, their clubs, their cock-fights, their coffee-houses, and their gambling rooms." It is true that they are interested in these things; because they are by temperament a pleasure-loving, happy-go-lucky sort of people and these resources are the expression of their idea of life. If the church would meet the needs of these people, it must be able to appreciate them, and sympathetically to interpret life for them. They can all become, as indeed most of them are now, good American citizens, but they will never be like the Americans in our Northern cities. We must allow them to develop along the lines of their own racial interests. How can we ever expect to be friends with Latin America if we cannot learn how to be good neighbors to the Latin Americans living in our own land? 124

**The Challenge of Conditions in the Factories.** The conditions in the factories are not ideal by any means, nor is the nature of the business such as to promote the highest type of character. The work is hard, and it is

performed in a heavy atmosphere poisoned with the breath of many individuals, and vitiated by the odors of human bodies and damp tobacco. The rooms where cigars are made have to be kept closed to save the weed; and every window is down, and no matter how hot the weather, not a breath of fresh air is allowed to enter the place. The atmosphere is so bad that it gives one a headache even to pass through; imagine what it would mean to spend your life working in such a place.

Tuberculosis makes deep inroads in the ranks of the workers. Statistics show that the proportion of mortality among the cigar workers from tuberculosis of the lungs is higher than in almost any other occupation. Between the ages of 15 and 24 the proportionate mortality from tuberculosis is 48.5 per cent. of the total deaths as compared with 33.8 per cent. for all occupations.<sup>3</sup> The reason for this is that the workers must sit for long hours at a table in a bad atmosphere and surrounded by others, many of whom are suffering from tuberculosis. There are nearly 50,000 members of the union and these men have been fighting for years for a betterment of conditions. However, just as in other trades, the employers claim that it is impossible to make cigars without sacrifice of the working men and women. The workers have accepted it there, as other workers have accepted it in other occupations, with the stoic attitude that marks so many of the laborers of our country.

125

<sup>3</sup> U. S. Bulletin of Labor, 1917.

One of the most noted social workers in America, a woman with strength and charm of character, who is a leader in every radical movement, began her life in a cigar factory. Later on she married a man of wealth and has lived a life of ease ever since. She says of her early experiences: "For twelve years I was a cigar worker in Cleveland. I was ill-nourished and poorly clad. I worked at night as well as by day to help piece out my family's existence. I never had anything I wanted." This might be said of a great many of the cigar workers and their families. The only difference would be that she did not tell all of her story. In addition to the long hours there is an undermining of the health that goes with it. Now all these people are working for some one's pleasure. They are making luxuries. The most radical person I ever knew in my life was an eighteen-year-old girl whose parents had lost their money. She was forced to go to work in a cigar factory when she was twelve years old. She was bitter toward life and had no faith or confidence in anything or in any person. Said she, "When I look around and see people who have all the money and all the clothes and all the good things that I want and can never have, I know that conditions are unjust and must be changed. I don't care what it costs; I am going to do my part in fighting and agitating until there is a change." This is an attitude that is now growing very common. There are deep-seated forces at work perpetuating these ideas. By valuing things more than men these conditions are made a permanent part of our life.

126

**Furs.** "Why do you want to wear furs in the summer-time?" I asked a young lady. It was an extremely hot day and she was wearing a white dress with very short sleeves and cut low in the neck, but she had a fox fur around her neck; there was quite a margin between the lower edge of her fur and the upper edge of her dress. "Why," she replied, "I think it is pretty, don't you?" This fur had come on a long journey and gone through many processes before it came into her hands. Many men and women had labored to produce it. The man who had caught the fox probably had a line of traps stretched over nine or ten miles of some stream in the northern part of Canada or Alaska. All through the bitter cold of the winter he had lived alone in a cabin, and day after day had tramped that line to take out the animals that had been caught. Bringing them back to his cabin he skinned them; turned the hide over a piece of board and stood it behind the stove to cure. Later the pelts were brought out of the wilderness and sold into the hands of a group of fur workers. They were then more fully cured, and passed on to the makers of scarfs. All of these workers were producing a luxury.

**The Trappers' Community.** In one of the regions of the Northwest where trapping is carried on through the winter there are three little settlements. There are only three white people and one white family in two of them, and the third settlement, which is a trading post, has about half a dozen white families. From the time that the snow falls in the autumn until late in May of the following spring, no one comes into these communities except the man carrying the mail who comes once in about ten days. No one goes out from the community unless it is absolutely necessary. The only ministers that ever visit there are those who come in the summer to enjoy the fishing in the near-by streams. The wife of a trapper in this region said to a minister: "Our oldest girl is nearly thirteen years old. She has never been to Sunday-school and never heard a sermon. She has never seen a church and you are the only preacher to whom she has ever talked. When I was married fifteen years ago in Missouri and we started for this country, I had no idea that a girl who had been brought up in the church and was a teacher in the Sunday-school could live so long in a community where there is no church or religious service of any kind." When we learn of places like this where there are no churches, and then hear of some small community that has six or eight churches and only about five or six hundred people, we wonder if there is not a call for a new kind of missionary effort and zeal. The church is not alone to blame nor is any one wholly responsible for this condition, and yet we are all to blame, for if it is necessary that a man should live on the outpost of civilization it should be made possible for some of the good things of civilization to be taken to him. In the foreign missionary work we have crossed oceans, traversed mountains, translated the Bible into new languages, and made every effort to reach new groups of people. In our own land we have neglected people just because they seemingly live in a world outside of our own. While they are producing the things we demand and use, we have forgotten the men who have brought these things to us.

127

128

**The Theater.** People have always been interested in seeing life presented in a play. The theater has had a large place in the history of every nation. It has furnished the means of recreation and amusement, and in a large measure it has been a great educator of the people. Religion was once taught through the theater. In fact, much of our church ritual is taken from performances that were meant to symbolize great facts and emotions of human life. The modern theater has become highly commercialized, and those who attend the performances continually demand more magnificent scenery, more elaborate costumes, and more thrills. What of the performers? Have you ever wondered, as you looked at the play, just how the people who are taking part would look if you saw them off the stage? For instance, there is a girl that is playing the part of an old woman. She is

dressed in a plain black, close-fitting gown, and hobbles across the stage leaning heavily upon a stick. In actual life she is a young woman under twenty-five years of age, has bright red hair, a charming smile, a figure that her friends describe as willowy, and walks with a springy step like that of a high school girl. Another character in the play is a woman who plays the part of the vampire. At home surrounded by her three children, she is a demure, domestic little body.

A few years ago one of our theatrical critics said that a glimpse behind the scenes would cure almost any girl of the desire to become an actress. The glamor is all in front of the curtain. Behind the scenes we come face to face with a hard-working group of men and women who are doing their best to furnish amusement. One of the leading actresses, in writing the history of her life, said that the only opportunity for success on the stage was for the person who comprehends fully that the theater offers but one thing—a chance for long hours of drudgery and the uncertain rewards that come from the hands of a fickle public. She described vividly the actors' boarding-house, with its narrow cramped bedrooms; its dimly-lit halls, with the faded and worn carpet; the smell of cooking that permeated the whole place "like the ghost of a thousand dead dinners;" the bitter loneliness, the jealousies, the misunderstandings, and she added, "my whole being revolts against all the petty details of the life." Then there is the traveling; nights on the train and days spent in the hotels until time to go to the opera house; then the feverish excitement of dressing; the play; and back to the hotel for a few hours' sleep and away again to another town. 129

The trouble is that most of the young people who think that they would like to go on the stage think only of the theaters in New York, Chicago, Boston, or in one of the other large cities. The great majority of the actor-folk spend most of their time traveling from place to place. There are comparatively few plays that enjoy long runs. Nowadays in one-night stands there are few places where special rates at the hotels are secured for actors. Usually the worst rooms in the house are assigned to them. In fact, the rooms that are given to the actors and actresses are known in a great many hotels as the Soubrette Row. The best rooms are saved for the regular patrons of the house, such as traveling salesmen, while anything is "good enough for the actor." In China the player folk live to themselves. They have no other companions but form a class of their own. We have not recognized the caste system in this country, and we do not officially ostracise the players, but in effect this is what we do. Their world is a world apart, yet they are the ones that help to amuse us. Each year we pay millions of dollars into the coffers of the theaters to see plays that are produced by these men and women who work hard, and who receive but little for their toil. 130

Once in a while the newspapers tell the story of some old actor, who has just died poor, broken down, and forgotten by the public. One of the most pathetic figures of these modern days was that of an old actor in Brooklyn, who had to be buried at the expense of his friends. They took up a collection to buy the casket in which he now rests; otherwise he would have been buried in the potter's field although thirty years ago he was one of the most popular men on Broadway. There are thousands of actors and actresses and they live for the most part to themselves. The Actors' Church Alliance was formed some years ago and has branches in many of our cities. There is, too, an organization known as the Actors' Fund, which provides relief for the poor found among these hard-working men and women who give so much pleasure to millions of people.

**The Motion Pictures.** The motion-picture business has become one of the greatest enterprises of our day. In 1914 there were over 20,000 motion-picture theaters in the United States. The year before that three hundred million dollars was spent for films, and over five billion paid admissions were recorded throughout the country. The motion-picture has made possible the reproduction of the best plays, and they are offered to the people at a very low price. Five and ten cents will permit any one to be amused for a whole evening. The motion-picture theater possesses great educational possibilities. It has revolutionized our ideas of entertainment. The best books have been put into films and more people than ever before are having a chance to read. This is having a profound effect upon our lives, for as has been said, "the thing we see impresses us more than what we hear." We often say, "it went in one ear and out the other" but no one ever says, "it went in one eye and out the other." The making of films requires the work of thousands of actors; besides carpenters, masons, machine operators, directors, and managers. It is a huge business! 131

A crowd gathered in New York at Thirty-fourth Street and Second Avenue one Saturday afternoon. A man was beating a boy when a disheveled woman ran out from the side entrance of a saloon and threw herself upon this beast. He grasped her by the throat and was just about to strangle her, when the boy, released from the clutches of the man, stabbed him in the back with a knife and thus freed his mother. It happened so quickly that many of the crowd thought that they were looking upon a real tragedy. It proved to be simply a "movie" being enacted upon the street.

In a Florida city an automobile dashed into town; a young girl was in the back seat, while in the front was a young man driving the machine with one hand and holding a preacher down with the other. They stopped in front of a church; went inside, and there they were met by two other men, accomplices of the young fellow, and who stood one on either side of the minister with revolvers at his head and forced him to perform the marriage ceremony. An outrage in real life, but really played for the movies. 132

In the West there are cities devoted entirely to the motion-picture industry. In some of the elaborate plays hundreds of thousands of dollars are expended in getting the scenic effects. Cities have been built and then burned to give the effect of a sacked town being destroyed by the enemy. Shipwrecks have been shown where real ships have been purchased, and then run upon the rocks and deliberately wrecked to get the proper setting for the pictures and the necessary thrills for the people. What of these people who follow the motion-picture industry for a living? Their lives are apart from the rest of the community. It seems fascinating, but it is one filled with hard labor, uncertain hours, and affords rather scanty pay. The pastor of one of the Los Angeles churches attempted to reach the people living in the near-by "movie-city" but he failed. A plan should be devised whereby a sympathetic understanding might bring these hard-working people into relationship with the church. The influence of such a tie would be far-reaching in results.

**The Makers of Other Luxuries.** Another group of workers are those who make jewelry; others are at work making fancy costumes, special designs in millinery, and artificial flowers. In fact, when we take a census of all 133



of the people who are at work serving the demands of this age, which loves the extraordinary and insists upon luxuries as a right, you find that there are in reality hundreds of thousands of these workers who are in every sense of the word serving humanity. Whether they are serving in the highest and best way is not the question we are discussing. As long as we tolerate an age of luxury and draft an army of thousands of men, women, and children to help produce these luxuries, so long must we consider the needs of the men, women, and children so drafted. The church, if its appeal is to reach all the groups, must reach all the workers who are making possible the abundance of things that minister to an age of luxury.

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# CHAPTER IX

## THE WORLD OF SEASONAL LABOR AND THE CASUAL WORKERS

"Why is it that those who produce food are hungry, and that those who make clothes are ragged? Why, moreover, is it that those who build palaces are homeless, and that those who do the nation's work are forced to choose between beggary, crime, or suicide in a nation that has fertile soil enough to feed and clothe the world; material enough to build homes to house all peoples, an enormous productive capacity through labor-saving machinery of forty thousand million man-power; and where there are only sixty-five million souls to feed, clothe, and shelter?"

The foregoing questions were put into the platform and issued by the Industrial Army of 1894 which was known as Coxey's army. That year was one of great depression all over the United States. The causes for the depression were discussed very widely at the time. It was the year following the great World's Fair in Chicago and hundreds of thousands of men were out of employment. There was suffering and deprivation in all the cities of the United States. Charitable institutions were taxed to their limit by the new responsibilities put upon them. The idea of having all the unemployed form themselves into a great army of peace, and march to Washington for the purpose of presenting to the President and Congress a petition for the right to labor, developed in the mind of a man named Coxey who lived at Masillon, Ohio. He gathered together the first army numbering several thousand men. These men were organized into companies, and officers were appointed after the fashion of the regular military customs. 136

Similar armies mobilized in other parts of the country. One at Los Angeles, another at San Francisco, one in Boston, and one in the Northwest, started towards Washington at one time. There were about 10,000 men on the march. They were ridiculed, persecuted, and feared. When the army that started from San Francisco reached Sacramento, it encamped outside the city. On Sunday night this curious army marched down into the center of the town, halted before the first church it came to, then the men filed in and in an orderly fashion filled up every pew. The remainder of the army marched on to the next church and did the same thing. This was repeated until every church in the city was filled to its capacity. This was the first and probably the last time in the history of that city when church pews were at a premium on Sunday night.

The men of this army were harmless for the most part. A great many of them were worthless fellows, but the vast majority were honest workingmen who had been thrown out of employment, and owing to the circumstances of the times were unable to find anything to do, and, consequently, were in despair. Their plan was to go quietly across the country and when they arrived in Washington simply to fold their arms and ask the government what it was going to do for them. Only a few of the men of Coxey's army reached Washington and the spectacular scheme failed. It, however, emphasized the need of the time and showed up the extreme danger in the situation. 137

**The Unemployed.** The unemployed man presents a real problem to society. Carlyle said, "A man willing to work, and unable to find work is, perhaps, the saddest sight that fortune's inequality exhibits under the sun." Many well-to-do people living in comfortable circumstances, with position and income assured, assert that if a man wants work he can always find it, and that the only men unemployed are the shiftless and the lazy. Right now the war has absorbed all the surplus labor, and a condition exists different from any that we have previously known in the history of America. Immigration has been cut off and the demands for new enterprises have called for hundreds of thousands of new workers, so that at the present time there is no reason why any man should be out of work. In fact, so serious has the need for men become that the latest interpretation put upon the draft law amounts practically to a conscription of labor for all men of draft age.

