THE COMMON GOOD OF CIVIC AND SOCIAL ROCHESTER

KNOW YOUR CITY

The GATE *to* EQUAL PAY — 8 *hours, fire protection and organization is closed to thousands of* ROCHESTER'S WORKING GIRLS.

Who will help her unlock the gate?

TEN CENTS
A COPY

VOL. VI.

FEBRUARY

ONE DOLLAR
A YEAR

NO. 5

Address Subscriptions to The Common Good Publishing Co. Rochester, N. Y.

Telephone 444 and 1998

Egbert F. Ashley Co.

Insurance

FIRE — LIABILITY — MARINE
BONDS — STEAM BOILER
TRANSPORTATION — BURGLARY
AUTOMOBILE

Insurance Building, Rochester, N.Y.

Reliable Merchandise
and low prices are our
chief claims upon your
consideration.

Burke, Fitzsimons, Hone & Co.

F. M. Kline & Co.

A Distinctive Drug Store

No Cleaner Soda
Service Anywhere

Certified Milk only is served at our Fountain.

All glasses and Spoons are washed in boiling water and dried with clean towels.

Cor. East Ave. and Main St.

BOOKSELLERS
STATIONERS
ENGRAVERS

Toys,
Athletic Goods,
School Books
and Supplies,
Leather Goods,
Pictures

LOCATED IN POWERS BUILDING

JOHN C. MOORE CORPORATION

ESTABLISHED 1830

Phones 38 65-71 Stone St.

Rochester, N. Y.

Loose Leaf Record Books and Cabinets, Loose Leaf Ledgers Bound Books and Printing. Also a Complete Line of Office Supplies

Made to Order Goods a Specialty

Agencies throughout the United States

BRING US

your Vacation Kodak negatives. We are students of modern developing and printing. Let us do your work, for we will do it intelligently.

Some of your negatives must be good enough to be enlarged. Bring them to us and find out.

MARKS & FULLER

Photo Supplies

28 STATE STREET, ROCHESTER, N. Y.

A Step From the Four Corners

MARCUS KOCHENTHAL & CO.

CLOTHIERS'
TRIMMINGS

84-90 ST. PAUL STREET

THE "BIEN" SWISS WATCH

The best watches in the world are made by the Swiss.

Through the efforts of our Paris office we have at last succeeded in getting hold of just the right Swiss watch to sell at a moderate price.

It bears our special name—"Bien"—and we can recommend it as the best watch we have ever seen for the money.

Supplied in three sizes, in 15, 17 and 21 jewel movements.

Prices range from **$12** to **$60**

Silverware Section, Front Cross Aisle

SIBLEY, LINDSAY & CURR CO.

The COMMON GOOD

AN INDEPENDENT MAGAZINE OF CIVIC AND SOCIAL ROCHESTER

NOT COPYRIGHTED—The articles in this publication are for public use and service

VOL. VI. No. 5 FEBRUARY 1913. NEW SERIES: VOL. III, No. 5.

THE WORKING GIRLS and WOMEN OF ROCHESTER

A Local Study of a great Injustice, Convicting the Organization of Industry more than Individual Employers.

By Edwin and Catherine Rumball

DEDICATION

"You working women who suffer from overwork and underpaying, and by harsh and sometimes shameful treatment, know by bitter experience what we of other classes know only by hearsay and by our sympathy with you. You owe it to all mankind to make your dearly bought experience count to make us all free from these inhumanities. If you merely suffer silently or angrily, your suffering helps nobody. If you try to climb out of your class and forget it, somebody else will step into your vacant place and inherit your pains. If, on the other hand, your suffering teaches you to unite with other men and women in a holy determination to put a stop to injustice for all, then your suffering is not in vain."

"Life & Labor." —Walter Rauschenbusch.

In presenting this modest study, which anybody might have made, to the people of Rochester, we want to point out that our whole motive has been educational. We want to help the non-wage-earning woman of this city to understand better, her wage-earning sister; we want the working women to understand more fully their common injustice, that they may together work for their liberty, which will be for the common good of the entire city. Weary of the reformers who know the truth but speak it not, one of our Rochester factory girls exclaimed, "Why don't you come out

and say what you know." This is what we plan to do in this report on the women workers of our city. It will be quickly believed that we have no purpose to boost the city, but we would at the outset protest that we have no desire to merely muck-rake the city. On the other hand we cannot promise to be absolutely impartial, no one can. The personal equation will enter into all our interpretations of the facts, but we can and do promise to be as fair and as impartial as we can. We will be sincere.

HOW THE FACTORY GIRL IS BETTER OFF THAN THE STORE GIRL

FACTORY	MERCANTILE
Law requires one seat to each girl.	Law requires only one seat to every three girls.
60 minutes for meals.	45 minutes for meals.
Indifferent appearance.	Must dress well.
Many sit to work.	Most on legs all the time.
MINORS	**MINORS**
8 hours a day, 6 days a week. Not before 8 a. m. or after 5 p. m.	9 hours a day, 54 hours a week. Not before 8 a. m. or after 7 p. m.
WOMEN	**WOMEN**
9 hours a day, except when making up for a holiday.	Over 21, no limit to hours she may work. Up to 21, 10 hours a day, 60 hours a week.
54 hours a week.	(Law does not apply between Dec. 18th and 24th)
Not before 6 a. m. or after 9 p. m.	Not before 7 a. m. or after 10 p. m., if under 21.
WAGES	**WAGES**
See figures given in text.	A number of Main Street stores have a minimum of $6.00 and even $7.00. We have heard of one orphan girl over 16, only taking $3.50. Check girls are said to begin at $3.00 and $3.50.

The consideration of the working women of Rochester is of even greater moment than the consideration of the women as a whole. Thirty-one per cent. of our women are wage-earners. Their cause is a greater cause than even that of child-welfare. The greater part of child-welfare work is made necessary by our neglect of the child's mother. Many things which the community and charity are doing to-day for the child should be rightfully done by the child's own mother. But because we have neglected the mother and all preparation for motherhood, we have unfitted her to care for her children. This consideration of the working womanhood of our city, is therefore an effort to go back to causes, rather than the mere reforming of symptoms.

Of course there are plenty of men and women outside the ranks of the wage-earners, who tell us that the presence of woman in industry is a sign of progress; that it is a splendid assertion of woman's rights and that we ought to honor women that they are thus able to take their place beside men in the performance of the world's great tasks. We would feel more inclined to call it *progress*, if we did *honor* woman for her proof of equality. But the vast majority of these girls,—for most of them are girls as we will show, are not in industry because man honors them, or even because they seek to show their equality, but from economic necessity. Their presence in industry is rather a tragical surrender to a condition which only offered privation as an alternative. A study of the home conditions of the young girls who apply for work certificates at the Rochester Health Bureau would show that 33% are *unquestionably* entering industry for economic reasons, and that the other two-thirds might be halved for the same reason. If this is true of school girls, it is

twice as true for the older girls. Woman's entrance is not one of her rights. Rights usually have to be fought for and campaigned for, but no campaign was needful to place woman in industry, the modern factory would rather give her work, and her mother and sisters at home than her brother or her father. The hard thing is to get the suffrage and the right to organize; not to work.

The academic side of the subject we cannot give space to. To say what our girls *ought* to do with their labor power is all right for the class studying economics; we are faced by a condition, which shows us what they actually do with it. Domestic service is growing more and more unattractive to the girls in America. The girl is not to blame for it so much as the spirit of America, which has no place for servility. It is part of the price we must pay for our democracy. During the last few years the number of women in all occupations have increased 34%, but they have only increased 6% in domestic service. Most of the servants in Rochester are foreign born and over 70% of them single girls. America does not easily or naturally create a servant class, and however much we think, the entrance of girls into domestic service would solve our problem, the great American fact is, they will not go; it solves nothing to say, they ought to.