**The Banana Boat.** A whistle sounded on the Mississippi river just below New Orleans early one afternoon last summer. It was a dismal, rainy day, and as the long screech died away the sound seemed almost prophetic of some coming disaster. Soon a huge steamship painted drab-gray, with a red diamond upon its smoke-stack, nosed its way from out of the mist and crowded in close to the pier. Scarcely were the ropes fast when there began to appear on the dock men black and white, ragged, unkempt fellows who had hurried from the near-by saloons, poolrooms, and other lounging places. This boat was just in from Central America loaded down with bananas. Two enormous unloaders were set up alongside of the vessel. The machinery of these started and an endless belt, which traveled to the bottom of the hold and out again, came up loaded with bunches of bananas. The fruit was brought down and thrown upon a table. Here two men, standing one on either side of the traveling belt, would take hold of a bunch of bananas and place it upon the shoulders of a third man, who in turn carried it off to the waiting freight-car. Fifty men went to work almost immediately; twenty an hour later in the afternoon; and at nine o'clock that night, under the glare of the electric lights, ninety-two men were busily engaged in carrying the fruit and storing it in the freight-cars. 138

All night long the men worked at a feverish pace. They were organized so that they formed an endless chain. The first two continuously placed the fruit upon the third man's shoulder, and he in turn stepped along as fast as those ahead of him would allow. When he was relieved of his bunch of bananas at the car door by two men on the inside who stowed the fruit away, he would take his place in the line of men returning for more fruit. Round after round this group of men passed, until in less than seventeen hours of constant work every banana was taken off the boat. When we realize that this boat carried nearly ten thousand tons, we get some idea of the activity of the workers.

I said to one of the men in the line, "How often do you get a job of this kind?"

"That depends," he replied. "A banana boat comes in about every three weeks and then I have about two days' work." 139

"What do you do between times?" I asked.

"Well, not much of anything. Sometimes one thing, sometimes another. Just kind of live along between the trips of these boats."

**Millinery and Dresses.** A little girl in Chicago wanted to learn the millinery business. She easily found a position. It only paid four dollars a week, but she was learning, so she was willing to begin at that price. Just before Easter the shop where she worked was crowded with orders, and she was forced to work from early in the morning until late at night. When Easter was over she said, "All I know about making hats is how to sew wire together and line frames." The girls in this shop who had been so busy were now thrown out of employment. They either had to find other employment or else live on what little money had been saved during the rush time. "I can never get ahead," said one of the workers in the shop. "Last year I was able to make just enough to carry me through the dull season." What is true of the millinery trade is also true of some lines of garment trades, especially the makers of evening gowns. At one period they are rushed to the limit of their endurance: at another there is nothing to do. Business demands cannot be regulated perfectly. The clerks in the stores at Christmas time must expect to do extra work.

**The Vagabond Workers.** One night in Seattle I saw a large group of men gathered on a street corner and singing at the top of their voices. The strange chorus was led by a young fellow who was standing on a soap box. The song he was teaching was mere doggerel; the refrain of it being "Oh, Mr. Block, you take the cake. You make me ache." The leader would pronounce a line, then say, "Now, fellow workingmen, all sing and sing with all your might. Let us show them what we can do." And the motley crowd shouted out the words of the song which told the story of a poor "blanket stiff"—a fellow who has to carry his blankets when he goes looking for a job—who got through work in one place, went into an employment agency to ask for a new job and was told that if he would put up the money he could get the job. He paid two dollars and was sent out into the woods. When he got off the train there was no job in sight. He came back and made his complaint, but nothing could be done because that was the method by which the employment agency made its money. He then applied to Samuel Gompers of the Federation of Labor, but all he got from Gompers was "sympathy." This man's name was "Block," and to accentuate the significance of the name the leader would hold up his hand, stop the crowd from singing, and then tapping on his head would say, "What was his name?" and they would reply "Block." "What was it made of?" and they shouted "wood." 140

It was amusing to listen to this crowd but in the midst of the grotesquery of the leader and the raucous howling of the song there was a moral quality and a spiritual earnestness that even a casual listener could feel. These men had just come in from the woods. They were laborers who had been lumbering all through the winter, and now at the end of the season were thrown on the city with nothing to do. The Industrial Workers of the World, that revolutionary organization that was formed in Colorado early in this century, had found a fertile soil in the minds of these men and had not been slow to sow the seed. I stood with one of the group and listened. My friend was an elderly man who had just reached the city from the mines in Alaska. In his youth he had been a miner in Wales. Said he, "This carries me back to the days of my boyhood. The Welsh sang as these men do, and the discontent of the miners in our district gathered headway under the leadership of the local Methodist preacher. The men sang and from their singing began an enthusiasm that rolled throughout the whole region in a wave of protest against the bitter conditions under which we were forced to work. We got results. If these men keep on singing, some day they are going to make their message heard." The main reason for the I. W. W. and similar organizations is that nothing has been done for the laborer who is at the bottom of the industrial ladder. He is considered a tramp, pushed into the out-of-the-way places, forced to do the hardest, most perilous work, and society forgets him. He is a bum, a tramp, or hobo. No one has a good word for him. Every effort to improve his condition is looked upon with disfavor. This little poem expresses the feeling of many of these men: 141

"The world is housed, and homed, and wived,  
It takes no note as I pass by.  
Nobody shared in the life I lived,  
Nobody'll share in the death I die.

"East, west, north, and south I've hiked,  
Seen more things than I'd care to tell;  
Part of the world that I've seen I liked—  
None of it liked me overwell.

"I cheated once—or twice—in my time,  
But the joy of crime I never could see,  
So I never went the way of crime—  
No pull-and-haul with the cops for me. 142

"I never was low like the hobo crew,  
Though I've begged my bread on many a day,  
But I always worked when they asked me to,  
To pay for a meal or a bed in the hay."

There has never been any great success in the attempts to organize the vagabond workers. The membership in the I. W. W. and similar organizations rises or declines so rapidly that it is almost impossible to quote any figures that are dependable. Professor Parker reported the results of a careful study made in California in 1915 and which showed that there were at that time 4,500 affiliated members in that state. The membership fluctuates, however, because when trouble arises in any industry in the West the membership in the I. W. W. always doubles or triples. In one strike in Washington the organization claimed membership of 3,000, but there were about 7,000 on strike. The organization of these workers and the explosive quality of their teachings form a real menace to society. The philosophy of the I. W. W. is expressed in the words of one of the leaders who explained that according to their code there is no such thing as right or wrong. He said, "We know what people

mean when they discuss these questions but they have no significance in our lives. The only principle that we acknowledge is the principle of expediency. It is better not to break windows because it will get us into trouble with the authorities, but the abstract principle of breaking windows and destroying property being wrong makes no appeal to us whatever.” The man who gave utterance to this statement was formerly a Presbyterian minister. He was in charge of a church in a steel city and his contact with the workers gained for him a clear understanding of the poverty and despair that grow out of their conditions. This vision and the sight of the people on the other side of the social gulf, who were living most recklessly in the midst of their luxuries, led him to become one of the leading radicals in the labor world. The philosophy of the I. W. W., and the power of this organization are increasing just in proportion as we fail to correct the abuses that now destroy the lives of men. 143

**Causes.** In this country we have made little effort to prevent the consequences which are certain to follow the operation of the law of supply and demand. We have acted upon the theory that all we need to do is to allow natural law to have a chance for its operation. Individualism is praised as being the means of saving the worker. The result is that there is a shockingly large amount of labor turn-over each year—that is, each job has two or three men working on it. We have presented to us also the spectacle of thousands of men who form an army of migratory laborers. In one part of the United States there will be a labor shortage and in another there will be a shortage of work to be done.

If we would know what makes the tramp and the vagabond we must become acquainted with some man who tramps the highway with his pack on his back. His wife and his children were left years ago in some Eastern city when he went out West to find a job. The job which he secured did not keep him long enough for him to become a resident or even to feel settled in the community. The place in which he slept and lived was a bunk-house, dirty, filthy, and filled with vermin; and the food he had to eat was of such poor quality and so wretchedly cooked that he would not have eaten it at all except that he was almost famished and it was all that he could get. 144

The communities in which this wanderer of the road finds himself have always been against him. The children in the homes are told that if they are not good the tramps will get them. He looks upon the law as being framed especially to cause him inconvenience, and the officers of the law are his special enemies. The only places that are open to him are the saloons, the low dives, and the cheap rooming house. The work he does pays him fairly good wages for a short period; but when he is paid off, with the money in his pocket, there is nothing for him to do but to get drunk, and this he proceeds to do; nor does he sober up until every cent is gone. Then he turns to another job if he can find one. Of course, if he would save his money and try to live a decent life he might be able to get on. But as the pastor of a church in southern Washington said: “Down in my parish, which is in the woods, I have in the winter-time about 1,500 men to look after. They are a rough, hard set who have been gathered together through the employment agencies in Seattle and Tacoma. They believe in nothing and in no one. They are made victims of every possible tyranny. All that they have is their job, and their roll of blankets. The bunk-houses in which they live are so bad that a self-respecting dog would not stay in them. The food they eat is absolutely rotten. They are treated like cattle, with the exception that a valuable steer will receive greater protection, for it is not as easy to get another good working steer as it is to get another hobo to take the place of the worker that is lost. When these drifters are paid off the forces that ruin men get hold of them immediately, and for the next few days they spend their time carousing and getting drunk. The lumber companies in our community are making money fast, but they are destroying men, and scattering dynamite all over the Northwest that threatens to explode in a social upheaval that will shake the whole western part of the United States.” These are the words of a sober-minded Presbyterian pastor and one who has no sympathy for dangerous social doctrines. He is simply speaking out of his heart and from his experience. 145

In another district one of the officials of a mining company said in his annual report: “This last year was one of unprecedented success. We were able to work continuously and with little difficulty because we had at all times an average of three men available for each job. This gave us workers always ready to our hand.” As was said before, the war changed this situation very largely, and for the time being the old causes which operated to increase the number of the unemployed have been removed. There is more work than possibly can be done, and every worker has his job cut out for him. In a letter I have just received the writer says, “The war offers the right-minded people of America the greatest opportunity in history. We can correct ancient wrongs and right old abuses if we will only put our minds to this task.” But there are certain considerations that must be taken into account if we would remove the causes which make for unemployment and discontent that accompany it. The community’s responsibility for the man out of work does not end with securing a job for him, nor with the regularizing of industry, nor in supporting labor exchanges. We are all creatures of circumstances and influenced strongly by our environment. Therefore, every community ought to provide adequate means for recreation, and decent places where men and women can gather under wholesome conditions. 146



**The casual workers are the true servants of humanity.**

**A Man and His Job.** One of the slogans of the French Revolution was "The right to work." Man has a proprietary right in his job and it is the only property that most men possess; when he loses it he is losing everything. Some years ago the Idaho legislature passed a law which guarantees to every citizen resident in the state for six months, ninety days public work a year at ninety per cent. of the usual wage if married or having a dependent, and seventy-five per cent. of the usual wage if he is single. Industry has never been organized so as to include the best interests of the worker. There are hundreds of thousands more workers needed in the good years than in the bad years. In every business special calls arise for more workers to be used for a few weeks or a few days at a time. The reserves of labor necessary to meet these seasonal or casual demands can be reduced to a minimum, providing that industry is regularized. As it is, the individual worker suffers in the machine, or system, that he has helped to create. The modern plan of organization provides for managers, superintendents, foremen, clerks, and skilled men—all dependent for their position upon the group of unskilled men or semi-skilled workers at the bottom. 147

It is obvious that we cannot legislate so that lumber can be taken out of the forests all the year round, nor can the casual workers—farm laborers, fruit-, and hop-pickers and others—have continual employment. What we can do, however, is to mobilize the labor forces of the country with the same care and ability that we have mobilized our national army. Through a chain of labor exchanges extending throughout the whole nation we can bring the man and the job together. When the lumber employees in the woods of Washington finish with their season they could be brought down into California to work on the farms and in the fields; and then farther down as the fruit ripens, following on straight through the state. In the autumn they could be brought back again to take their places in the woods.

Another thing that will be required is a changed attitude toward the men at work. Just as long as we assume that the workers employed at these tasks are worthless, just so long will they try to live down to their reputation. A Methodist minister in Seattle believed that the average "blanket stiff" had enough good in him to respond to right treatment. He formed a cooperative company and bought up a number of mills in the state. He hired a lot of the commonest workers and sent them out to the woods to work in these mills. Instead of attempting to make a big profit on the labor of the men, he allowed the men to share in the management and profits of the concern. The result was that when all the other mills were having labor troubles he was able to work right straight along, and where others failed he made a big success. The reason was that he faced the issues squarely and fairly, and treated the men as he would himself like to be treated. 148

**Sin and Inefficiency.** If every individual was normal you could lay the full responsibility upon him and feel that when he failed it was perfectly just that he should suffer, and we would not need to worry about the conditions under which people labor. But sin enters in and with depravity comes inefficiency. Business cannot be conducted as a benevolent enterprise. A man or woman's wage must be earned by the worker or else it cannot be continued. When a man by drink or other excesses destroys his efficiency it is impossible for him to maintain himself in a position that pays a large wage and which offers steady employment; so he drifts into the ranks of the casual workers. He is unfit for regular work by temperament and habit; but he is willing to work for a short time, even though he works extremely hard. In dealing with the problem of the casual worker then, we have two things to take into account: First, we must regularize industry as far as possible, doing away with the extraordinary demands for certain periods that are always followed by long periods of idleness. In the second place, we must in some way lay hold of the individual man, and by surrounding him with the best influences, make it possible for him to live a life of righteousness and sobriety. In other words, we must reduce the amount of seasonal work to the minimum and increase the efficiency of the worker to the maximum.

We should never lose sight of the fact that personal qualities enter in to complicate this question and make its solution more difficult. The drunkenness and vice of the individual man keep him in a position where it is almost impossible for him to be helped or for him to help himself. The man out of work degenerates. His moral fiber is weakened; he becomes susceptible to every evil. The process by which many a criminal has been made was begun in the hour that the man found himself thrown out of employment. Perhaps it was not his own fault in the first place, but having once been faced with the grim alternative of seeing his family suffer or of yielding to some criminal act, he accepted the latter as the easiest solution of the problem and a way out of his 149

difficulties.

As long as a person is able to provide the necessities of life and to keep himself and his family in a fair degree of efficiency through the use of an adequate amount of food, shelter, and clothing, the chances are that he will develop a new and stronger interest in the things that have to do with the moral and social side of his life. On the other hand, when the means of livelihood are taken away, and a man finds himself denied the opportunity of work—which means that the things that are necessary to satisfy the most fundamental needs of himself and his family cannot be secured—the moral effect on this man, his family, and society can hardly be exaggerated. The whole structure of our life is dependent upon and presupposes regularity of employment. Not only does the fact of being out of a job cut off a man's means of livelihood, but the psychological effect of being forced to live without working, taken together with the breaking of habits acquired by years of industry, puts a severe strain on the standards of morality which have been built up by long and painful processes. The unemployed man may react in one of two ways: he will become an anarchist and spend himself in fighting the system under whose injustice he suffers, or he will give up the struggle and become a drifter upon the tides of life, a social outcast. 150

**The Jungle.** The best thing in Upton Sinclair's story of the conditions in the stock-yards in Chicago is the little picture he gives of the man who finally in despair gave up the struggle for a living, got on a train, and went out as far west as the train would carry him. When he left the railroad track he wandered into a field and lay down beside a stream. Feeling hungry after a while he arose and went to a near-by house and asked for something to eat. This was the first time he had ever begged but the woman at the door was considerate of him and he got his food. Then he returned and lay down again in the rich grass and went to sleep. When he awoke he took off his clothes and had a bath in the creek, then getting out of the water he dressed himself and again lay down; put his hands behind his head and looked up into the blue sky. All of a sudden it occurred to him that he was now getting more out of life than he ever had before. He had worked and worried and all he ever got was just barely enough to eat. Now he had all he wanted to eat, a good place to lie and dream, the pure air of heaven fanning his face, the blue sky over his head, and no work to do. "Why should a man work, anyway? What's the use?" he said. This philosophy made him a tramp.

Unemployment must be recognized as an evil in and of itself. For the man out of work meals and lodging should be secured. The church has done much in this regard. The soup-kitchens have been so much an adjunct of so many churches that some of our evangelists have come to refer to the soup-kitchen type of Christianity as being a recognized type. The church knows the methods for charity and relief. We must go further than this. The church's program for the casual laborer should include the education of the community regarding the necessity of regularized industry, bringing it about so that, for instance, hats will be made not only when hats are needed but ahead of time. And, too, there should be public exchanges for employment covering the country and a systematized distribution of public work. 151

The forming of a comprehensive plan for unemployment insurance is another step forward. Other countries have found this kind of insurance a wise provision. Insurance against every form of disaster is common. We insure a perfect day for a parade. We insure the ships and their cargoes. We insure our lives. Why not insure men against the greatest of all disasters that can befall them, the loss of their jobs? We need not worry about the probability that unemployment insurance is likely to take away the initiative of the men. The danger of moral deterioration in such a case is much less than that which actually grows out of the periods of unemployment.

The church is involved in the whole situation. The men dependent on their wages for a living find their means of livelihood cut off and they naturally turn to the church. A year before the war broke out the unemployed in several cities marched into the churches and demanded help. Some of the churches felt that they were being encroached upon. A committee in one church forced the janitor to sweep the entire building with a solution of formaldehyde, for, as the chairman of the committee said, "You never know what diseases these dreadful people have." It is undoubtedly true that the churches are always expected to do more than it is possible for them to do. At the same time the unemployed man has the right to feel that if the church is a fundamental institution for the salvation of individuals, for the remaking of society, and the reconstruction of industrial life, it cannot evade the issue nor fail to shoulder its responsibility. To open the church as a sleeping place and to feed the hungry is not enough. 152

**The War and the Future.** The world war has brought us face to face with a new task. The United States and Canada are at present the producing nations of the world. The Anti-Loafer laws now being carried through are cleaning out the cabarets, the poolrooms, the theaters, and other places where idle men congregate. It will be years before we are faced with the same serious situation that has faced us in the past. However, when our huge armies are demobilized and "Johnny comes marching home," there will be a new problem which will have to be considered. How can these men be fitted back into industrial life without increasing the number of unskilled and semi-skilled workers to such a degree that we will again be faced with a huge army of unemployed?

In periods of unemployment it is the common laborer who suffers most. We have failed to realize this. And yet he makes a big contribution to all progress. You cannot build a bridge without him and, in fact, he is used in every enterprise. Because of his lack of skill, and also because of his too common habits of living, we call these men tramps and hobos, and refer to them in the mass as common laborers. As a matter of fact no man who does any work is a common man. They are ignorant for the most part; vicious in many cases; some are lazy, drunken, shiftless—all of these things; but at the same time they are the men who are cutting down the trees, sawing up the logs, forming them into rafts, floating them down the river, and putting them through the mills. They are the men who are loading the ships at our docks, the men who pick hops and work in the harvest fields; pick the fruit and do the thousand other things that have to be done when the season is right. Besides these, there are the thousands of women who are driven at top speed at certain periods of the year through the unusual demands of industry, and then are thrown out of employment for long periods. Ignorant, unknown, friendless, and made the victims of industrial conditions over which they have no control, they seem of so little importance in the vast system—as merely the lesser cogs in the lesser wheels—that very few know of their existence except when 153

something goes wrong with the cogs, and the whole machine is shut down because of the break. But without them the machine could not run at all.

The casual workers are the true servants of humanity, and yet they are the ones that are passed by unnoticed; the ones that rarely if ever are influenced by the church. They constitute a great army of neglected men and women, a challenge to the church, a menace to society, and a danger to our commonwealth; and all because they are neglected and unknown.

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# CHAPTER X

## THE WORLD OF INDUSTRIAL WOMEN

Any one who reads history with his eyes open will be impressed with the fact that this world has always been considered a man's world. At one period woman was denied every right; she was the slave of man. Rome and Greece treated her as a child. Medieval ages found her working in the fields and supporting large families, while her husband and son fought for rights that could never be hers. The familiar figure of a woman and an ox yoked together and driven by a man well represents the spirit of the past. The Hebrew rabbis made many proverbs relating to woman's condition: "When Jehovah was angry, he made woman." "Woman is an afterthought of God." "A man of straw is worth more than a woman of gold." The statement has been made and repeated times out of number that woman's sphere is the home. This statement is true, but not unqualifiedly so; in fact, home is no more a woman's place than it is a man's. Home is based upon mutual responsibility, consideration, and the willingness to share mutual burdens. There is no sense in the old saw, "Woman should leave her home but three times—when she is christened, when she is married, and when she is buried." This is on a par with another old proverb: "Woman, the cat, and the chimney should never leave the house." We have outlived these archaic notions, and to-day, while we recognize as never before that home is woman's true sphere, we realize that home is the man's true sphere also. 156

The home is the foundation-stone of our civilization. It is the strength and safety of society. Rome fell when her homes were destroyed. Public morals are gaged by the morals of the home. In the face of the divorce court, with its incessant grind of business, it is time to raise a voice of protest against the spirit of careless indifference which views the home as a mere boarding-house, and "a place to stay away from." Who is the chief offender, man or woman? The woman's club, the woman's place in politics, woman's interest in industry and in reform have all been cited as being the potent forces at work destroying the home. As a matter of fact it is the man who is chiefly responsible. The strength, the vigor, and the purity of the American home, which show to-day in the splendid type of soldiers that are being sent across the seas to fight in the battle for democracy, speak well for the work of woman. The average man knows where he lives, the number of the house, and the name of the street on which it stands. He is able to recognize his children usually when he meets them. He pays the bills and takes a general interest in the appearance and up-keep of the establishment; but when it comes to bearing his share of the heavy burdens, he is a poor partner in the concern. The wife and mother is the home-maker. We know how well she has done her part.

**Woman and Necessity.** Women have chosen their work because of necessity as well as because of opportunity. A mother of two boys was left a widow with no money. Her people were all poor. If she went back home, the added burden would be an injustice to her parents and would work hardship upon her brothers and sisters. She had too much self-respect to take this course. She knew little about business and had no trade, but she found work in a store and by hard study at night and close application became an expert saleswoman. She sent her boys through college. One of them to-day is a successful lawyer and has served as senator in the state legislature. The other is a practising physician in one of the large cities of the Middle West. Both of these men are eminently successful. This woman contributed more than her share to society and was cheerful and happy in her work. In speaking of her one of the partners in the firm where she was employed said, "There is no person connected with this firm who has created such a wholesome atmosphere as she has done." 157

A little black-eyed boy was arrested in the north end of Boston and sent to the reform school. He was eleven years old and had become the leader of a gang of boys who had been robbing show-windows. His mother was a Jewess; his father had deserted her and left three children, one just a baby in arms. This woman could find nothing to do that would pay her enough to enable her to provide actual necessities for her children. The baby died and in the distress of the hour the mother appealed to a neighbor. She helped her financially and found a position for her in one of the millinery shops of the city. This woman, in reality a widow, had been able to struggle along but was not very capable. She fought her battle as bravely as she could and was always cheerful, but it was almost too much for her to do the earning that was necessary. Her little boy, without proper guardianship, with no place to play but the streets, got into trouble. It was not only because the mother was at work and thus unable to train her boy, that this new trouble came, but because there is no proper and adequate provision made for women left in her position. 158

The woman of the family is always the most overburdened member. She has serious responsibilities and the heaviest tasks. When she is left with the care of children, it is inevitable that she should turn to industry for her own and her children's support. Another group of workers are the young girls who go into work for a few years until they are married. Still another are the young women who feel that there is no reason why women should not have the same chance to make a place for themselves in the world of industry that is accorded to men. We must come to believe in the independence of both men and women and grant to each the right to choose his or her own place and work in life. A newspaper woman in Cincinnati said: "I determined that I had qualifications necessary for success as a writer. I went to school and studied hard with the intention of becoming a reporter. When I received my diploma, I was as proud as any member of the class, but not half as happy on that day as I was a week later when I received my first assignment from the city editor of a paper that had employed me 'on trial.' I have succeeded and am happy in my work." Why should any one attempt to limit this woman in her vocation? She has chosen and chosen well. She is making her contribution and it is just as important as that made by thousands of the best men in similar positions. 159

**In War Time.** Since the war began nearly a million and a quarter additional women have been brought into the industries of Great Britain. This is an increase of nearly forty per cent. of the number employed in July, 1914. Moreover, the percentage of the increase is rising. In France we find the same situation. In the United States as the war goes on larger numbers of women are taking places as wage-earners. Women are replacing men in running elevators in all public buildings, working in hotels, as conductors on street-car lines, guards on subway trains, ticket sellers, baggage agents, and crossing tenders in the railroad service. Thousands more are



going into the different forms of agricultural work. Besides these new pursuits, women are running the lathes in the shops and factories, while thousands are employed in the making of munitions. Probably it is safe to say that for every man who has gone to the front at the present time there is a woman in America who is doing the man's work.

A study of the conditions shows that nearly all the work done by women in the warring nations is unskilled or semi-skilled. There are not very many opportunities for advancement and most of the women feel that they are simply working in an emergency; hence there is not a chance of their becoming efficient as skilled workers. The ability of these workers is remarkable, especially when we take into consideration the fact that most of the women had no training before the war. In the working of automatic machines where technical skill is of less value than carefulness, attention, and dexterity, women are much more efficient than men. In a report made upon the conditions in the employment of women in Great Britain during the war, is this statement concerning the efficiency of women: "In regularity, application, accuracy, and finish women have proved very satisfactory."

160

**Quality of Work.** In the work that women are able to do, they learn quickly, more so than the men employed in the same places; and they increase the output above what was usual with the men workers. The experience in the United States in pre-war times proves the efficiency of the women workers. The treasury department employs women for the detecting of counterfeits in paper money. After a bad bill has gone through half a dozen banks, and has been subjected to the closest scrutiny, and yet has not been detected, these experienced women can detect it by its "feel." According to statistics color-blindness is much more prominent in men than in women. A noted educator is authority for the statement that in the public schools four per cent. of all the boys are color-blind, while only one tenth of one per cent. of the girls are color-blind. It is now generally conceded that the sight is the most intelligent of all the senses. The average woman, no matter what she undertakes, will work harder to make herself proficient than will the average man. One result of so many women entering into industry is to raise the grade of employment and make the workers more competent. It may not seem that this would be the result at first, but that rather the reverse would be true. It was the entering of women into the ranks of the physicians that changed the meager ten or eleven months' course of the medical college into the four years' course that is required to-day.

161

There never has been a time when women were not in industry. When the loom left the home, women followed it into the factory. More than eight million women and girls were employed in gainful occupations outside the home in the United States just before the war began. This number has been increased, yet it is not out of proportion to the number of women in the country. It is logical that women should continue in industry. A woman must live, and for her living a certain amount of money is required. This money must be given to her or she must earn it; not only that, but the women of to-day will demand the right to do some constructive work in the midst of the new conditions under which we live.

**The Field of Women's Activity.** Certain vocations are closed to women. All those occupations which demand great physical strength belong of right to man. The heavy work in the steel-mills, much of the work in structural iron trades, wood-work, bridge-building, stone masonry, heavy carpentry, mining, smelting, refining minerals, and the heavy work of shoveling and lifting are men's tasks. Many of the trades are also closed to women, because in these trades it takes at least five years' apprenticeship before a man is able to earn a salary. Women do not care to enter into such a long apprenticeship. They will not give five years to non-productive work, for the great majority of women have not accepted industrial work in preference to married life. If the right man comes along, the average woman would feel that as a home-maker cooperating with her husband she could accomplish more than by continuing alone as an industrial unit. Of this attitude Miss Alice Henry says, "Give her fairer wages, shorten her hours of toil, let her have a chance of a good time, of a happy girlhood, and an independent, normal woman will be free to make a real choice of the best man. She will not be tempted to accept passively any man who offers himself, just in order to escape from a life of unbearable toil, monotony, and deprivation."<sup>4</sup>

162

<sup>4</sup> Alice Henry, *The Trade Union Woman*.



Press Illustrating Service.

**In the army of laborers the girl and the woman are drafted as well as the boy and the man.**

**A Woman's Chances in a Man's World.** Woman is an organic part of society. This means that she is a part of every one of the organizations that enter into modern society. She has always had a part in literature. Julia Ward Howe in writing the "Battle Hymn of the Republic," contributed not only to our wealth of song, but made a direct contribution toward the winning of the freedom of the slaves. Harriet Beecher Stowe also gave her remarkable aid to the same cause. George Eliot was one of the great novelists. In the field of reform Frances E. Willard takes first place. Maud Ballington Booth, the "little mother" of thousands of prisoners, is making a new world for the men into which they may enter when they leave the penitentiary door. It is the Pilgrim mothers rather than the Pilgrim fathers who ought to be given the credit for New England's contribution to national history. All other attempts to colonize failed because the adventurers in their quest for gold and fortunes did not bring their women with them. Anna the prophetess of old in the temple and Susan B. Anthony in the suffrage cause each represent an age and an enthusiasm and an ability to persist until results are achieved. 163

Now we have a new situation. Many people view with concern the increasing numbers of women that are employed in gainful occupations in the United States and Canada at the present time. The employment of women presents not one question but many. The problem that is familiar to nearly all housekeepers—that of securing domestic service—presses upon our attention the number of women employed in this kind of work. Domestic service engages the largest number of women outside of the home. Women are now doing everything that men have done, and in most cases are doing the work just as well, while in many occupations they show an efficiency that men have never achieved. Charles Kingsley's phrase, "For men must work and women must weep," did very well in that age, but under the economic conditions under which we are living to-day, the contrast he makes is absolutely inappropriate. The question of work and workers has been settled. In the army of laborers the girl and the woman are drafted as well as the boy and man.