From the latest figures obtainable we have something like six million wage-earning women in this country. We might insert at this point, that if these figures or any others given later are incorrect, we will try and have them incorrect on the side of under-estimation. In the last twenty years we have added two million to our number of working women. America is not alone in this matter. In France there are six million wage-earning women to twelve million male wage-earners. In England it is worse, there half of the grown women of the land are wage-earners; a proportion which is twice as bad as America.

An analysis of the figures representing the women workers of America would show that 44% of them are either immigrant girls or the children of such. We speak of them as girls, for 62% of the working women of America are under 24 years of age. Only 14% of our women workers are natives. Knowing as we do the dream of America which dwells in the hearts of many of these girls regarding this wonderful land of the west,—a dream which steamship companies have commercialized,—it is an untold and immeasurable civic loss to have them with us as our slaves instead of happy dreamers whose dreams have come true. In our beautiful city of Rochester, which has in it much worthy of dreams, if we were to look for the immigrant girls between 16 and 20 years of age, when the bloom of youth is upon them and the dream days should by all human rights be theirs continually, we should find that 71% of them were shut up in our factories away from the sunshine and God's earth slaving for what is barely pocket money. This is not rhetoric so much as a fact which we will prove when we come to speak of their wages.

The following tables will show Rochester female breadwinners by their age and nativity, and we would urge that they be carefully read. We regret that it has been impossible to obtain at this time the 1910 figures, we therefore seek that importance be chiefly attached to the percentages, which while most accurate, certainly do not overstate the number. If our readers wish to know approximately the true numbers, we would advise that they multiply the census figures 40%. Our general population increase between 1900 and 1910 was 34%, according to the

Census, but as there is great reason for supposing, that by a census under-estimation of our Italians and Poles, we were credited with 30,000 less population than we really had in 1910, our general increase may more truly be represented as 45%.

Of our female population between 16 and 20 years, 61.1% are Breadwinners.
" " " " " 21 " 24 " 55 % " "
" " " " " 25 " 34 " 33.3% " "
" " " " " 35 " 44 " 22.5% " "
" " " " 45 years of age and over, 12.7% " "

1. Native White Female Population.—Both Parents Native.

Of the total number 16 to 20 years of age, 50.4% are breadwinners.
" " " " 21 to 24 " " " 50 % " "
" " " " 25 to 34 " " " 32.3% " "
" " " " 35 to 44 " " " 23.8% " "
" " " " 45 years and over, 13.1% " "

2. Native White Female Population.—One or both Parents Foreign.

Of the total number 16 to 20 years of age, 66.3% are breadwinners.
" " " " 21 to 24 " " " 57.2% " "
" " " " 25 to 34 " " " 36.6% " "
" " " " 35 to 44 " " " 25.2% " "
" " " " 45 years and over, 17.7% " "

3. Foreign Born White Female Population.

Of the total number 16 to 20 years of age, 71.8% are breadwinners.
" " " " 21 to 24 " " " 58 % " "
" " " " 25 to 34 " " " 29 % " "
" " " " 35 to 44 " " " 17.9% " "
" " " " 45 years and over, 10.3% " "

4. Totals of Above Tables.

Of our female population 16 years and over, 31.5% are breadwinners.
(Note.—This does not include some 2,000 professional women.)
Of our female population of native, white parentage, 30.5% are breadwinners.
" " " " foreign parentage, 38.6% " "
" " " " foreign born, 24 % " "
" " " " of the Negro race, 43.3% " "

In regard to all the preceding figures it should be remembered that while the actual figures represent the latest obtainable from Census records, they should all be increased some 40% to represent roughly the conditions in 1913. The safest way of dealing with them is to use only the percentages, which is all we have been given above. As no very radical change has taken place in our population, these percentages more truthfully show the proportions. If there is error at all, it is as we have before intimated, on the side of under-estimation. The total number of working women who reported as such in 1900 in this city was 20,174, which was made up in the following manner: 1,675 were in professional occupations; 5,365 in domestic and personal service; 3,375 in trade and transportation and 9,731 in manufacturing and mechanical pursuits. Forty per cent should of course, also be added to these totals, giving us to-day about 30,000 wage-earning women and girls in Rochester.

We find from the 1900 Census records that the percentage of women wage-earners in Rochester is 31%, which is 6% higher than the national average; and as our immigrant population has increased much more than the native and as most—71%—of our immigrant girls work; it would not surprise us to learn that the percentage of women wage-earners in Rochester in 1913 was much more than even 31%. We shall note when we come to speak of the clothing factories that no other city of the great clothing cities of America has so large a proportion of women workers as the Rochester factories. It will be seen also that two-thirds

of our women workers are immigrants or the daughters of such. If we take as our basis the number of girls in Rochester between sixteen and twenty years of age, we find that 61% of them are trying to earn their own living. If we make our basis, immigrant girls alone for the same ages, we find that 71.8% are breadwinners. If we take all the young women of Rochester between 20 and 24 years of age, we find that 55% of them are earning their own living.

After twenty-four years of age the percentage is gradually and at times suddenly reduced. Most factory girls seem to marry between 25 and 30. Only 12% of the women over 45 years of age in Rochester are earning their own living. The significance of these figures is greater than appears at first sight. With marriage the factory girl begins to find out what the system has cost her in health and knowledge. In some cases a terrible harvest begins to be reaped. The average chance for motherhood in all industrial communities has been lowered, even though children are born. Everywhere this life for women has meant criminal interference with the future of the race. If the mothers and girls are over-worked and under-paid, and consequently underfed and badly housed and subject all the time to the unrelenting strain of poverty, their children when they live must inevitably be enemic, feeble and predisposed to disease. We find that these very children are usually taken to mill and shop as soon as they are able to do the slightest task and the law will allow, till the poor are destroyed by their own poverty. As we write this paragraph word is brought to us of a little Rochester girl ten years of age, who has been found after school and after supper sewing on coats in the dim light of her home. She has only the little play she can snatch as she comes from school. Asked why her older sister of fifteen did not help her, she replied that *"Her eyes is bad, she cannot see to sew now."* If anyone should pay the charity bills of this city it should be the factory owners and all who reap their dividends. If we study the facts in our own city Open-Air school, we find that out of 74 families that have been represented there during the last two years, forty of them had wage-earning mothers and four were on charity and no longer able to work. Of the twenty-four who did no work as mothers we do not know how many worked before they were mothers. If we look in Rochester to the district where we have the largest infant mortality rates, we find that it is in those districts where the mothers live who before marriage were factory girls and who even after marriage have to go to the factory occasionally. If a large part of the human race must be born and reared with such results, then we can never hope for an *evolutionary* advance to a nobler social order. One Rochester mother came to the Infant Welfare Station the other day and said, "I want to wean my baby." Asked why she wanted to wean her child when the little thing was only five months old, she said, "My man is out of work and I must go back to the factory, if we are going to live." In one English mill strike recently, which lasted several months, it was found that though the standards of life were considerably lowered for the striking women, the chances for life for their children were raised, because the mothers were at home to care for thm. The result was that infant mortality was reduced 16% in that district.