Before the great war began there was in the United States about one woman worker for every five men. This number has been greatly increased. Of the three hundred specific occupations the census of 1900 enumerated there were only two occupations in which women were not engaged in some capacity. The census of 1910 gives a larger number of occupations, and not one in which women are not employed. Women are on the street-car lines and are line women and telegraphers, riveters, blacksmiths, steam-boiler makers, brass workers, and foundry workers. In fact, no work seems too hard or too heavy for some woman to make a success of it. From the time of the invention of the cotton-gin, which brought more women into the world of industry than any other one machine, to the present day we have the story of women and men gaining larger visions, receiving better wages, and together making the world a more habitable place for us all. 164

**Justice to Women Workers.** It would be impossible for us to manage business as we do to-day without the efficient help of secretaries, stenographers, telegraph-operators, and other office assistants, nearly all of whom are women. The question arises as to what treatment a woman should receive. For some reason, when a woman does a piece of work, no matter how well it is done, or howsoever efficient she becomes, we have a feeling that

she should receive less pay for the same work than a man would receive. There are many reasons why women are suffering from this injustice. One arises from the conditions which bring a large number of women into industry.

A number of salesgirls, some stenographers, and a great many helpers in different industrial firms live at home and work for what is known as pin-money. They are not primarily dependent upon their wage. The money comes in handy and they can use it to good advantage. They are not forced to work, hence, they can and will accept a lower wage than if they were absolutely dependent upon what they earn. "I receive \$3.50 a week for clerking in this store," said a bright girl in Chicago, "and I don't take anything from the floor-walkers. Whenever they try to order me around, they have got another guess coming. I don't have to work, and I let them know it. They are mighty lucky to get me." This was all right for this girl, but the fact that she was situated so that a salary of \$3.50 a week satisfied her made it possible for the firm to set that as a standard wage, and other girls who did have to take bossing from the floor-walkers, and were dependent upon their wages, were forced to accept what the firm offered. A friend of mine who has an interest in a dry-goods store holds that the average girl is not worth more than \$6 a week because she works simply to tide her over a few years until she gets married. He said, "I cannot afford to pay more than \$6 because my competitors pay this same rate to their clerks; and if I am going to sell goods I have to take into consideration the conditions in the trade."

165

Another thing that enters into the situation is the fact that women workers have never been as well organized as men. The points upon which the trade-union movement concentrates are the raising of wages, the shortening of hours, the diminution of seasonal work, the regulation of piece-work (with its resultant speeding up), the maintaining of sanitary conditions, the guarding of unsafe machinery, the making of laws against child labor which can be enforced, the abolition of taxes for power and for working materials (such as thread and needles), and of unfair fines for petty or unproved offenses. Miss Henry tells of a case in a non-union trade which suggests the reasons which make organization a necessity. "Twenty-one years ago in the bag and hemp factories of St. Louis, girl experts turned out 460 yards of material in a twelve-hour day, the pay being 24 cents per bolt, measuring from 60 to 66 yards. These girls earned \$1.84 per day. Four years ago a girl could not hold her job under 1,000 yards in a ten-hour day. The fastest possible worker can turn out only 1,200 yards, and the price has dropped to 15 cents a hundred yards. The old rate of 24 cents per bolt used to net \$1.80 to a very quick worker. The new rate to one equally competent is but \$1.50.

166

"The workers have to fill a shuttle every minute and a half or two minutes. This necessitates the strain of constant vigilance, as the breaking of the thread causes unevenness, and for this mishap operators are laid off for two or three days. The operators are at such a tension that they not only stand all day, but may not even bend their knees. The air is thick with lint which the workers inhale. The throat and eyes are terribly affected, and it is necessary to work with the head bound up, and to comb the lint from the eyebrows. The proprietors have to retain a physician to attend the workers every morning, and medicine is supplied free, as an accepted need for every one so engaged. One year is spent in learning the trade; and the girls last at it only from three to four years afterward. Some of them enter marriage, but many of them are thrown on the human waste-heap. One company employs nearly 1,000 women, so that a large number are affected by these vile, inhuman conditions. The girls in the trade are mostly Slovaks, Poles, and Bohemians, who have not been long in America. In their inexperience they count \$1.50 as good wages, although gained at ever so great a physical cost."<sup>5</sup> These wretched conditions are not uncommon. Thousands of women who are forced to earn their living and are contributing their full share toward making America the great commercial power she is to-day are laboring under just such injustice.

167

<sup>5</sup> Alice Henry, *The Trade Union Woman*.

**Women and Unions.** Most of the union leaders have viewed with alarm the increasing number of women that are being drafted into industry each year. The reasons for this are clear to all who know the history of trade unionism and know how the workmen greet the coming into industry of any new group of available workers. The war has made labor conditions chaotic; and the shortage in certain lines has given opportunity for the employers to substitute women for men, because women for the most part are economically defenseless and, therefore, can be secured for a lower wage than men. Women are more easily exploited than men because they have not been so long in the industrial struggle with its keen competition. They are less able to appreciate the value of cooperation for mutual protection. One union leader said, "I look upon the large number of women who are being drafted into industry as a real menace to the women themselves, to society, and to labor." The situation presents itself something like this: Organized labor has a very close relation in its feeling to all labor and to all the different groups of workingmen organized and unorganized; and it regards an injustice to an unorganized worker as being indirectly an injustice to itself. The reason for this sympathy is of course primarily selfish, for the union man knows that if his fellow laborers in another trade are unprotected, and an injustice is practised upon them, it will be only a short time until the same thing will be attempted upon the organized worker. If women go into competition with men under present conditions they will be employed rather than men because they can be secured for a lower wage. Look, for instance, at some of the cotton-mills in the South, where the whole family, father, mother, and two or three children all work, and the total wage of the family group amounts to just about what is considered a living wage.

168

The attitude of organized labor toward women workers is about the same as its attitude toward cheap foreign labor, and the reason for the feeling is due wholly to the fear that the women brought into the industry will lower wages and bring down the standard of living of the entire group. The attitude is dictated as a defense measure in behalf of the standard of living for all. The attitude of union labor is indefensible except as a measure of self-defense. It should be said, however, that union labor is not a unit in this attitude. There are a large number of broad-minded men in the ranks of the organized workers who recognize present conditions, and see that it is inevitable that larger numbers of women shall be employed in gainful occupations in the future. Instead of putting up the bars and attempting to keep women out, those who have given the matter most

thought are putting forth their efforts to organize the workers. The Women's National Trade Union League, of which Mrs. Raymond Robbins is the president, has rendered great service for the women workers of the nation. Legislation has been secured and minimum wages established in some places. But best of all this movement has been teaching the women workers the necessity of organization in order that they and other women may be protected, and that the women drafted into industry may not become a menace to the American standard of living which has been built up at such great pains and through such toilsome efforts. This league voices the protest of American working women against the notoriously bad conditions surrounding the work of women and children. 169

Women have always been taken into some of the men's unions, but the growth of certain trades—such as glove-making, coat- and suit-making, shirt, collar, and shirt-waist manufacturing—employing women almost exclusively made such cooperation impossible. These trades were organized after much effort on the part of the leaders of the Women's National Trade Union League. This organization has conducted several strikes in big cities in the last ten years, and in nearly every case has won. Girls strike just as hard as men. They have more persistence; are more willing to sacrifice and suffer and generally show more intelligence in conducting their affairs. They make good pickets and because of their aggressive, earnest work are successful. Their resources are not so great and when they are out of work they have more difficulty in getting temporary jobs. Another important feature of their problems is that the supply of non-union workers to take their places is almost unlimited.

**Women and the Church.** Women in all the Christian ages have recognized the church as their friend and in appreciation of what it has done they have worked unceasingly for its success. There is a big task before the church in behalf of women, and especially in the interests of the women laborers in industry. There is the opportunity for the church groups to influence the individual employer to improve conditions pending regulation by the community. In addition to the question of wages and hours the demands of the churches must involve the abolition of the speeding-up process by which, under the piece-work system, the amount of work required for a specified task is constantly increased. The fastest worker is used as the pace-maker, so that the wage of the slower worker continually drops, and the amount of work done by the fastest workers continually increases. The law may specify a minimum wage, but it cannot specify the amount of work to be done in each particular trade. 170

Here is where the church groups must cooperate with the working women themselves, and must assist them to secure some voice in determining the conditions under which they shall work. Legislation alone can never achieve the standards now demanded in common by the church and social workers; nor can they be realized by the benevolence of employers. If the health and morals of the community are not to suffer from the employment of women in industry, it can be accomplished only by the cooperation of working women to this end. The church must educate its community to think in terms of the greatest good to the greatest number. And this means that we must come to realize more than ever that the strength of the childhood of the nation is dependent upon the home; and that the strength of the home is dependent upon the physical, intellectual, and moral welfare of the women of the nation. It is possible for the church to accomplish much by arousing purchasers to the necessity of using their conscience in their shopping. Local white-lists of stores and factories which meet the Consumers' League conditions can be made by representative groups. The Consumers' League label and the labels of the organizations affiliated in the Women's Trade Union League should be demanded. They will protect the conscience of the buyer and assure him that his comfort is not being secured at the cost of strain upon the health and morals of the women of his city or nation. It is for the churches to make this fight for the working women a community issue. It is a religious issue, and the pulpit may help to realize these religious values in the lives of the working women. 171

When we pray "God save the people," it would be well for us to use our heads in our prayers, and to remember that the people will perish if we do not protect the womanhood which is the foundation of the home. God cannot save the people if we destroy the mothers of men.

# CHAPTER XI

## THE WORLD OF THE CHILD WORKERS

"No, we can't go to school, much as we'd like to. You see, school holds only a few weeks each year and we have to help with the tobacco."

This was the reply of a twelve-year-old girl to a question regarding her school work. She also informed the visitor that helping with the tobacco meant doing everything that was necessary to be done from the time the plants are set out until the leaves are finally cured. While the conversation was going on, this girl's eight-year-old sister came out of the barn, and the visitor said:

"Do you help with the tobacco, too?"

"Yep," was her reply, "I jest now been out wormin' it."

When asked what she meant by that she was utterly amazed that any one could be so ignorant as not to know that tobacco had to be wormed. To display her efficiency, she showed a tomato-can nearly full of worms that she had just brought in from the tobacco-field. To prove the quality of her catch, she held up a nice fat one and even offered to let the visitor take it if he so desired.

The Burley tobacco is made into plugs for chewing and is used in pipes. It is grown very extensively in central Kentucky. It was on one of these tobacco farms that this conversation took place. The worm that infests the plant looks like a caterpillar with a smooth skin. A small boy described it as a "bald-headed caterpillar." It has huge eyes and is twice the size of the woolly caterpillar. These creatures crawl all over the plants, and, because of their size and their voracious appetite, unless they are closely looked after, soon destroy all the leaves. The plants cannot be sprayed with poison for obvious reasons. The only prevention is to have the worms picked off by hand. This work falls to the lot of the boys and girls in the district. It is not a very congenial task, and it is hard work for the children stooping and raising the leaves as they toil all day in the burning sun. The little girls wore their sunbonnets tied under their chins but pushed back on their necks. They were barefooted and carried a tin can in one hand to hold the worms. They followed down each row peering under the leaves and picking off the worms. "Wormin' time" came just at the period when they ought to have been in school, but the tobacco had to be saved.

**The Beet-Fields.** There is a settlement of Russians near Billings, Montana. The fathers, mothers, and all the children work in the beet-fields. The work commences early in the spring when the beets have to be thinned out. Apparently no child is too young to pull beets. I saw boys in the beet-fields hoeing and the hoe-handle was almost as big as their little bare legs. When the crop is ready to harvest, the dirt is loosened about the beets and then they are pulled out by hand. The dirt is knocked off the roots and they are thrown to one side so that when a row of beets has been pulled they look like hay in a windrow. This work is heavy and hard, for a beet will average from seven to eight pounds, and by the time a person has lifted them all day long from five in the morning to seven at night, he has lifted several tons. After the beets are laid in rows they have to be topped with a strong, broad-bladed knife with a hook at the end. The beet is held against the knee of the worker, and with one stroke of the knife the top is severed from the root. In the beet-fields the beauties of nature are reduced to a dull round of production. According to a report made by the National Labor Committee there are five thousand children working in the beet-fields. "Money and not children is evidently the chief concern of these families" is the testimony given in the report made by Miss Ruth McIntire. She says: "An eleven-year-old girl was found, who with her sister aged seven, was kept out of school to work in the beet-field, although her family boasted that they had made ten thousand dollars last year from their farm. A certain parent declared to a school principal that his boy was worth \$1,000 for work during the beet season. If he went to school he was nothing but an expense."<sup>6</sup>

<sup>6</sup> "Children in Agriculture," by Ruth McIntire, a pamphlet published by the National Child Labor Committee.

**Mills, Factories, and Workshops.** With the development of the cotton-mill there was opened up a wide field for the exploitation of childhood. The spools full of thread have to be put on the machine and the empty spools removed. Boys and girls of six and eight years can do this work even better than a grown man or woman. One worker in a mill can take care of several machines, and if there is a child to care for the spools the machines can be run very economically, and the profits will be large. Children are used in works and on the breakers in the coal-mines. In one of the silver-mills in the Cœur d'Alene mining district boys stand on the platform alongside the incline down which the ore rushes in a ceaseless stream going into the breakers. As it passes down their quick eyes detect the rocks, and especially the hard round stones that get mixed up with ore. These they pick out and throw to one side. This is a boy's job. He can do it better than a man. Thus all modern processes of industry seem to be at work to make easy the utilization of the immature and the unskilled.

**Why Child Labor.** Because the machine produces so much it is possible to pay the child worker a wage that seems large in comparison to what a man would receive. The father of a boy who worked in one of the cotton-mills said, "I can make a dollar and seventy-five cents a day; but my nine-year-old kid makes anywhere from eighty cents to one dollar a day." The quick returns from child labor appeal to the selfishness of the manufacturer as well as to the greed of the father and mother. It is not good business to have a man do anything that a machine can do; nor is it good business to put a man to work on a job that a boy can do just as well as a man. This is the dictate of business. Children are an expense, and with the increased cost of living there is always a temptation to utilize the children in the family as economic assets. "I have three children," said a father in an Indiana town, "and all of them are working. We are about as happy a family as you want to find anywhere. Every month we are able to put a tidy sum in the savings-bank. Every member of the family is doing

his or her full share. But now on the other hand, my brother has four children and not one of them is earning a cent. The oldest girl had to have a college education and that is just a drain on the family. Poor George has never known a moment's ease or peace all of his life, what with an extravagant wife and four children eating their heads off!"