If we only consider the twelve per cent Rochester women over 45 years of age who have to earn their own living, the number is not without significance. We cannot afford to neglect the mature single woman in industry, for the presence of this twelve per cent is one of the evidences

of the necessity of self-dependence at an age and among a class where marriage is frequent. Have you ever passed through the Rochester factories and seen the gray and white-haired women, many of them considerably younger than they look, some of them crippled with rheumatism? They have given their lives for the industries of this city and have been unable to save anything from their petty wage. We have hundreds of such white heads in our local establishments. Every young girl who leaves her mother's roof to take a job at $3 a week increases the burden and makes more difficult the struggle of these women over 45 years of age.

On the other hand the girl who leaves home in her teens and leaves the factory to marry at 24 is not usually free from being a problem to the community. These girls have small knowledge of home-making and the more serious responsibilities of motherhood. They pass from the school to the factory and from the factory to the management of a home, which from its simplest to its most serious tasks is a surprise to the girl, even to her who has had a little domestic science taught her in the grammar schools and eight years in the factory to forget it. 'Tis a bitter path to have to lose your baby as the only means of knowing how to care for it, but that's the path that hundreds tread every year in our city, and we do not think that generally speaking, the girl is to blame. Some small percentage of them, who are not made to speed as much as the others and are therefore less tired, are able to attend some of the evening schools and give some thought to preparation for the future, but far too large a number have no chance to efficiently meet the great human task of intelligently ennobling the human race. Even the new science of eugenics can do little while this condition is true for them. They are all sculptors working in the dark; if their hand slip, they mar for a lifetime and seal the lip.

SEVENTY-ONE PER CENT OF ROCHESTER'S IMMIGRANT GIRLS ARE BREADWINNERS AND CAN DO VERY HEAVY WORK

The Girls Who Do Not Live At Home

The women who have to board themselves form the best group from which to judge of the position of the working women of Rochester. In the early days of interest in the woman worker, many sensational statements were made regarding the large numbers of women who had to board themselves on their petty wage. The careful investigations of recent days however show without a doubt that about 80% of our women and girl workers live at home. It was a relief to hear it, but not so much of a relief as some allowed. One result of this change in the percentage has been a carelessness regarding the 20% who still have to board themselves and almost an utter neglect regarding the 80% who are in their own homes. Twenty per cent in Rochester, for example, means over 5,000 girls in 1913, and in a small city like ours we dare not be neglectful of so many. In round figures in 1900 we had about 5,000 girls taking care of themselves out of 18,910. Half of this number, however, were waitresses and domestics and as we all know it is the custom with the latter even if they have a home to go to, to board away from it. We learn however that usually 21% of the waitresses and domestics board themselves away from the homes of their employers and of course, many of these would be married, widowed and divorced, and not single girls. If we are to add the lowest average to the 2,500 factory and office girls who board themselves and allowed a fair proportionate increase for the 34% increase of population here between 1900 and 1910, we will easily admit that 3,500 girls boarding themselves in 1913 is by no means an over estimate. It will suffice for us.

As to the comparative standing of Rochester in this matter we have been surprised to find how much worse off we are than many cities much larger. In population Rochester stands in the 25th rank but when it comes to making a list of the cities according to the percentage of bread-winners who are women boarding themselves we stand in the 10th rank. There are not as large a proportion of girls boarding themselves in the Bronx or Manhattan as in Rochester. We have in Rochester a larger percentage than even Pittsburg, Buffalo, Indianapolis, Providence, St. Louis, Baltimore, Cleveland and other cities of nearly equal size. We cannot wholly blame the clothing industry, for Baltimore is a large clothing center. Whatever inference we make we have a greater reason than most cities for looking out for our working girls without homes.

Girls Who Do Live At Home

But let us consider for a moment the girls who do live at home, the 80% that set so many consciences to rest that were beginning to worry about the sad condition. Are we sure that the girl that lives at home has the best of it? If we will investigate the 80% we shall find that a very large percentage of them live in unattractive tenements and are not as carefully looked after as when we associate the words, "living at home" as synonymous with "living in a home *like our home.*" These home-living girls have very often as heavy and even heavier burdens to bear than the girl who only has herself to take care of in a single room. What are the facts as to this 80% in Rochester? We find that 3% of these girls are motherless girls and that 15% of them are fatherless. Is that nothing to us? The economic handicap in such homes is at times terrific, for many a girl is not only trying to support a widowed mother or father, but is caring for the education of smaller brothers and sisters.

Most social workers in this city will recall instance after instance where the struggle of the girl who lived at home was greater than that of the girl who lived in one room. It is one of the shocking things of today that so few of us are quick to recognize the concrete significance of such figures. Statistics may sound cold, but warm, passionate aspirations, griefs and heart-breaking failures are all mixed up together behind them. We cannot unfortunately ease the situation on our own conscience by supposing most of these girls to be well-paid stenographers or other fairly well remunerated employees, the government figures show that most of them are tailoresses, laundresses and dressmakers.

WAGES

This question of wages is the next thing for us to consider. It is the unhappiest part of the subject. It does not appear that employers are proud of what they pay nor the girls of what they receive. We have found a willingness on the part of some employers to show us the pay roll, but as private investigators we had no right to ask it of any. We have therefore drawn our figures mostly from government reports and census returns on manufactures and to some extent from the testimony of individual factory employers and employees. We cannot say that the testimony of either owners or factory girls can be wholly trusted. Both have reasons for making them appear more than they are. They will call attention to the misinterpretations that government figures are open to, and yet amusingly state but one interpretation of their own figures. It would appear that some Rochester employers are so ashamed of the wage that they pay their girls and women that they try to relieve their consciences or save themselves some social embarrassment, by requiring of all girls who apply for work a statement as to whether they live at home or board themselves. The girl who lives at home is then given the preference, for her home can then subsidize the industry in which she is employed and enable her to live a fairly efficient life; at least that seems to be the assumption. The result is that the girl who lives by herself not only has additional hardship in getting employment, but frequently finds it "good business" to lie and declare that she lives at home. Some manufacturers are frank to say, "We do not pay as much as we could pay, nor as much as the girls who are self-dependent ought to have, because we have plenty who will come for less." On the other hand some firms prefer the girl who has to keep herself, on the assumption, she will take more interest in her work, and will sacrifice much to keep her position. When we approach the working girl herself to discover how much she receives in wages, we have another evasion. Girls, like men, like to give the impression that they earn more than they are paid, so that they will sometimes tell a white lie, and give the figure which represents a heavy week or work with much overtime, which may be from thirty to fifty per cent above the average wage. If they work, as a very large number of them do, in seasonal trades, they will give the average wage for the busiest time of the year and thus from the general public the secret is kept.

In The Clothing Factories

But what about the wage scale for women and girl workers in Rochester? If we will make unexaggerated imagination count as we read the unadorned figures, we shall be unable to escape the feeling that this page in the history of the industry of Rochester is about the saddest

that could be written, even if not as bad in 1913 as it was in 1909. We will begin with the Clothing factories and dwell on the significance of conditions in them more than in the others because they employ more factory girls than any other industry in the city. Within the last year or two a Federal Investigation was made of the five great clothing cities of this country, and our first data will be drawn from the report of this investigation. The five cities included New York, Baltimore, Philadelphia, Chicago and Rochester. These five cities manufacture 68.3% of the total product of men's ready-made clothing. The investigation covered 244 factories employing 23,683 wage-earners. 88 of the factories were in New York, 70 were in Chicago, 22 were in Baltimore, 39 were in Philadelphia and 25 were in Rochester. The information was obtained both from the factories and from the workers after they had arrived home.

In Chicago nearly 33⅓% of the establishments had toilet facilities in "bad" condition. In New York 57 of the 88 investigated were so described. Generally the larger establishments offended less in this respect, but "in Rochester the worst toilet conditions were found in the larger factories." (*Cf Senate Document* No. 645 of 1911.) There is no evidence in the recent Chamber of Commerce's report that this condition continues to exist, as all the toilet complaints are made of medium and small sized factories.

The length of the working week was shortest in Chicago and Rochester, but even in these places it was as much as 54 hours. In regard to the weekly earnings it was shown that between one-third and three-fourths of the women earn less than $6 a week. In Rochester 31.4% were receiving this; in Baltimore the percentage receiving this small amount was as high as 76.9%. "In every city about half of the women were found earning between $4 and $8 a week." The average weekly wage of women, sixteen years of age and over in Chicago was $7.30, while in Rochester it was $7.04. We understand that in 1913 this figure should be something like $9.25. By the hour Chicago pays 17.1 cents and Rochester 15.9 cents. Of course, this rate was taken from a representative week and yearly income cannot be drawn from such a basis. The yearly income of these girls from this industry we will give below. In all the clothing establishments seen the women numbered more than 49% per cent of the total force. In Rochester 61% of the force were women, which is higher than in any of the other cities. In all the cities, including Rochester, the women's wage was lower than the men's who worked in *the same processes.* In Chicago the women's wage was 70% that of the men's; in Rochester it was as low as 60%.

But there is not steady employment in this industry for all the girls and every year when the busy season is past, many are turned off. We know of local factories that try to make this unfortunate part of the trade as easy as possible for the workers, by dismissing the single men rather than the married men and discriminating to some extent among the women workers. But such paternalism can do little after all and all do not do it. We wish that we felt free to praise by name those firms which in order to keep most of their force on all the year, actually lose or risk considerable money thereby. Some local factories keep from 80 to 90% of their force all the year, when the state of business might warrant them in dismissing fifty per cent. *But even this* all depends on a prosperous business. The scenes and struggles in the homes of some of those girls who are turned off, are pitiful. We recall going one evening

TYPES OF THE AMERICAN FACTORY GIRL —The Survey

into one of our hospitals to see a pretty 18-year-old girl, who had tried to commit suicide, because she had been dismissed, and there was no work she could obtain. We saw her landlady after, and she was preparing to throw the girl's trunk in the street because rent was owing her. In some instances as we shall show they have parents and children dependent upon them and all the time the tragedy is deepened by the consciousness of youth and strength which cannot be employed, because they were made to work at such a speed when in the factory. We find that canning factories and others can and do take some of these women after the seasonal trades begin to reduce their force. "In no city" says the report, were more than 35% of the total force found on the pay-rolls fifty or more weeks in a year." Of the 2,544 tailoresses who reported as such at the 1900 census, 1,329 were motherless girls and 475 were fatherless; while of the whole number 2,158 were single, 180 of them having no breadwinner in the family. Of course all of these totals must be greater now. It is these last facts which make even the best figures on the pay-roll sound so insignificant.

Warning In Regard To Statistics

We want to warn our readers of the continual difficulty which we have found in obtaining exact figures in regard to the wages in the different industries. Even government figures can be very misleading unless they are fully understood. For example, we know of one firm in the city,—not a clothing factory,—where the annual wage for all the workers is about $32,000. The trade is a seasonal trade, and at different seasons of the year the working force varies all the way from twenty to two hundred women. This firm reports, however, to the Census as having two hundred employees; and the uninitiated social investigator may with guilelessness divide the $32,000 by 200 and charge that this firm is only paying $160 a year to its women. Yet 200 employees are there only about six months of the year. The blame for this fact regarding easy misinterpretation, may be partly due to the usual deception of all generalizing but also to the carelessness of those who fill in the Census papers.

We have given very careful thought to the wisdom of publishing such inadequate figures as are to be found in the 1900 Census, which are still the only ones that can be obtained. But in addition to the interest that will gather about them as illustrating the perversity of statistics, we cannot escape the feeling that they should be given as a basis on which to add varied percentages of increase, and also to emphasize the fact that even the 1913 larger figures may not be so much larger than those of 1900 when it comes to their actual purchasing power. If wages have increased, the cost of living has also increased, and while no man can dogmatically claim how much per cent the cost of living has gone up during that number of years, we lay it down as *our opinion* that wages have not generally advanced at a greater rate than the cost of living and that on the whole the purchasing power is not so very different from what it was twelve years ago. The wage scales of a few local factories might not verify this opinion and it may be that in these few the purchasing power is greater today. But the opinion we have expressed is almost an economic law.

In Other Local Factories

We do not see that the same percentage of increase has come to all local industries. In one canning establishment we find that the increase during the last fifteen years has been such that today, it is treble what it was then. For work which the women did at that day at 3 cents an hour, today they are paid 9 cents an hour. In the button factories of the city the increase has been about 100% during that period. We state these things for we have no motive to make things out to be worse than they are. The very "best are bad enough," as one of our leading manufacturers put it. In the clothing industry in 1900, the average wage of women sixteen years of age and over was $308 a year in Custom Work and Repairing of Men's clothing, and $295 a year in those establishments that dealt with what is called Factory Product. In Woman's Clothing establishments, under the head of dressmaking the average wage was $273 a year and those places having the Factory Product, the average was as low as $172 a year. It will be seen at once that before much faith should be attached to these figures consideration must be given to the irregularity of the number of employees and a considerable but unknown addition made to the wages to represent conditions now, a modification which we illustrated in two paragraphs ahead of this.

In other industries the following were the figures for the same period and we are under obligation to treat them in the same manner as we have already done those in the clothing industry. In the Boot & Shoe factories in 1900 the average wage of women from 16 years of age and up was $297 a year each. Of the 1,285 women and girls who reported at the Census as boot and shoe makers and repairers, 603 were motherless and 315 were fatherless, 1,192 were single and 58 of them were living in families where they were the only bread winners. In the Confectionery and Candy factories the average wage for the same girls at the same time was $230 a year each. In the Fancy and Paper Box establishments, it was as low as $176 each. This was the same low report for the Optical establishments. The Box Factory girls have in their number more than half of them motherless girls or as the figures were in 1900, 192 of them out of 309, while 78 were either fatherless or living in homes where there was no father. Most of the girls here as elsewhere were of course, single girls. In the Cigar and Cigarette Factories the average wage

was $194, while in the Button factories it was $186 a year. Today we understand that the minimum wage in these last factories is $6 a week with very little "lay off time," in all but one department, where it is yet $5 and that the median wage, which we have explained in an earlier paragraph, is about $8 a week. In the Canning Factories, it is reported to us that today the wage is about $4.50 for a 48 hour week for all girls between 14 and 16; while for a longer week, those from 16 years of age and more, it is $6 a week on an average during the season. We do not know what are the number of employees in all these industries today so withhold even what seem to us to be reasonable approximations. We shall not need to convince anybody that the higher figures of 1913 do not represent anything to be boastful about, except as some may take some joy in boasting over comparative goodneess. We know more than one $8 a week girl who receives that amount fairly steadily every week in the year, who almost makes herself ill with the worry as to what she will do when she does become ill. They have nothing or very, very little saved and the thought of no reserve is a fearful thing in the background of the mind of these girls who have to keep themselves, as also in the minds of those who have to keep others too.