"Children are a blessing from the Lord," says an old writer. But the modern interpretation is that they are industrial units that can be utilized to advantage. Another reason for child labor, however, is found in the stress of poverty. Here is the story told by another father: "I love my children just as much as anybody in the city and I would like to see them have a good time. Joe is selling papers on the street, May working as cash-girl in a dry-goods store, Frankie clerking in a five-and-ten-cent store, and William working in a pencil factory—but not just because I do not care to provide for them. You see it is this way. My folks were poor and there were nine of us children. When I was eight years old I had to go to work. To begin with I got good wages for a boy, and until I was eighteen or nineteen years old I got along all right. Just about that time other fellows came in that had more than twelve dollars a week. I began at six dollars. Now I am nearly fifty, and am already considered an old man, and I am getting forty dollars a month. How can I support my children and give them an education such as they ought to have?" This indicates the vicious circle that is formed between poverty and childhood. Poverty forces children into industry. They help out for the time being but it is not very long before they have used up all their initiative, and have gone just as far as they can go; and as they grow older their wages are reduced, and in turn their children have to go into the mills to help them out. 178

**Poverty and the Cost of Living.** Poverty is the chief enemy of humanity. It is the parent of nearly all of our ills. This is the demon that drives bad bargains. For the present the high wages that are being paid for labor everywhere has done away with a great deal of poverty; but even yet wages have not been advanced in proportion to the increased cost of living. Last fall in Scranton a gentleman whom I met was bitterly complaining of the high price of coal. "If it is so high now what in the world will the poor people of the city do when the cold weather really comes?" Scranton is built on the largest anthracite coal deposit in the world. It is said that in some places the vein is seventy-five feet thick. It is estimated that at the present rate of production the supply will last for one hundred years. If, therefore, the poor people of Scranton suffer for lack of coal what about the people in other places? We learned last winter how essential coal is to the life of the people. Combinations all tend to keep the prices high; our foodstuffs, our fuel, our clothes are high, not because of the law of supply and demand, for we have learned how to circumvent that law, but we are all "jobbed by the jobbers."

Cold storage enables vast quantities of goods to be brought together and kept for a rise in the market. James E. Wetz, the so-called egg-king of Chicago, boasted early last winter that he had six million dozen eggs in storage, and in defiance of the Federal Prosecutor said, "All the investigation, legislative or otherwise, will not bring the price of eggs down this year. This is a broker's year and as for me I am going to sit tight, watch the prices climb up, and the public can pay. Nobody can do anything to me." In the French Revolution the queen appealed to one of the superintendents of finance and urged him to bring about a change, for the people were starving. He was obdurate, however, and in despair she said to him, "What will the people eat?" The contemptuous statement of the French official was, "Let the people eat grass." With the increased cost of living, and the manipulation of the market so as to keep prices always above a certain level, the present rise in wages is not as great as under ordinary circumstances. As long as there is poverty there will always be a strong incentive for the piratical industrial agent and the greedy conscienceless father to join hands in exploiting childhood. 179

**Effect of Child Labor.** The children of the nations at war have been called the second line of national defense. The men in the front line are the soldiers and the children growing up will take their places. If the childhood of the nations at war is destroyed, there is no chance for men to take the places of the ones who fall at the front. It is perfectly clear then that in times of war the nations are dependent upon the growing boys. If, however, the children in times of war form the second line of defense, in times of peace they form the first line of defense. The future of a nation is in the hands of the boys and girls of the present generation. They are the men and women that will take the places of the business men, the workers in the factories and workshops, and the tillers of the soil. They must become the future people who will be responsible for transportation, producers of the raw materials of civilization, and those who with cunning hands and ingenious brains work these raw materials into finished fabrics that go to make up the wonders of civilization and of the age. We are robbing the nation when we set children to work and make producers out of them. 180

**Physical Evils.** The effects of child labor are so bad and so well known that there is no need of entering into a formal discussion of the question. I taught a class of boys in a settlement in Chicago some years ago. One of the little fellows had hands that were as black as a Negro's, and he always held his hand in a certain position. One night after class I asked him to wait for a few minutes. I said, "Just a minute, Fred. I notice that you always hold your hand in a peculiar way." "Gee, it is the only way I can hold it," he replied. Then he showed me that his fingers were all pressed out of shape and that the black stain was ink that had been ground into his hand and into his very flesh. This boy looked to be about twelve years old but he was nearly nineteen. For almost nine years he had been working in a box factory. His job was to stencil the ends of boxes. He would lay the stencil on the wooden end of the boxes, then hold a brush resembling a shaving brush in his hand and this he would dip into the pot of black and rub it across the stencil. This constant work for ten hours a day for nine years had blackened his hands so that they would never be white again; and the constant pressure from the brush had deformed his right hand so that it was good for nothing else than to hold a stencil brush. 181

Nearly all the unemployable men who gather in our cities, who sleep on the park benches in good weather, eat wherever they can, and in cold weather fill up the municipal lodging houses or sleep upon the floors of the police stations, are physically unfit because they were forced to go to work at too early an age. The number of these men who are the victims of child labor is remarkable. A student of social conditions, who made a study of the problem of unemployment in this country in the winter of 1913-14 said, "We are coming to see the rank folly of putting children in at one end of the industrial hopper, grinding them up, and taking inefficient, no-account men out at the other end. We have thousands of children in the country doing work that they ought not

to do, and hundreds of thousands of men who can get nothing to do. We are not only faced with the problem today, but we are projecting the problem into to-morrow."

An accurate study of the life of the cotton-mill operators shows that the death-rate is so high that the inference is justified that work in the mill has an unfortunate influence upon those who follow it. Approximately half of the deaths of the operatives between fifteen and forty-five years of age are due to tuberculosis. Some years ago a book was published in defense of child labor in the South. The contention was that the workers in the cotton-mill were the most healthful of any people in the community. A report made by the United States government on the conditions in the mills shows that beyond any doubt the mill is a hazardous place for an adult, to say nothing of the child. In Massachusetts, according to reports quoted by Florence I. Taylor of the National Committee on Child Labor, it was found that the average fourteen-year-old mill boy was decidedly below standard in weight and height; and that the sixteen-year-old boys did not show a normal gain in height over the fifteen-year-old boys, and actually decreased two and a half pounds in average weight. "It was evident from the physical examination alone," said the report, "that there were boys whose interests from the point of view of physical welfare called for further attention after being permitted to go to work, whatever the work for which an employment certificate might be issued."

182

In the printing trades, in the paint shops, in glass works, in coal-mines, in fact, in every place where children are employed, we find the physical effects all bad. The undeveloped boy or girl is more susceptible to diseases that are inherent in the several businesses themselves. For instance, lead attacks a child worker more quickly than it would an adult. The fumes inhaled and the substances breathed in affect the child, and owing to the demands put upon his physical strength by his growing body it is difficult for nature to throw off the bad effects of these poisons.

**Child Labor and Education.** Another evil is the loss of educational opportunities. "There is plenty of time for the children to go to school," is a common saying among fathers and mothers. "I will send Mary to school next year," said a farmer in Oklahoma. "She wants to go on with her class. I cannot see that it makes any great difference whether she gets her learning this year or next." Mary was fourteen years old and we have no record of Mary's career, but it is quite probable that she never got a chance to go back to school. The school promised to boys and girls who are being used in gainful occupations is like the promise that St. Patrick made to the snakes in Ireland after he had put them all into a box. He promised that he would let them out to-morrow, but to-morrow never came, according to the old Irish legend.

183

A returning visitor from Russia tells us that the cause of Russia's collapse is to be found in the ignorance of the people. Only one per cent. of the people are able to read and write. In the midst of this dense ignorance the peasant groups believe everything and nothing; are easily influenced by anything no matter how unsubstantial, passionate, cruel, brutish. No wonder that Russia presents one of the most pitiable spectacles of any nation in the world's history. There is serious danger that in America we will produce a rural peasantry that is ignorant, and if such should be the case, there will grow up with this ignorance a narrow-minded prejudice against everything that we think is worth while in life. Education is the hope of this nation as well as that of every other nation.

**What of Disposition and Character?** Child labor has a bad effect on the disposition. It crushes initiative from the group, and while it will develop a type of leadership in the future, the leadership is not that of free, broad-minded Americans, but is self-assertive cheap, tricky, and clannishly shrewd. For instance, I was told that the children attending school in an Arkansas city who came from the mill district were the leaders in all the sports. I asked some of the boys about this, and named to them several who I had been told were leaders. The reply was that these fellows were not leaders but were bullies. "No matter what we play, they want to run everything, and if we do not do what they want us to do, we have a fuss." The struggle in the mill and the bearing of responsibilities had led the mill boys to rely upon themselves. They knew that they could never get anything unless they got it for themselves and by the most direct and brutal means. In an age when a new emphasis is being put upon cooperation any power that warps the disposition and creates wrong ideals is a real menace.

184

**Robbers of Childhood.** "Ketch," cried a small lad as he turned with the ball in his hand just as he was entering the mill door at the end of the thirty minute noon period of freedom. The boy to whom he had called, and who had been playing ball with him during this period raised his hands preparatory to catching the ball. Then he dropped them to his side and said, "Naw, don't throw it, else we'll get fined for not comin' in on time after the whistle blew." No time for play! Thirty minutes for lunch and out of that thirty minutes these boys had taken as much as possible for a game of ball. By night they would be so tired that there would be no inclination to play. They would stand around and talk a little, or sit on the front porch for an hour after supper, and then crawl into bed and sleep until aroused by the whistle of the factory early in the morning. This was the life of these children. The only period in their lives when they might have been free was taken away from them and they were made to work in the mills of industry, grinding out the raw materials of civilization which go into the very foundation of our society, and grinding out at the same time the joy of life and the possibilities of ever being able to gain the best that life holds in store for them.

**A National Evil.** East, west, north, and south we have been robbing children on every hand. California cannerymen deplore the conditions among the child workers in Massachusetts. In Massachusetts those who employ children find excuses for themselves in the laws of the state, and in the traditions of New England, but they have no good thing to say about conditions in the mills of the South. In the South it is easy to find men who are responsible for the children working who see nothing but good evolution of the family from bad rural conditions to a condition of comparative opulence in their mill cities, but who can see nothing good in the child labor as it is found in the coal-mines in Pennsylvania and the beet-fields of the Northwest. In Montana and Nebraska the farmer everywhere will tell you that "Nothing is so good for a child as to work in the beet-fields. It makes a man of him quicker than anything else."

185

**The Unfinished Task.** When the Federal Child Labor Law was passed which prohibited the shipping of any goods in interstate commerce that had been manufactured by child labor, a great many people foolishly thought

that the last trench was taken and the final victory won in behalf of the children. Now that this law has been declared unconstitutional we will have to begin the fight for its reenactment in terms that will be in accord with the constitution of the United States. This law was a great advance over anything we have ever had before. While it held, it released thousands of children from toil, but there were still employed in small towns, in villages, and in the rural communities boys and girls in domestic service, as bootblacks, as newsboys, as messenger boys, and at work in stores and local shops. According to the last census in the United States, 1,990,225 children under fifteen years of age are at work at some gainful occupation and 895,976 of these children are thirteen or under. Advanced legislation has been taken in most of the states, but as the standards of such legislation rise in the different states it becomes clear that with the reenactment of the child labor law further steps must be taken for the protection of children against exploitation. For instance, the child labor law can be administered effectively and for the best good of the child only in connection with compulsory education laws. It is futile, and dangerous as well, to take the children out of the mills and leave them in idleness upon the streets. Higher and better health standards must be raised and safeguards thrown about the home and school life of the children. Owen Lovejoy says, "The physical development of children securing employment is quite as important as their age."

186



Photo from National Child Labor Committee.

**We have thousands of children in America doing work which they ought not to do.**

**The War and Childhood.** The war has put a new emphasis upon the value of children as industrial assets, and many states attempted to rescind the laws protecting children so that they might be allowed to work in the munition factories as a war measure. England had her experience. Schools suffered, juvenile delinquency grew, and chaos resulted from the short-sighted policy of those who wanted children to help out in a time of need. An English periodical is quoted as saying, "When the farmers clamored for boys and girls at the outbreak of the war, it was 'for a few weeks only,' and 'to save the harvest.' The few weeks have spread out to a few years; and a few years cover all the brief period 'twixt boy and man' when character is molded, education completed, and skill of hand and eye and intellect acquired. Even in the time of peace one of our statesmen said that one of the most urgent national problems was how to check the evils by which too many of our bright, clean, clever boys leaving school at the ages of thirteen or fourteen, had become ignorant and worthless hooligans at seventeen or eighteen. Much has been done in recent years by patient, skilful endeavor to stanch this wound in the body politic; but now all is reversed and the hooligan harvest promises to be truly plenteous. The victims are of two classes. First, the little children taken from school at illegal ages for a few weeks under promises that their interrupted school time should be completed later on—a 'later on' which was never really practicable, and is now frankly abandoned. Secondly, the boys and girls, who, having completed their legal school attendance, would normally have gone to learn a trade, and would by a few years of patient training and industry at small wages have made themselves skilled workers and worthy citizens. But training for any future efficiency, either industrial, social, or moral, has been brushed aside by the necessities or the hysteria of war time." It remains to be seen whether we will learn the lesson from Britain's experience.

187

**The Church's Part.** There is no one thing in which the church should be so much interested as in the welfare of the children. When Jesus was asked who was the greatest in the kingdom of heaven, he took a little child and set him in the midst of the disciples. If any one offends a child, he said, it were better for him that "a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were thrown into the sea." Entrance into his kingdom was dependent upon a childlike attitude, and the measure of rewards and punishments was to be meted out according to the treatment of children by the individual man and woman.

188

"Lord, when saw we thee hungry, or athirst?" is the question which we must ask. "Inasmuch as ye did it not unto one of these least, ye did it not unto me," is the promised reply. The program of the church relating to the children is perfectly simple and plain. Each church should keep in close touch with the work of the National Committee on Child Labor. Information can be secured by writing to the Secretary, Owen R. Lovejoy, 105 East Twenty-second Street, New York. One Sunday in each year, the fourth Sunday in January, is set aside as Child Labor Sunday. Every church should take pains to observe this day and make it a time when the members of the



church will be made acquainted with the work being done by the Child Labor Committee; and should strive to understand the conditions concerning the child laborers of America, and the plans and purposes that are being devised for meeting needs and for protecting our nation's greatest asset. Child Labor Sunday was observed in nearly 10,000 churches last year.