Her Budget and (?) Pin Money

Wages are for living and living is for life. What kind of life can a girl have from such wages as we have cited? Even supposing that the wage was from $6 to $8 a week steadily, how can homeless girls or even those who have to help out widowed mothers and feebled fathers at home make a living on this basis? One mature thoughtful working woman said that if girls would live co-operatively and study food values, they could live on $6 a week. We believe this to be so, but how many factory and store girls know food values? And as we shall try to show later, the mature woman can do it easier than the girl. Supposing that we allowed a girl NOTHING for laundry, NOTHING for recreation, NOTHING for friends, NOTHING for a vacation, NOTHING for a doctor, NOTHING for magazines or newspapers, NOTHING for the scores of sundries which most of us have come to consider the necessities of decent living, we have left something like the following: Room, $1.25; Food, $3.50; Clothing, $1.65; Car-fare, 60c;—a total of $7 a week. This is no imaginary budget on the part of the writers but the kind that many, many girls have to somehow meet every week of their lives. The Report of the Pittsburg Survey did not hesitate to say that "the lines of the $7 budget are the lines for a barren life." Of course, the "pinch" is met by saving car-fare and going in for a little "dieting" as one poor girl excused her poor ill-nourishing meal. Personally, we cannot conceive of any kind of true worker's budget for women in this city on less than $10 a week steadily all the year. It has been said that this figure is the minimum in New York city, but most minimums are like the budget mentioned above, minimums not for living, but for a "barren life," and it is time that some of us seriously questioned the policy of trying to decide what is the least that our girls and women can live on and begin to ask what is the maximum that they ought to receive as their just reward for what they have produced. Every manufacturer in Rochester who is paying his women workers 40% less than he is his men for the same work done with equal efficiency is putting their wages into his pocket, and no euphonious phrasing can hide the fact. We say this so bluntly not from any personal animosity but because such manufacturers

are making the community as a whole pay for their injustice. Girls are cheap and there are plenty of them and when industry is done with the m and they are no longer skillful enough, quick or pretty enough, instead of industry paying the penalty for such wear and tear on beautiful human life, the city as a whole has to pay for it and all on-coming generations must share the cost. Nearly all the evils of bad housing, child-labor, tuberculosis, insanity and prostitution start in the only partially filled pay-envelope of the working women and girls of our city. The fact is, the working girl is largely "the helper-out" with the family income. The six million women workers of America are in industry to help-out the thousands of $600 a year men, and they have thus become the cheapest thing on the labor market of today. We have wanted to think that the terribly low averages which can be found for the yearly wages quoted above in the different industries in the city which largely employ women, are made so by unusually large number of very young apprentices, but as we have watched the girls come from their work in these places we have not found that very young girls are there in any number, most of them have seemed to be at least eighteen years of age. There is not the demand for apprentice help today as there used to be. The girls learn mostly a process not a trade and it is learned comparatively early. In fairness, however, we raise the question whether that local manufacturer was right who said, "It is the girl who takes less than $6 that we lose money on."

It is still frequent to hear the excuse that most of these young women are at work for pin-money and that the low wage does not make any material difference to them. Some do, of course, but they are so few in number that it is foolish to even consider them, we have facts which show that 84% of the girls who work in the stores and 88% of those who work in factories, turn their entire earnings over into the family income. See where the vast mass of our factory girls come from, their homes are not the kind that can afford to have daughters going to work merely for pin money. They are there as we said at the beginning, for economic reasons. We wonder if any know to what an extent the factory girls hate the life they have to lead? They go there in no enthusiasm. One of our Rochester girls had from childhood the hope that she would be able to be a book-keeper instead of following the family destiny and making one more tailoress and she tried hard to fit herself for the better position. But economic reasons forced her to leave school early and because she hated so the idea of going to a factory, she became a check girl. But this was not for long, for the low wages in this occupation at last forced her,—a very old check girl,—to enter the factory. She came in bitterness of soul on the day that she was to enter the factory and said, "Today I die!" If any of our readers had seen her during the months that followed, the broken spirit would have not failed to have impressed us. Her first week's wage she could not use, she said, so she gave it away, for it seemed to her to be the price of her soul's ideal, a costlier price than the price of blood and as she gave the money away, she cried, "I hate the money." We do not know to what extent this spirit of rebellion is rife among our working women, but we have reason to suspect it very widespread. Only the money forces them to do it. One of our Rochester girls visited some friends in a neighboring city came back and said, "Do you know that it is a disgrace to work in a factory? My friends would not let me say that that was my work in Rochester. They wanted me to say that I was a stenographer or something respectable. They look

down on you something inferior if you work in a factory." If what we have said and have yet to say of our factory life be in anyway true, it is not to be wondered at that girls,—and girls were never made for the factory,—hate the life.

Why She Is So Poorly Paid

One thing cannot help being uppermost in our minds as we consider this question of wages, and that is, why are they not better paid? Students of the subject have found a multitude of reasons, which can be read in any study of the subject. For example, Frank Carlton in his recently published book on "The History and Problem of Organized Labor" gives the following reasons among others: Women are physically weaker than men; women are more liable to sickness than men; competition is increased between women because there are fewer occupations open to them than to men; immobility of labor is more marked among women than among men; women workers are frequently subsidized by the home and by friends; women are not interested in learning a trade; women are unorganized; women have not the suffrage; women are more grateful than men to those who employ them, and so on. Outside of the reasons which gather about the political, economic and unorganized condition of women, the chief reasons gather about her sex handicap.

It is one of the oldest fallacies regarding womanhood which dies hard, that women are physically the weaker sex. For certain muscular efforts undoubtedly she is not trained to be man's equal, but this fact does not make her the weaker sex. The requirement of great muscular effort in our factories is growing less and less and the chance of the woman to show equal work is very much greater than ever before. A closer examination of this question of physical strength would show that they have a much stronger hold on life than men. For example, we proverbially call them hysterical, but it can be shown that they have greater stability of nerves than men and a greater power of resistance to diseases. It is notorious that we have fewer women insane than men, that there are never as many die of alcoholism, that nervous diseases and suicide and other troubles which indicate mental and physical instability are more in evidence among men than among women. More women die of old age than men. This last fact has its economical sequel. More women paupers are found than male paupers. The very physical strength that we boast of on her account, when economically considered, is a source of her weakness. The lower death rate among women leaves a large number of women without partners at a time when they are least able to cope with the battles of life and be self supporting. The working widow is nearly always at this disadvantage; she has given her best days to the home and her return to industry finds her unprepared for its competition. It is as Mr. Hobson says in his "Problems of Poverty," "the general industrial weakness of women and not sex prejudice which prevents them from receiving the wages that men get." There are fewer women's strikes and they are more easily kept down. This fact in the history of labor is the standing contradiction of that assertion of many employers that better conditions and wages have come from the employer's own volition and sense of what is just. The women workers of the civilized world are still waiting for that volition to reveal itself on their behalf. Where it has not been the outraged sense of justice in the public mind, nearly all improvements in the condition of women's wages have come from their organized protest.