The child laborer suffers because we do not know about him. His life is lived in a world apart. While he is producing the things that we accept, we have forgotten or passed over lightly the needs of the producer himself. The war puts a new responsibility upon us. Its agony and suffering have made us seemingly callous to suffering and we stand in grave danger of losing our power to sympathize. It is during such periods as these that the hard won gains of generations may be lost. We have gone far in our legislation for the protection of children since the days when the Earl of Shaftsbury first began his work for the poor boys of London. Much remains to be done. The church cannot slacken its efforts nor clear its skirts of responsibility if it does not exert every effort and put forth all its strength to pass new legislation, and steadfastly to set its face against every effort to break down existing laws or set them aside even as a temporary measure.

The battle for democracy cannot be won, and will not be won, even with the destruction of German autocracy if we allow the bulwark that has been built up for the protection of the children of democracy to be torn down.

## CHAPTER XII

### THE MESSAGE AND MINISTRY OF THE CHURCH TO A WORLD OF WORK

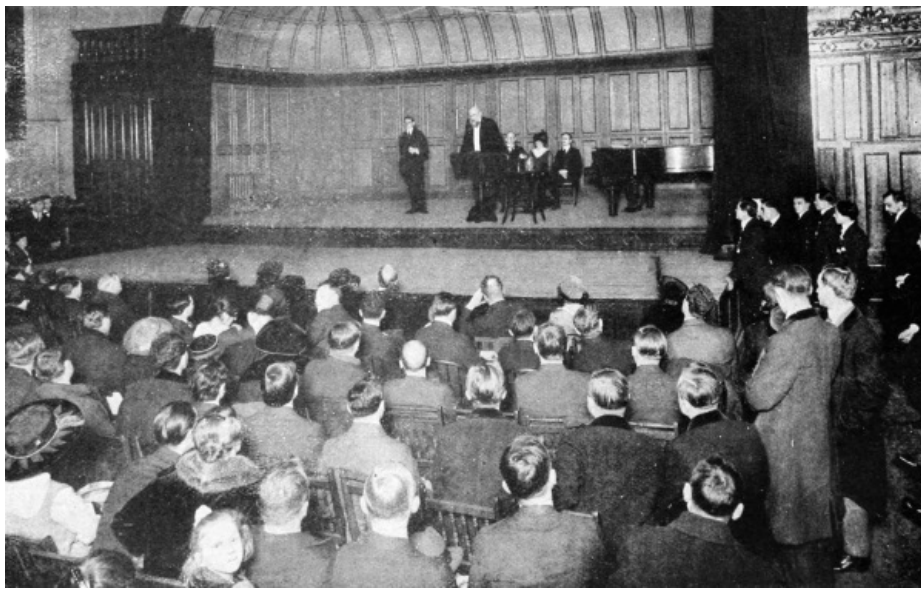
"He has never given me a mouthful of bread nor means to gain it. What have I to do with your God?" This was the answer of an immigrant woman to an appeal made by the church visitor, and it strikes nearer the heart of our modern life than it appears upon first thought. Why indeed should a person acknowledge kinship to a God who allows suffering, sorrow, and want in the world? It is not enough to answer such a question by pointing to the ultimate ends God has in view, for with hunger gnawing at the very vitals it is difficult to be philosophical or to meet the problems of existence in a quiet frame of mind. It is undoubtedly true that a large part of the misery and suffering of this world is caused by the sins and incompetency of the individual; but it does not help one to bear misfortune to know that he is to blame for his own condition. Is it any easier for the mother to teach her hungry little children to say their prayers asking the heavenly Father to feed them when she knows that her husband has brought the suffering and want through his evil conduct? But suppose she knows that her husband has tried as hard as possible, and in spite of all his efforts and all her care there is not enough bread for the little ones. She is very likely to grow impatient with the religion that talks about love, and yet allows bad social conditions to exist in the community that robs children of their childhood, destroys manhood, and makes women slaves in their own homes. 192

We have studied certain groups of the workers, and great as is the contribution made by these workers, it is only a small part of the story. The world of the workers is a very large world. Within this world things are produced that enrich mankind to a degree that has never even been dreamed of in any other age of the world's history. The men who are producing these things are the true servants of the world.

**Social Salvation and the Wage-Earners.** The church, in order to retain its ascendancy in national life, must lay increasing emphasis upon the importance of social salvation. The importance of social salvation as contrasted with individual salvation was seen by the great spiritual teachers of the past; but modern civilization, with its marvels of intercommunication, has placed a new emphasis upon mutual dependence of associated human beings, and has made self-realization a possibility only in connection with the salvation of the social group. The social group consists mainly of wage-earners, two thirds of those gainfully employed in the nation being dependent for food, shelter, and clothing upon a daily, weekly, or monthly wage. Therefore, social salvation is largely a question of the salvation of the wage-earner. The problem is a dual one. It is material and spiritual. It is material, because the higher purposes of the Eternal cannot be attained in an atmosphere of inefficiency, disease, unemployment, vice, crime, and general destitution. It is spiritual, because the elimination of inefficiency, disease, unemployment, vice, crime, and general destitution will not regenerate character. The salvation of the wage-earner must, therefore, be achieved by the combined efforts of three important agencies of social reconstruction: religion, education, and government. Religion furnishes the motive, education the method, and government the mechanism of social reconstruction; each of these three is impotent without the other two. 193

Religion from this view-point must be personal and social in order that regenerated individuals may work for the material and spiritual regeneration of national life. Education from this view-point must be technical, scientific, moral, and universal so that all may have the opportunity to become skilled workers, progressive thinkers, and efficient citizens. Government from this view-point must be controlled by the religious element of the community and equipped with a program of economic and social reform based on scientific investigation. Scientific studies of the wage-earners' communities show that a family of five in a large American city requires a minimum income of \$900 in order to maintain its physical equilibrium, and that three out of every four adult males, and nineteen out of every twenty adult females in the United States, receive less than \$600 a year. No one can longer doubt that the hardships and depravity of the poor are more economic and social than personal; and that the responsibility for human misery is put squarely upon the more fortunate members of society. The way of salvation for the poor and helpless lies along the path of the educated conscience of the rich and powerful.

**Workers and the Church.** Much has been written and said in criticism of the church. Many statistics have been given to prove that the workers are not members of the church. For the most part the figures quoted are mere guesses. It is sheer folly to assume that the working people of our nation are not religious. Religion is as natural to all people as is breathing. The belief in God is well-nigh universal. It is a fact, however, that comparatively few of the mass of workers of our country are connected in any way with the church, or have any part in carrying on the functions of organized religion. There are a great many working people in the churches, but in proportion to the large number of wage-earners in each community there are comparatively few of the actual producers in the churches. 194



Board of Home Missions, Church Extension. Methodist Episcopal Church.

### **A Russian Forum in session in the Church of All Nations, Morgan Memorial, Boston.**

A study made in city after city shows that the churches are largely made up of the well-to-do, middle-class people. In one typical city of 75,000 people there were found to be approximately 30,000 members of all the religious organizations, Protestant, Catholic, and Jews. Of this total number approximately 1,000 were wage-earners, that is, men and women working in shops and factories; 500 of these were members of the Catholic Church, and the other 500 were distributed among the sixteen Protestant churches. There were a great many persons in these churches who were dependent upon their wages; such as clerks, stenographers, bookkeepers, and others who should be classed as belonging to the industrial group. But as some one has said, the distinction between people who are in the churches and those untouched by the church can be drawn in this way: those who refer to the remuneration received for their work as a salary, and their work as a position, are in one group and they attend church; the other group is made up of those who refer to their work as a job, and the remuneration received as wages, and but few of these go to church. The conditions found in that instance are the same that would be found in most cities of the same size in America. The total membership was a little larger, perhaps, for in most places only about one third of the people are connected with the churches. 195

**The Makers of Things Outside the Churches.** Communities in which the church has failed are the communities where may be found most of the workers who are the actual producers of the things that go to make up our life. The men who run the lathes and other machines, the day-laborers on the street, in the factory, and on the railroads; these men and their families are the ones untouched by the church. The foremen, the better class of skilled mechanics, and those workers who are doing the more congenial kinds of work are the ones found in the churches. I asked one of the leading labor leaders of the country why it is that the laboring man is opposed to the church. "Opposed?" he answered. "He is not opposed. The average laboring man living under average conditions does not know that there is a church in town." In other words, the church moves in an orbit that is totally removed from the life of the mass of the workers.

**When Nineteen Men Last Went to Church.** During the last year I took occasion to ask different men that I met at various times what they thought of the church. I have the record of the conversation of nineteen men on this subject. Not one of these men had been to church with any degree of regularity during the past five years; three of them had attended the Billy Sunday meetings in the various cities. They went to see the evangelist, however, just as they would visit Barnum & Bailey's circus, and they professed to having come away from the meetings in the same frame of mind as if they had been attending such an entertainment. Five of the men were Jews, nine were Roman Catholics, and five were Protestants. They gave various reasons for not going to church, but all agreed on three things: they had no especial criticism or complaint to make regarding the church; it was easier to stay at home on Sundays than it was to go to church; the church had very little to do with the things that they were interested in. One of the men said, "The minister stands in a pulpit over my head and talks down to me about things that I am not interested in." They also agreed that they could see no special reason why they should be influenced or moved to live according to the requirements of the church. 196

The church has no especial authority and a life of piety did not appeal to these men. My conclusion was that the church had lost its grip upon these men because of the innate selfishness of the individual and the unwillingness on his part to pay the price demanded of a true follower of any religion. These men were living under false impressions as to what the church required and knew nothing of the quality of the church's message. The fact remained, however, that the church failed to reach them, and if we define religion as the giving of one's self to the group, these men had no religion, for they were each living their own lives in their own selfish way. Of these nineteen men three were skilled mechanics, five worked in a cottonseed mill, four were traveling salesmen, and the remaining seven were business men. This would seem to prove that the church has failed to reach other groups in the community as well as the groups of laboring men. 197

**The Church and the Age.** The new social order must be based upon righteousness, and the church must furnish the power that will carry forth the plans of reconstruction to ultimate victory. It must supply the regenerating social influences for our generation in order to live up to its privilege and fulfil its function in the world. It is the will rather than the intellect of men that is primarily influenced by religion. The doctrine of the

church attracts only a few people; speculation on theological questions, and arguments regarding life and its problems are futile in the face of the bitter experiences that lead the majority of the working people to view life from the standpoint of the pessimist. What men want to know about the church is, does it make people better neighbors? Is there more kindness in the community because of the church? These are the things that are of paramount importance. A boy passed by three churches on his way to attend a certain Sunday-school. A neighbor said to him, "Why do you go so far? why don't you come to my Sunday-school?" "I do not care how far it is," he replied; "they like me down at the other church." This is the secret of the success of much that is being done to-day by different churches.

A prominent pastor desiring to discover how his preaching would affect different classes of people had a friend invite some persons from different parts of the city; and then after the service these people were invited to meet with others in one of the classrooms to discuss the sermon. It was almost impossible to draw any expressions of opinion from them as to the value of the service, but they agreed that they did not feel at home in the church. Yet none of these visitors could tell what he meant by "feeling at home." The fact is, however, more people go to church to-day because of the friendships that they find within the institution than because of their desire for religious instruction. A large proportion of the people who are outside of the church are outside because to them the institution seems cold, narrow, and unattractive, and fits the description given by Robert Louis Stevenson of many churches that he had known, "A fire at which no man ever warms his hands."

**A Ministry to All.** The Morgan Memorial Church of Boston touches a wide community and is carrying on a very extensive work. It has enlarged its plant from time to time until it occupies almost a solid block. There has recently been erected a new building to be operated in connection with this institution known as the Church of all Nations. Here is the gathering place of the multitude from every land who now live in the south end of Boston. In addition to the regular religious services there is a rescue mission for the "down and outs," and dormitories for men and women where clean beds can be secured at a reasonable price. There are workshops, employment bureaus, a restaurant, a reading-room and, in fact, under one roof this church houses a community of interests, economic, industrial, social, educational, and religious. On the front of the building there is a lighted cross, and to all of the south end of Boston this cross means hope.

**Story of Twenty-five Years.** The church has not accomplished all that might have been accomplished, but when we study the history of the last twenty-five years and take stock of the results that have been achieved, we find that there are countless things that indicate a real life interest, and a purpose toward achievement in the church.

Twenty-five years ago the Student Volunteer Movement for Foreign Missions was just beginning, and a Social Service Commission for the churches would have been considered as something having no part in the churches' work. In fact, at that time the men who were the prophets of the new social order were looked upon as dangerous leaders. There were only a few books that dealt with the social aspects of the teachings of Jesus, and these were theological and theoretical rather than practical. At that time institutional churches were novelties, and the efforts that were being directed toward the solution of the social questions by the church were very often efforts in the wrong direction. The institutional church was not a complete success because it attempted to do for people instead of inspiring people to do for themselves. The institutional church and the modern socialized church have the same relationship to each other as the old alms-giving societies have to the modern charitable organizations. Legislation in the interests of women and children was considered totally out of the realm of Christian interests. "The church was put in the world to save souls and not to dabble in politics," was a favorite definition of the church's sphere. There was little church unity or coordination of effort. The churches were more busy fighting each other than they were fighting the common foes of the community. There were only one or two professors in our theological seminaries who were teaching sociology, and of one of these men an eminent authority in the church of that time said: "He ruined a lot of good ministers and made a lot of poor socialists by turning the attention of the young men who came under his teaching to merely humanitarian interests." The church leaders knew nothing about the labor movement; in fact, at that time, the modern labor movement as represented in the American Federation of Labor was just beginning to gain strength. The church made no special efforts to interpret the spirit of Christ in terms of international relationship.