Relation of Employer To The Problem

It is not pleasant to dwell on the relation of the employer to his women workers. Employees find it continually harder to believe in the sincerity of the owners. Some are very impatient and many are unwilling to acknowledge that employers may be as great victims of an industrial system as employees. For example, we are told of an employer who employs some 2,000 persons. He argues that if he were to add fifty cents a week to the wage of each of them, it would mean $50,000 a year. This, he says, would mean the ruin of his business as he could not spare at this time or perhaps at anytime that amount from the business. To get the extra fifty thousand out of the consumer, is in the long run, only working round a circle, and competition will not allow him to get it. It is said by local employers that a very large number, perhaps the majority of Rochester employers are all the time within a narrow margin like the above. Now even the employers admit that an additional fifty cents is not a great increase to the employee, but it is ruining when multiplied fifty times fifty-two. Of course, our answer, which at present solves nothing, is that it is time we changed our system of business rather than have one which is always so near to bankruptcy and is compelled to exploit the community. Our employers *are* victims. But,—it is too bad that there has to be a "but",—the employee, whose point of view we frequently have tried to give in this study, sees other things than the narrow margin which we have referred to. If she could speak to her employers, she would say: "When your child is sick you are still able to have a nurse-girl but when my baby is sick and my little sister has the fever, I must fight for their lives without such help, or come on charity. You can buy good clothes that wear and I must buy

THIS PHOTOGRAPH OF TWO LITTLE ROCHESTER CHILDREN TAKING HOME CLOTHING FROM THE FACTORY REPRESENTS WHAT CAN BE SEEN ON OUR STREETS ANY DAY.

cheap dresses that do not last and often get them and my boots on credit. You can get good food and learn what is good, and always have enough, while I must take the cheapest and be content. When you want recreation you can sit in a box at the Lyceum Theater, but I must go to the 5 cent show. Your business may be in a risky condition, but you have a summer home to-day that you used not to have; you have an automobile to-day that you did without once; you have a nice home to rest in at night, while mine is still a tenement; if you go on a vacation, your wage comes in just the same but mine will stop." Can you wonder we say that it is not pleasant to deal with this part of our subject; we see both sides. Some owners are brutally indifferent, and even kindly inclined ones at times tactlessly show their good will, so that the workers reject it as so much charity or patronising and only here and there can we see owners and workers living with intelligent co-operation. Many employers do not know of the condition under which their workers are employed, and it is not always possible to obtain a foreman who will perform the will of the owner in matters of his good will. We recall that in one of our local "model" factories a new law was introduced that no more work was to be sent out to the homes of the workers. The foreman, finding the girls were willing to take home coats was allowing them to do so, in spite of the order, until he was peremptorily ordered to stop them by the employer who came in time to see them being taken home. In another instance the girls complained to an outsider of the condition of the toilets in their factory. The description was so bad that the outsider felt that the owner could not know of it, for he had the reputation of doing the best he could for his workers. He was therefore seen and went with the visitor and saw what the girls had complained of; and he was embarrassingly angry with the man whose duty it had been to take care of this condition. Yet some of us will justly feel that he ought to have known, perhaps. It seems to us that there is a place for just condemnation of all employers who pay poor wages to their women and girl workers and yet have enough to luxuriously live on some of the best of the city. Of course, there is a point which can be reached easily under our present system of competition, where wages cannot be further increased without bankruptcy. The most significant thing in modern business in its relation to poor wages, is the feeling of helplessness before this condition. The system of competition could hardly have a more pathetic condemnation. If bankruptcy is the only alternative for a man who cannot pay a living wage, then as a man wanting to be honest, he should get out of business. He has no right to further exploit the community. The injustice of continuing in business is greater than the injustice of the dismissal of employees, which last may adjust itself in some larger synthesis. To try and get rid of some of this responsibility by some unjust contract and sub-contracting system of employment does not remove the blame. The man who is unjust by proxy is doubly unjust, that is all.

Effects of Speeding and Fatigue

The speeding of the girls begins from the moment they rise in the morning, for harsh words and closed doors and a docked pay-envelope are the kind of rewards which await the girl who does not get to work on time. A whole hour's pay will be forfeited for being fifteen minutes late. "We were paid by the piece," writes one Rochester factory girl. "When we worked at making samples, we were paid by the hour. If I was late they closed the door. Once on a cold dark morning in the winter, I got

there at five minutes after seven, and the door was closed, and I had to go home." The boss or foreman only sees a tardy woman in a late worker. If he stood at the other end of the trip, he would see a mother getting her children out of bed at five and six o'clock in the morning, hastily giving them their breakfast, and getting them ready for school and then hurrying,—even running we have seen,—to work so as to be on time. The effect is more than women can stand for any long time unless they are exceptionally strong. Have you ever watched the mothers bringing their little children on dark cold winter mornings to the Industrial Home on Exchange street? We have seen the little huddled bundles going along in the early dark with the nervously hurrying mother by their side. A man does not need much social imagination to feel the striving and struggle behind that daily dark journey. All the modelness in the world that could be placed in a factory cannot count for much to these poor workers. If there is one type of woman worker in Rochester for whom there should be special legislation it is the working widow with children. We have known them in this city to leave their children in bed, to get up themselves later, and get their own breakfasts, while they have gone to clean offices down-town. When they return the children are in school. At night they go again and the children come home from school and are on the street waiting for mother till sometimes nine o'clock at night.

But speeding begins in real earnest once within the factory; by that cruel system of piece work which can be found in so many hundreds of Rochester factories, which is doubtless rightly blamed for lowering

wages more than anything else in modern manufacturing business, the girls are kept at a selfish competitive tension all the hours of their task. There is hardly anything uplifting in the system. It is every girl for herself and the devil of poverty for the hindmost. We have seen these girls when the day's work has been done, when the employers could not see them and the effect on them is a loss and menace to the whole common life of our city. The piece work and even the speed of the week work is kept too frequently at a speed wholly disassociated from the capacity of the worker with results that are disastrous. Of course many girls want to do piece work, at least so it is said. But a fuller inquiry will show that they really want the wages of the piece worker not that kind of work. If the girl and women workers of Rochester were paid their maximum wage, there would be no hurry for piece work. Many of the younger and more energetic ones do not quickly show the results but large numbers do. We told a little time ago in THE COMMON GOOD, the experience of one of our Rochester factory girls (Vol. 6, page 71.) It will interest here to add to that story that, when that girl came to tell her story for dictation, she went off to sleep in her chair from sheer exhaustion from the days' work in the factory. We know social workers in Rochester who have tried to take care of the evenings for these girls and find them amusements and classes. It is their testimony again and again that these girls ought not to be *there* even, but in bed. Hundreds of working girls go to bed directly after they have eaten their supper. "too tired for recreation, too tired for reading and often too tired for sleep." We write that which we know.

By speeding for the few months that they can work, a girl, if young and energetic will earn even at button holing as much as $15 a week, but this is done by working early and late.—Do not forget the significance of factory lights after six o'clock.—One Rochester girl who lived by herself was doing this but even she had to make her own clothes in order to do it successfully and expressed dismay that any girl in this city could live on less than $9 a week. In spite of the waiting lists which can be found at the larger model factories, there is also we have found a loathness to enter them. The speeding there under so-called more perfectly organized efficiency system is what a girl will shun as long as she can. We have known them to work for months and years at the slower pace and smaller wage in the smaller places rather than go, but at last be forced to it by need. Many prefer the smaller shops also, because a neighborhood knowledge of the boss, and easy going ways of the smaller group fits in best with a natural shyness of the girls. They do not need to be so particular about their dress and it is easier to go home when tired and unwell. One story which refers to a worker in one of our Rochester factories we cannot withhold at this point. One of our girls had at last been forced to go into the larger plant for work after keeping out for a long time. She found among her fellow workers one bright girl who during the *busiest* times only managed to earn $9 a week. She was one of the best girls in the shop and she could not understand the low wage and therefore asked her about it. Her reply was "I like the praise for my nice looking button holes as well as my nine dollars." The other's instinctive answer was, "But I've got to live!" We wonder how many more would work or would like to work for both "bread and roses" if it were not for the "I've got to live!" Is not the factory and the city the loser that our girls can work for bread only?

The exciting tension of the day's work does not end with the clos-

One of Rochester's Working Women. We took this photograph near the store of Sibley, Lindsay & Curr Co.

The old lady had to stop every few steps to pick up the kindling which fell from her ill-arranged load.

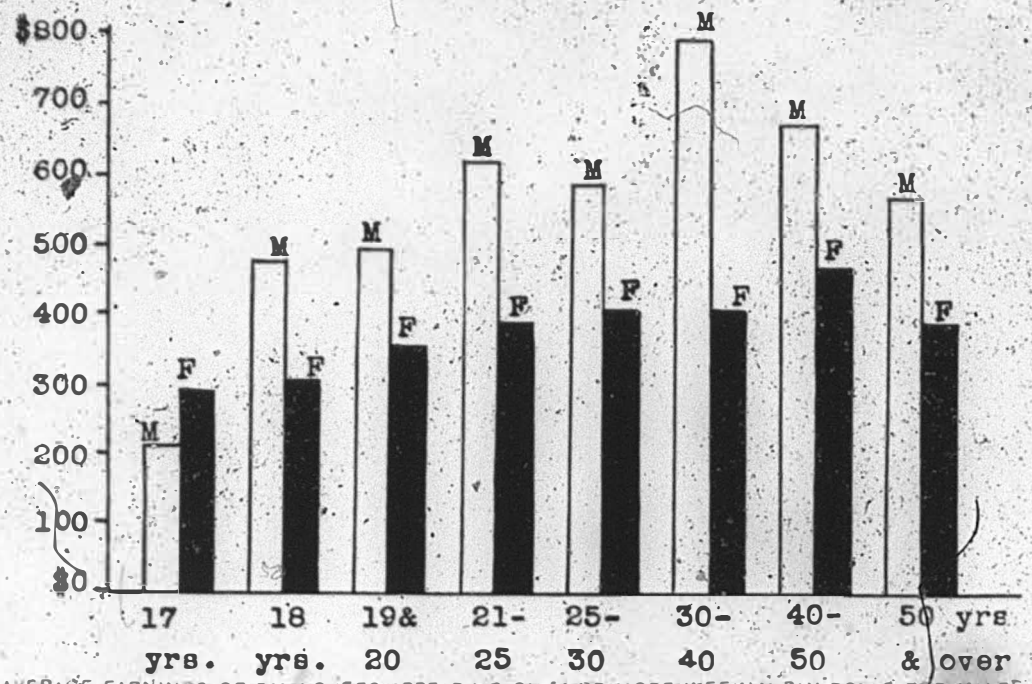
ing of the factory, it has a harvest to reap in the evening. Ill-health and ill morals go back to the fatigue of the girls as much as to anything else. The dull room at the lodging is torment to the girl whose ears all day have reacted to the factory din, whose eyes have followed the interest and attraction of many movements. The evening's moral equivalent for the factory has not yet been discovered except under degrading auspices, with the possible exception of the social center of the school house. "I know the judge thinks I'm a bad girl," sobbed the little Russian factory girl to Jane Addams, put under bonds for threatening to kill her lover. "But I had only been bad one week and before that I was good for six years. I worked every day in ..... 's factory and took home all my wages to keep the kids at school. I met this fellow at a dance hall. I just *had* to go to dances sometimes after pushing down the lever of a machine and using both my arms feeding it for ten hours a day—nobody knows how I felt some nights. I agreed to go away with this man for a week but when I was ready to go home he tried to drive me out on the street to earn money for him and, of course, I threatened to kill him—any decent girl would." Was the report of the Chicago Vice Commission wrong in its declaration that "the economic stress of industrial life on unskilled workers, with the enfeebling influences on the will power is the second great cause why thousands of girls are sacrificed annually to an immoral life?"

Our Women Workers and The Social Evil

It remains for us now to dwell upon an evil which the consciousness of to-day is fortunately connecting more and more with low wages. We have no reason for sensationalism on this subject for a number of causes combine to create the trouble. No one reason will account for every effect here anymore than elsewhere. Prof. Rauschenbusch, whose

thoughtful insight into so much of this subject we have before noticed, in calling attention to Jane Addams's book on "A New Conscience and an Ancient Evil" has this to say which will be enlightening for us at this point. "Miss Addams's book has a message of great hope, for she makes it clear that girls rarely prostitute themselves from any perverse or sinful preference for a life of vice. They are drawn into it by various influences in combination, which are all humanly comprehensible and natural, by instincts which we find in our own hearts and in our sisters and daughters, such as the love of ease, dress and excitement. The girls are not crowding into vice; they have to be trapped and pushed in." But to-day we know better than any previous day that the girls are pushed in by low wages and the speeding life in the factories more than any other thing. The reports of the thorough investigations of the Vice Commissions of Chicago, Minneapolis and Kansas City can no longer permit the most optimistic of us to treat these facts in any other light. From 70 to 90 Per cent. of those who go wrong take the first step from the threshhold of our stores and factories. It is our belief that the store girl is more tempted than the factory girl. But we quote Jane Adams's own words, "The increasing nervous energy to which industrial processes daily accommodate themselves and the speeding up constantly required of the operators, may at any moment so register their results upon the nervous system of a factory girl as to overcome her powers of resistance. Many a working girl at the end of the day is so hysterical and over wrought that her mental balance is plainly disturbed." * * * * "A girl in financial straights does not go deliberately to find illicit methods of earning money, she simply yields in a moment of utter weariness and discouragement to the temptations she has been able to withstand up to that moment. The long hours, the lack of comforts, the low pay, the absence of recreation, the sense of good times all about her which she cannot share, the conviction that she is rapidly losing charm and health rouse the molten forces in her. A swelling tide of self-pity suddenly storms the banks which have hitherto held her and finally overcomes her instincts for decency and righteousness, as well as habits of clean living, established by generations of her forebears." Sometimes it will be found that our economic system indirectly causes these sad results. There are Rochester girls as young as fifteen and sixteen who show a vicious tendency without any cause that can be directly traced to industry; often they are not workers at all. But a feeble-mindedness goes back to a mother who was in industry and all is but the natural harvest of a previous generation's wrong and injustice.

It has been pointed out by one of our local men that the greatest danger which we face is not the increase of prostitution, but the frequency with which womens' wages are supplemented by occasional immorality which still permits them to hold their social standing. One of our Rochester girls recently sent from the city for vagrancy said that all of the girls in the house where she lived—a house in the 4th Ward,—received men into their bedrooms and supplemented their income in the same manner. We have asked workers among girls and those who come into contact with them a great deal, seeking for some strenuous denial of the implications but we have found none. But for all that we register our protest against the slander that girls cannot be virtuous on a low wage. Frenzied social workers may have their notions, but the fact is, thousands of our girls would rather starve first. If their amusements are low, it is because they are cheap, if the places they lodge in are not in the



AVERAGE EARNINGS OF EMPLOYEES APPEARING ON 50 OR MORE WEEKLY PAY-ROLLS FOR MALES AND FEMALES, BY AVERAGES IN ROCHESTER. THE DIAGRAM IS TAKEN FROM THE 1911 GOVERNMENT INVESTIGATION REFERRED TO IN THE TEXT.

best quarters in the city it is because the rents are the cheapest, and it is the cheap which an income of $312 a year *must* seek. So again we bear our testimony in the other direction. When we consider the many pitfalls surrounding our young girls at an age when they do not know the world, when they are deprived of the home protection which is rightfully theirs, when bitter alternatives are all that is offered for vice, we cannot withhold our admiration for the mass of them who come to pure and noble womanhood. Such life makes one reverent. But every now and then a girl throws up the hands and goes under and our words must be on the behalf of the weak far more than on behalf of the strong.