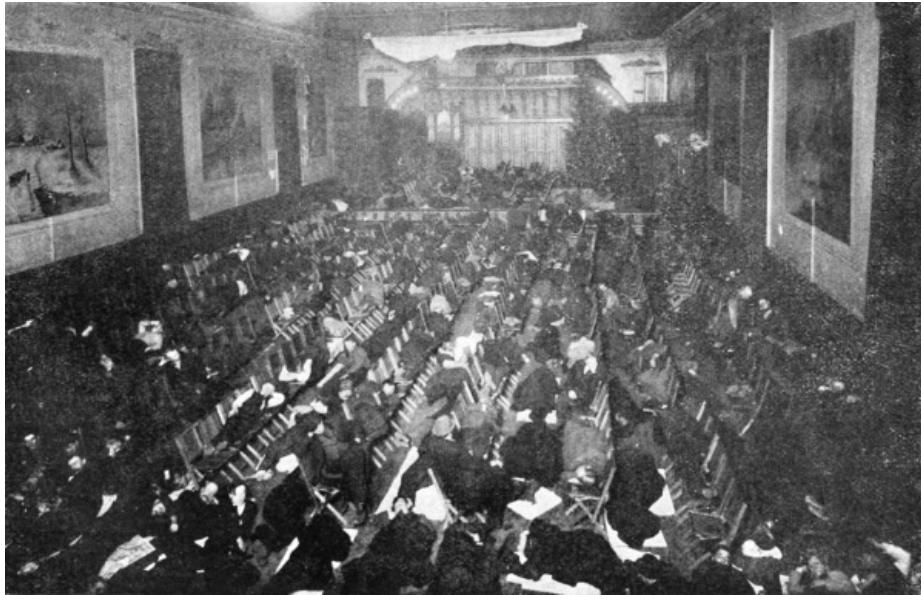
**The Present Situation.** Now, when we compare the present situation with these facts, there is every reason to be encouraged. Never in the history of the world was there a time when organized religion was more efficient. When was there ever such interest in religious education? so much cooperative effort among Protestant bodies? such an eagerness to discuss ways in which men of widely different views may work together? The money given for missions and social reconstruction reaches proportions that were never dreamed of before. Jesus Christ is recognized to-day as the friend of all men and his salvation is recognized as applying to social, industrial, and educational relationships as well as to individual needs. He is the Savior of the individual and also the Savior of the world in which the individual lives. It is true that the individual cannot enter the kingdom of God unless he is born again, but it is equally true that the whole social fabric must be recast and social relationships regenerated, else the kingdom of God cannot come in this world.

Nearly all the parables of Jesus have to do with the idea of mutual helpfulness. The parable of the Good Samaritan will always stand first as the exemplification of the life that bears another's burdens. The teachings of Jesus sums itself up in supreme love for God and for one's fellow man. At the marriage feast the multitude were invited and they came from the highways and the hedges. According to Jesus' teachings all material possessions are to be counted as nothing when compared to the use and helpfulness of these possessions. His bitter denunciation and burning wrath were turned against the hypocrites who made long prayers, took the widow's mite, paid their church dues, forgot mercy, and used harsh measures against the defenseless. In every instance where Jesus referred to future punishment, it was to be visited upon the individual because he failed to live according to the law of love and was making burdens harder to be borne rather than helping men to bear them. His law was the law of cooperation.

The early church began among the very poor; and all through the Apostolic Age the slave and the owner, the poor man and the rich man, met on the plane of equality. There was only one interest for all and that was the

life of the Master. It is said that Napoleon and several of his aides were one day walking along the country road. They met a peasant carrying a load of fagots who did not get out of the path as quickly as one of the emperor's companions thought he should, so stepping up to the rustic he took him by the shoulders and started to push him out of the way. "Stop," said Napoleon, motioning to his companions to step out of the road while he did the same. "Messieurs, let us respect the burden, even if you do not respect the man." In the community there are a multitude of burden bearers. The church must be filled with the desire to do what it can to improve the conditions in the community life, and to add to the good of all the people, so that the community relationships will no longer be regarded as matters of indifference to be taken up or laid aside without faithfulness to the gospel. The success of the church must be measured in terms of the community life.

202



Board of Home Missions. Church Extension. Methodist Episcopal Church.

**The Church of All Nations, Boston, provided a sleeping place in its hall for over five hundred of the unemployed in the winter of 1915.**

**Inspiration for Social Effort.** The church is not merely a reform agency. It is not primarily interested in housing, ventilation, sanitation, and labor questions, but is completely interested in the moral aspects of these questions, and their effect upon the life of the community and the life of the individuals in the community. Any church which fails to educate its members to look at all such matters from the moral point of view, and fails to make effective the principles of Jesus in relation to the social life of the community, is falling far short of its duty. It is no wonder that the men and women who are struggling with the evils of society grow impatient with the churches that do not undertake to help humanity. One worker expresses it thus: "The trouble with all social effort is that we have no inspiration for the task. The churches that should be helping us by supplying this inspiration are apparently afraid to take hold of the job." This is too sweeping a criticism, for there are hundreds of churches that are doing just this thing.

**The Church and Other Organizations.** Instead of institutional churches, however, we are substituting the socialized church, and it is not what the church is doing as an institution but what it is inspiring others to do in the community that counts most. When the church cannot get any one else to do a certain task, then the church must shoulder the responsibility itself. The church ought to cooperate with the united charities of the community. It will not be enough for it to have merely a member or two on the boards of these organizations; the church as an organization must be in close touch with them, furnishing money and workers, and helping to plan and carry out the plans of the organization. Above all, it must supply the proper spirit of love which will offset that professionalism which is to-day a growing evil in all charitable effort.

203

**The Church and the Outcasts.** The church ought to be organized so that the sick and the poor, the unfortunate and the people out of work, would find it a friend and champion. There was a preacher in one of our churches in a certain city who was greatly disliked by all the so-called "respectable" people who knew him. As one man put it, "He has long hair, a long tongue, and is a trouble-maker." But among the outcasts in the city he was known as the "Chaplain for the nobody-knows-who." By this term those who loved him meant that he was a friend of the neglected people of the great city. After he died men who had no use for him before began to tell of little illuminating incidents in his life, and thousands of people testified to the fact that he had been an inspiration and a help.

The early Christians were not a very respectable lot of people nor would they have been very congenial. Probably some of our modern churches are so fine that these people would have been considered out of place; but it was to these people that Jesus preached his gospel in the first place, and from them the influence of Christianity spread until the whole life of the Roman world was brought under the control of the new gospel. Now, of course, all the laboring groups that we have been considering are not made up of the poorest people in the community. The heart of the great mass of the people is sound to the core; their principles are strong and their morals are uncorrupted. We are very likely to measure morals by social customs. Just because a man shaves every day and wears a white collar is no sign that he is a gentleman; while the man who wears blue overalls, who shaves once a week, whose face and hands are grimy with toil, is not by these things made an

204

uncouth barbarian. The reverse is very often true. The unions have been educating their members; and the men gathered in these organizations have a fund of common sense and a breadth of judgment that would put to shame men who have had much larger experiences and wider opportunities both for education and travel. The son of a man with a salary of twelve to fifteen thousand a year was expelled from one of our universities a few years ago; and in the same year the honor man in the class was the son of a blacksmith who worked for one of the Western coal-mining companies. This boy was one of a family of six children. With the help and efforts of no one but himself he was able to go through the university and graduate at the head of his class. All the forces of our time are at work leveling the fictitious and mischievous barriers that have been raised between men, and which divide society into groups and classes. 205

**Wider Use of the Church Plant.** The church building can be used for very much wider service than at present. The church is usually one of the best-equipped buildings in the community. It has light, air, and heating facilities and can take care of a large number of people. In the Maverick Church, East Boston, they are using the church for club purposes. Just at present plans are being devised whereby this property will be used much more extensively for meeting the new needs put upon the community by the old ship-building industry that has just been revived. Plymouth Church, Oakland, California, is a veritable beehive of industry. Every night different groups gather in the social clubs, sewing classes, cooking classes, and other organizations. The community looks upon this church as the natural meeting-place to discuss vital problems. During the past winter in one of the Baptist churches on the east side of New York different nationalities met night after night and were instructed concerning patriotism and the moral issues of the war by men who spoke the tongues of the men attending.

A Presbyterian church in Du Page County, Illinois, became famous because it made its buildings available for all social activities and interests of the community. A report of this work says: "The older people often attend and engage in play with the young people. Refreshments are served free at these gatherings. Special attention is given to strangers and to the backward boys and girls, and a few of the leaders have always upon their hearts those who are not of the fold of Christ. The people become well acquainted, and such fellowship, such friendships, such companionships are created—all centering around the church!" The writer, telling of the work in another progressive church, says: "This church has learned the value of the inspirational meetings. Two principal ones are held each year. One takes place on New Year's eve when the whole community, old and young, gather at church as one family to watch the old year out and to welcome in the new. This is no common watch service. The evening is filled to overflowing with good and interesting things. The other great inspirational meeting is held at the close of the church year. It is an all day meeting, and the whole countryside turns out to help round up the year's work. The ladies serve a banquet at noon free of charge. There is always good music on this occasion and two or three talented participants from outside supplement the home talent. These big meetings are of benefit to the country people. They promote friendship and good fellowship, and the dead level gait always receives a big jolt." These are just a few of the churches that are making good use of their buildings, and there are hundreds of others all over the country. Whenever you feel that the church is failing, just turn to the record of some church that is really doing what it ought to do. You can easily find some such church, and what is being done in one place can be done in another. People are the same the world over, and all groups can be brought together upon a common level of interests and good fellowship. 206

**A Program of Action.** The war has emphasized the necessity of making our communities 100 per cent. American. We are thinking in terms of nationalities and races now because of the present world crisis. We need each community to be not only 100 per cent. American, but 100 per cent. democratic and neighborly. This involves the study of the questions of the relation of the foreigner and of his Americanization; the problems of the housing of the community, and the questions of the eight-hour day and union labor. The charge that the church speaks for the employer rather than for the workingman must be completely answered, so that every workingman in every community will come to realize from practical contact with the churches that he knows that they are not capitalistic institutions. He must learn that they stand for all men; and that they speak fairly and unreservedly for the cause of humanity and champion the rights of men against the encroachment of everything that would crush the spirit of man. The church must interest itself in the problem of recreation. People used to work for a living; now they work for profit. Playtime was formerly not such a problem as it is today, for industry was not geared up to the same high pitch of efficiency. To-day the margin of play is about the only margin of an individual's life when he is really himself. In our cities especially the problem of play is a real problem. The questionable forms of amusement are patronized, not because young men and young women are inherently bad, but because they are the only means of recreation offered. The motion-picture theater is popular because the best of the drama has been put within reach of the average person. Public health should be a vital consideration of the church. In fact, every line of effort that involves the welfare and happiness of human beings is of interest to the Christian church. 207

No church ought to have at first too intricate a program. More can be accomplished by an active pro-virtue program than by one that is all anti-vice, but the church must also be a fighting organization. We must fight evil of every kind. The great struggle of the church against the liquor traffic and against vice has resulted in a vast amount of good. The thing to remember, however, is that the church must not stop simply with its protest and its fight. 208

**The Ultimate End of All Effort.** Nothing material or physical is final. We are not to provide social rooms, good healthful surroundings, playgrounds, and other social good things just for themselves, but because these things are essential to the best and highest moral development of individuals. In the last analysis the work of the church is the salvation of men and women. Its work, as has been said, is to put a sky over men's heads. You cannot save individuals by giving them good physical surroundings, healthful conditions, and by supplying all their physical needs. These are merely the steps to the temple of the spirit. The weakness of most of our schemes for social betterment is found in the fact that many of them would put a man in a fine room, with good light, splendid furnishings, serve a sumptuous meal to him and then start a force-pump and pump all the air out of the room. A man may die in the midst of the finest things with which we can surround him. People must grow, and growth demands atmosphere, and if we give everything else and fail to create the right kind of atmosphere 209

we are failing. "Seek ye first his [God's] kingdom, and his righteousness; and all the other things shall be added unto you." By this Jesus did not mean that we were to put less emphasis on right conditions, but that if we get conditions right, then we can work for the things that really are of greatest interest. Above all, he was warning of the danger that faces us to-day, of becoming so much interested in a man's social welfare that we lose sight of the emphasis which the great Teacher would put upon the qualities which make up humanity.

We must recognize man as a spiritual being, and everything that goes to make him better physically ought to make him better spiritually. The best work of the church, and the work which God alone can do for the community, is to carry humanity beyond physical betterment into the realm of spiritual idealism. This is our task. This is the church's goal. When this is realized in all society then the kingdom of God will be realized on earth; and the things that men create will be set in right relationship to the men themselves; that is, they will become the adjuncts of every man's life and will minister to all human happiness.

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---

# INDEX

## A

Accidents, in mining, [72](#), [73](#);  
in steel-mills, [85](#), [86](#);  
on railroads, [99-101](#)  
Actors, Church Alliance and Fund, [130](#);  
off the stage, [128](#)  
Anthony, Susan B., referred to, [162](#)  
Anthracite coal areas, [69](#)  
Anti-loafer laws, [152](#)  
Apathy of mill workers, [91](#)  
Arbitration in clothing industry, [60](#), [61](#)  
Architecture and present use of steel, [79-81](#)  
Artificial flowers, [132](#)

## B

Bag and hemp factory conditions, [165](#)  
Baker Manufacturing Company, [93](#)  
Banana boat and rush unloading, [137](#)  
Baptist East Side churches in New York City, [205](#)  
Bargains in ready-made clothing, [55](#)  
Bathtubs and buttons, [114](#)  
Beet, culture, [20](#), [174](#), [175](#);  
sugar, [20](#);  
use of child labor, [20](#), [21](#), [174](#), [175](#), [185](#)  
Bessemer steel, [82-84](#)  
Bible, study class members, Y. W. C. A., [4](#), [5](#);  
unopened to Jewish radicals, [62](#)  
Billy Sunday meetings, [195](#)  
Bituminous coal-fields, [69](#)  
Booth, Maud Ballington, referred to, [162](#)  
Brakeman, accident to a, [100](#)  
Brick and mortar not the soul of the city, [33](#)  
Bridge cables, steel, [82](#)  
Burley tobacco, [173](#)

## C

Canada, western grain-belt, [17](#)  
Cane-sugar makers, [18](#), [19](#)  
Casual workers and the common man, [153](#)  
Casualty lists. See [Accidents](#)  
Catholics, [90](#), [120](#), [194](#), [196](#)  
Cemeteries, well-tended Western, [27](#)  
Chaplain beloved, a, [203](#)  
Chicago, Industrial Exhibition, picture of a mother, [58](#);  
stock-yards, [150](#)  
Child labor, in agriculture, [174-185](#);  
in home work, [58](#);  
reasons for, [176](#);  
task of the church, [187-189](#)  
Child Labor Law, Federal, very helpful but unconstitutional, [185](#)  
Child Labor, National Committee on, [188](#);  
Sunday, [188](#)  
"Children in Agriculture," quoted, [175](#)  
Children's Bureau in Washington, D. C., [90](#)  
China, actors in, [130](#)  
Christ. See [Jesus Christ](#)  
Christmas-time work, [139](#)  
Church, duty of, [197](#);

responsibility, [151](#), [152](#);  
 statistics of per cent. of working people, [194](#);  
 work, past and present, [28](#), [191-209](#);  
 with country people, [27-32](#);  
 with factory folks, [46-48](#);  
 with garment-makers, [62](#), [63](#);  
 with miners, [75-78](#);  
 with rail and vessel forces, [109-111](#);  
 with steel workers, [91-94](#);  
 with Tampa cigarmakers, [122](#), [123](#);  
 with theater people, [130](#);  
 with transient classes, [150-153](#);  
 with women and children, [169-171](#), [187-189](#)  
 Churches, criticism of, [194](#);  
   faulty distribution of, [127](#);  
   indifference to, [195](#)  
 Cigarmakers, [116-120](#);  
   social worker's story, [125](#)  
 City and country life depicted and distinguished, [1](#), [23](#), [24](#)  
 City church statistics, [194](#)  
 Clothes and civilization, [34](#)  
 Clothing industry, [54](#);  
   labor troubles in, [58-61](#);  
   materials, [34-36](#)  
 Coal, importance of, [65](#), [66](#);  
   mining methods and miners, [67-74](#)  
 Cœur d'Alene district, Idaho, [68](#), [75](#)  
 Cold storage, [178](#)  
 Conservation, of fuel, [11](#);  
   of wheat, [18](#)  
 Consumers' League, [52](#), [171](#)  
 Cooper Union, New York City, a social center, [62](#)  
 Cooperation, [170](#), [184](#);  
   among the churches, [200](#)  
 Copper, [68](#), [69](#), [74](#)  
 Corn and hogs, price of, [21](#)  
 Corn belt, [21](#)  
 Cost of living, [9](#), [178](#)  
 Cotton, [36](#), [37](#);  
   importance increased by the invention of the cotton-gin, [37](#)  
 Cotton-mills and workers, in Northern cities, [34](#), [44-46](#);  
   in Southern towns and villages, [40-43](#), [47](#)  
 Coxey's army, [135-137](#)  
 Cuban traits, [121](#)

## D

Dressmaking industry, [53](#)  
 Du Page County, Illinois, Presbyterian Church, [206](#)  
 Duty of the church, the, [197](#)

## E

Early ambitions, [3](#)  
 Early Christians, influence of, [203](#)  
 Effects of specialization in work, [7](#)  
 Efficient women in war and other work, [159-165](#)  
 Eliot, George, referred to, [162](#)  
 Engineer, the, and the world war, [98-101](#);  
   wish to renew service, [99](#)  
 Evansville, Wisconsin, Manufacturing Company, [93](#)

## F

Factory system, [7](#)

Fall River factories, [34](#)  
Farm life, [23](#)  
Fashion and clothes, a shop-girl's comment, [51](#)  
Fatalism of steel-mill workers, [91](#)  
Feudal castles and modern mills compared, [33](#)  
Fictitious barriers in society, [204](#), [205](#)  
Fifth Avenue, New York City, [49](#), [61](#)  
Film making, [43](#), [131](#), [132](#)  
"Fine art of living, the," [6](#)  
Fire and coal, [65](#)  
Fishing village preacher's report, [3](#), [4](#)  
Food-producing industries, [21](#)  
Ford Hall, Boston, a social center, [62](#)  
Foreign element on Western farms, [27](#)  
Formaldehyde used in a church, [151](#), [152](#)  
French Revolution conditions, [179](#)  
Fuel administrator, [66](#)  
Furs, [126](#)  
Furuseth, Andrew, work for the sailors, [108](#), [109](#)

## G

Garment makers, [51-53](#), [57-63](#)  
Garment Makers' Union, New York City, [50](#)  
Garment workers in New York City, [49](#), [50](#), [53](#), [55-58](#), [61-63](#)  
Gentleman, deeper than outward marks, [204](#)  
Girl clerks' wages affected by "pin-money" competitors, [164](#), [165](#)  
God, question of an immigrant woman, [191](#);  
    work for the community, [209](#)  
Gold and silver mining, [69](#)  
Government ownership of railroads, [106](#)  
Grain belts of Canada and the United States, [17](#)  
Group needs and the church, [13](#), [14](#)

## H

Havana and Key West, [116](#)  
Health of garment workers, [56](#)  
Henry, Miss Alice, quoted, [162](#), [165](#), [166](#)  
Herring, Rev. Hubert C., referred to, [27](#)  
Home, importance of, [156](#);  
    work conditions, [57](#)  
Home mission work, pressing need for, [30](#)  
Hookworm, [41](#)  
Hoover, Mr., [18](#)  
Housing conditions and the cost of living, [9](#)  
Howe, Julia Ward, referred to, [162](#)

## I

Idaho, labor legislation in, [146](#)  
Immigrant, mill workers, [89](#);  
    woman and God, [191](#);  
    women in Saint Louis, [166](#)  
I. W. W., code, [142](#);  
    efforts in East Tampa, [121](#);  
    street song in Seattle, [141](#), [142](#)  
Industrial, army, questions raised, [135](#);  
    classes created, [8](#)  
Inefficiency, causes of, [148](#)  
"Infant Mortality" statistics, [90](#)  
Institutional churches, [203](#)  
Interdependence, [10](#)

International Seamen's Union, [108](#)  
Interstate Commerce Commission, [105](#)  
Iron, [69](#), [80-83](#)  
Italians, [49](#), [56](#), [57](#), [63](#), [67](#)

## J

Jesus Christ, [12](#), [187](#), [200-202](#), [204](#), [209](#)  
Jewelry industry, [132](#)  
Jewish characteristics, [54](#)  
Jews, [49](#), [53-56](#), [62](#), [63](#), [194](#)  
Johnstown, Pennsylvania, mill workers, [89](#)  
Judson Memorial Baptist Church, New York City, [63](#)  
Juvenile court case in Tampa, Florida, [122](#)

## K

Kelly, Mrs. Florence, referred to, [52](#)  
Kerensky, mistake of, [22](#)  
King, Henry Churchill, quoted, [6](#)

## L

Landlord and tenant, [25](#)  
Lawrence, Massachusetts, cotton-mills, [34](#)  
Lead and zinc, [68](#), [69](#)  
Life in the Southern mill village, [40-44](#), [47](#)  
Livermore, California, railroad wreck, [99](#)  
Loom, contrast between earlier and later, [36-38](#)  
Lovejoy, Owen R., quoted, [186](#);  
    referred to, [188](#)  
Lowell, Massachusetts, cotton-mills, [34](#)  
Loyalty, labor's lack of, [7](#)  
Lumber companies of the Northwest, bad conditions for laborers, [144](#), [145](#)  
Luxuries, defined, [114](#), [115](#);  
    examples of producers of, [116-134](#);  
    harmless and hurtful, [115](#)

## M

Machinery, [37](#);  
    has subordinated man, [46](#)  
McIntire, Miss Ruth, quoted, [175](#)  
Manufacture of clothing materials, [35](#), [36](#)  
Maverick Church in East Boston, [205](#)  
Men, as users of clothes, [34](#);  
    as creators of things, [15](#)  
Metal mine workers, [74](#);  
    wages, [75](#)  
Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City, picture referred to, [84](#)  
Michigan Central Railroad accident, [100](#)  
Migratory workers, [143](#)  
Millinery, [132](#), [139](#)  
Mills and workers, [33-47](#);  
    experience of a family, [44](#), [45](#)  
Mine workers, accidents, [72](#);  
    forgotten, [67](#);  
    wages, [73](#), [75](#)  
Minerals, valuable, [65](#), [68](#)  
Mining town, life in a, [5](#), [6](#)  
Missionary work at home, [127](#)  
Morgan Memorial Church, Boston, [198](#)

Morris, William, demand for joy in work, [6](#)  
Motion-pictures, [43](#);  
theater statistics, [130-132](#)  
Motorman a suicide, [107](#)  
Municipal ownership, San Francisco, [108](#)

## N

Napoleon, anecdote of, [201](#)  
National Child Labor Committee, [175](#), [181](#)  
National Consumers' League, [52](#)  
Negro philosophy of work, [115](#);  
work and wages on sugar plantation, [19](#), [20](#)  
Neighborliness, [11](#), [12](#)  
New York *Herald*, referred to, [119](#)  
Nickel, of Canada, [68](#)  
Northern textile workers, [44](#);  
Southern groups, [40](#)

## O

"Open shop," [45](#);  
in steel mills, [42](#)  
Organization, of labor, [7](#);  
of men questioning women's admission to labor unions, [167-169](#);  
of women workers, [165](#)  
Oriental visitor's comment on American civilization, [79](#)

## P

Peace of the world and the bread question, [22](#)  
Philanthropy, city, [24](#)  
Pilgrim mothers, [162](#)  
"Pin-money" workers affecting regular wages, [164](#)  
Pioneers in the West and their descendants, [27](#), [31](#)  
Pittsburgh has bad housing conditions for steel workers, [89](#)  
Play and relaxation, [6](#), [207](#)  
Plymouth Church, Oakland, California, [205](#)  
Professor Parker's report of I. W. W. in California, [142](#)  
Profit-sharing, [92](#), [93](#)

## R

Racial and residential phrases used by rival boy groups, [9](#);  
more general racial groups, [55](#), [56](#)  
Railroads, casualty lists, [99](#);  
churches and, [106](#);  
expenses and profits, [103](#), [104](#);  
government ownership, [106](#);  
system statistics, [98](#);  
work and workers, [99](#), [102](#)  
Ranch life, [3](#)  
Reader in Tampa, Florida, cigar factory, [119](#)  
Ready-made clothing bargains, [54](#), [55](#)  
"Red Jacket" mine, [74](#)  
Restless Americans, [95](#)  
"Riding out a bill," [95](#)  
Right to work a just demand, [146](#);  
helping agencies, [147](#)  
Robbins, Mrs. Raymond, referred to, [168](#)  
Rochester, New York, address at the City Club, [108](#)  
Rolling-mill, [84](#);  
statistics, [86](#)

Rural community study, [26-28](#), [30](#).  
Russian, labor, [21](#);  
    revolution and the food question, [22](#);  
    unexpected collapse, [183](#)

## S

“Sacred Motherhood,” [58](#)  
Safety devices for railroad trains, [100](#)  
Saint Louis, factory conditions and women workers in, [165](#), [166](#)  
Saint Patrick and the Irish snakes, [183](#)  
Salvation of the individual the ultimate aim, [208](#)  
Scranton, Pennsylvania, coal famine in, [178](#)  
Seattle, song of the vagabond workers, [139](#);  
    success of minister’s experiment with “blanket stiffs,” [147](#)  
Selfishness and greed back of child labor, [176](#)  
Serving humanity, [133](#)  
Silk, [35](#)  
Sinclair, Upton, story referred to, [150](#)  
Skyscraper significant of America, [79](#)  
Social, centers formed by the churches, [205-209](#);  
    salvation and the wage-earners, [192](#)  
Social Service, Commission, [199](#);  
    Department of Congregational churches, [26](#)  
Socialism and the church, [31](#)  
Socialized church as an inspiring force, [202](#), [203](#)  
Song of the world of work heard in the city’s roar, [2](#)  
Soubrette Row, [130](#)  
Soul of the city, [33](#)  
Soup kitchens, [151](#)  
Southern mill village, life in, [40-47](#)  
Spencer, Herbert, quoted, [6](#)  
State laws for home work, special provision needed, [58](#)  
State University rural work in Wisconsin, [26](#)  
Steel production, [80-89](#);  
    manufacture, [80-83](#);  
    statistics, [79](#), [80](#);  
    uses, [80-82](#);  
    workers and working conditions, [86-89](#)  
Stencil work deforming a hand, [180](#)  
Stock-owning, [92](#), [93](#)  
Stock-yards of Chicago, [150](#)  
Stowe, Mrs. Harriet Beecher, referred to, [162](#)  
Street-car men’s wages, [107](#)  
Strikes: on street-car lines, [108](#);  
    one striker’s case, [45](#)  
Student Volunteer Movement for Foreign Missions, [199](#)  
Sugar-beet culture, [20](#);  
    child workers in, [174](#)  
Sugar-cane fields, processes and workers, [19](#)  
Summer use of furs, [126](#)  
Sweat-shop system, [52](#), [57](#)

## T

Tampa, Florida, churches, [121-123](#);  
    cigar factory, [119](#);  
    conditions, [120](#), [124](#);  
    statistics, [116](#)  
Task system, [53](#)  
Taylor, Florence I., effect of mill work on boys, [181](#)  
Tenant farmer, [25](#)  
Textile industries, Northern and Southern wages and workers, [40](#), [44](#)  
Theater as a medium of luxury, [128-130](#)

Theories concerning the Pyramids, [96](#)  
"Tired Business Man," the, [4](#)  
Tobacco, for cigars, [117](#), [118](#);  
for the Burley demands, [173](#);  
"worming" done by children, [173](#), [174](#)  
*Trade Union Woman, The*, quoted, [162](#), [166](#)  
Tramp as a product of labor conditions, [143-150](#)  
Transportation, [96](#);  
and progress, [97](#);  
other than railways, [107](#);  
workers largely unknown to us, [109-111](#)  
Trappers, [126](#)  
Triangle Shirt Waist Company fire, [50](#)  
Trotzky's success turned on supplying food, [22](#)  
Tuberculosis statistics, [124](#)  
Typical life of busy women illustrated, [5](#)

## U

Unemployed, problem of, [56](#), [137](#);  
regulation of industry, [146](#);  
war changes, [145](#), [152](#)  
Union Garment Makers', [50](#)  
United States, Bulletin of Labor, quoted, [124](#);  
Bureau of Labor, statistics from, [39](#);  
coal-mine statistics, [65](#), [66](#);  
Public Health Service, report quoted, [56](#);  
Steel Corporation, concessions, [92](#)  
Urge of work, the, [1](#)

## V

Vagabond workers, in Seattle, [139](#);  
poem, [141](#)  
Valuable non-essentials, [115](#)

## W

Wales, singing by miners a means of progress, [141](#)  
War, asking the employment of childhood, [186](#), [187](#);  
requirements in communities, [207](#);  
talks in New York City churches, [205](#)  
Washington state, a parish in, [144](#)  
Watered stock, [105](#)  
Welfare of the American seaman cared for by Act of Congress, [109](#)  
Welfare work in mining communities, [75](#), [76](#);  
plan for Colorado, [77](#)  
Wetz, James E., Chicago egg-king, [178](#)  
Wheat, [17](#)  
Wilcox, Ella Wheeler, referred to, [27](#)  
Willard, Frances E., referred to, [162](#)  
Williamsburg Bridge, cost and materials, [82](#)  
Winnipeg, prosperity of, [17](#)  
Wisconsin townships, survey of three, [26](#)  
Woman, former disadvantages, [155](#), [156](#);  
present opportunities, [156-164](#)  
Women, needed service of the church for, [169-171](#);  
organization of, [165-169](#)  
Women's National Trade Union League, the, [168](#), [171](#)  
Wool, production and manufacture of, [35](#)  
Work, vocabulary of, [3](#)  
"Wormin' time," [174](#)



Y

Young Men's Christian Association, [77](#)

---

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