It may seem to some a little strenuous to expect factory owners to care for the morality of their employees, but it is not aside from our general study to ask the question, whether they could not do more than they are doing, even apart from the great demoralizer of low wages. The mixing of male and female employees and the conditions of some of the toilets in the Rochester factories alone can provide us for some comment. Even the Chamber of Commerce could not blink the fact that too many factories had men's and women's toilets together. When we have listened to the stories which some of the factory girls have told us concerning the evils which gather about such a condition, we have only been able to exclaim, "Horrible!" Yes, horrible that the owners of our factories have forgotten that when they employ girls at their works they are dealing with *womanhood!* In one sense, of course, the employer is not to blame for the indecent talk which is heard by the girls in the workrooms,—a crime which has been complained of to us again and again,—but in a very real sense they are responsible for having these conveniences off from rooms where men are employed. We realize that many employers never think of these things and that they will remedy them as soon as the trouble is known to them, but we should have demanded this of them long ago. One case in one of the factories was so vile, that the girls were told by

their outside friends that if they did not report the insults of this man, they would do it instead. At first, the girls were afraid to complain, but one with a little more "sand" than the others plucked up courage and went and told the whole story to the owner and the man was dismissed on the spot. We would like to believe that every boss in the city would do the same under the same circumstances; but first of all they must have their girls feel that there is nothing to be afraid of in making complaint and that however skillful a workman or foreman the indecent man may be, it shall not stand to his credit for such conduct. We mention these things because it is time that a halt was called in this matter in our factories. Is it not enough that our girls have to work "under the alien roofs" for their living, that we must add insult to the injury? Again, we say, this evil is not peculiar to Rochester, but if it is here—and it is—we want our manhood to rise to the occasion and abolish this system which treats "female hands" as if they were not women. This de-personalising of labor is one of the damning results of the greed of gold. Truly, "if any one has a sound reason for taking the competitive system by the throat in righteous wrath, it is the unmarried woman and the mother of girls."

WHAT TO DO

One of the best things is already being done. The condition of things which we have described is not only the object of thought but the *burden* of thought of increasing thousands of men and women all over the world.

> "I have robbed my sister of her day of maidenhood,
> For a robe, for a feather, for a trinket's restless spark
> Shut from love till dusk shall fall, how shall she know good,
> How shall she pass scathless through the sinlit dark?
> I who could be innocent, I who could be gay,
> I who could have love and mirth before the light went by,
> I have put my sister in her mating time away—
> Sister, my young sister—Was it I? Was it I?

Yes, it was I. And as we said, one of the best things being done today is that so many are willing to admit the social responsibility. The more publicity that we have on the life of the working women of our land the harder it will be for exploitation to take place. But in order to have this we must have our working women standing before their employers on a different status to what they do in Rochester today. We not only refer to the equality which will come to them with the granting of the suffrage but to the equality which will be theirs when they are organised. No amount of welfare work, which many of our Rochester factories have taken up, can atone for the refusal to recognise collective bargaining and organised workers. Welfare work usually is paternalism in its origin yet the moment that the principle of paternalism is applied to the owners and the State is urged to have a paternalistic power over the wages they shall give and the working conditions they shall provide, their enthusiasm for paternalism often disappears. Paternalism seems to be wanted only if the employers can be the fathers. We know that after they are started, many of these welfare experiments have the co-operation of the workers and we have much sympathy and encouragement for it, but there is one feature of it that arouses indignation. Wherever employers are dealing in these "philanthropies" for the sole purpose of staving off organisation and destroying labor unions, they are worthy of the indignation of the community. William Henry Baldwin, Jr., the railroad magnate who of

all employers we have ever read of, had the best "drop of manly blood," says, "If they want to fight trade unions, that is their privilege; but let them do it openly and not in the guise of baths, gymnasiums, cheap lunches, entertainments and profit-sharing." Usually we find that the workers are not deceived by these devices. Baldwin admitted, as many other employers are doing, that the workers have the right to organize and that in the long run it is better to let the workers educate themselves than to create a superior set of persons to do the work of bossing for them. Our girls must soon refuse to be the helpers-out with their wages and insist on the same wage as men for the same work, and then unite with the men for the maximum wage for all. The women who trim hats and work in the factories of Massachusetts, New York, Connecticut and Pennsylvania have already come to their responsibility as workers. The following parallel will show what they have accomplished:

BEFORE ORGANIZATION	AFTER ORGANIZATION
Low wages.	50% increase in wages.
No limit to working hours.	52 hours a week.
Home work.	No home work.
Discharge in dull season.	No discharge; fair distribution of work over the year.
No protection from insult.	Worker respected.
No pay for extra work.	Extra pay for extra work.
Worker had to provide silk.	Employer provides silk.
Worker provided cotton and needles.	Employer provides both.
Favorites received easy work.	No favorites; fair division of easy and hard work.
No heed given to worker's grievances.	Conferences held and grievances adjusted.
LOCKED DOORS; BARRED WINDOWS AND NO FIRE PROTECTION.	UNLOCKED DOORS AND FIRE PROTECTION.

What we want in Rochester is an increase of the public opinion which shall say "Progress is measured by the constantly increasing organization both of capital and labor and the increased effectiveness of each. The organization of capital may be interpreted as the increased ability through corporations to direct capital in the most intelligent and efficient manner, and the organization of labor as the increased ability of labor to arrive at an intelligent basis for collective bargining." Our employers *need* an organization among their employees, because they know their own needs best. We want a public opinion which shall make a man an outcast from respectable society who lives well himself and yet who does not know the needs of our womanhood enough to pay a living wage.

It will have been noticed that we have constantly tried to keep in mind that our study is one of working girls more than women and some may have supposed that their needs cannot be as much as those of the mature woman. The fact is, contrary as it is to the general impression, it is harder for a girl of 18 to live on $6 a week than for a woman of 45. The girl has come to the blooming time of her life. If she is a natural, normal girl she will want her inalienable right to joy. She will have "the fluttering towards laughter, lightness and the need of singing" and this all means companionship and pleasure. Her social needs are tremendous compared with the older woman. If she has only a dingy bedroom in which to receive her boy friends, if she is not allowed to dance at the school house among the boys whom she has known from her childhood, but is forced downtown to dance halls of which she knows nothing, if the community provides no decent lodging for her at her price, if she is made to speed at

the factory, till she is wrought up to a pitch that she does not know what she is doing, if the owner of the factory is careless—*as most, if not all, are in this respect*—of the peculiar needs of womanhood and she cannot walk out of the factory once every month without any questions being asked and receive her pay just the same, if she is not encouraged to organize with other girls to better her condition, if she is made to fall by the way in the battle which she should never have been asked to fight, then the entire city of Rochester must pay the price, and a delinquent parentage in the Rochester of the days to come will be part of the terrible harvest. If, as is so, three out of every five girls we meet on the streets and in the homes of our city between 16 and 20 years of age, are earning their own living, their cause is one of the most imperative calls that could be made in these days of social responsibility.

Part of our purpose in this educational study has been to educate the women workers themselves,—for we will endeavor to place a copy in the hands of thousands of them,—to the necessity of organization and the need for them to help those of us outside to understand their cause better. There are many questions surrounding the women workers of this city that we want to see answered and many that we have tried to answer we want to see answered better. We want more data from the girls themselves. We shall respect and hold in strict confidence all communications made to us on the conditions upon which we seek enlightenment and we urge our working readers to send us their answers. This is a land where social investigation is looked upon as an intrusion into private affairs, and to some extent this is right and we respect it. But in many instances the community is menaced through lack of knowledge and where the workers can add intelligence to these kind of problems, it should be sought from them. "You know by bitter experience what we of other classes know only by hearsay and our sympathy with you."

We have shown throughout what facts we were in the possession of and have emphasized the need for yet further information, we want to close on a different strain. For after all, the greatest need is not more information, investigations everywhere show the same facts. We *know* what happens if poor wages are paid, we *know* what happens if the working girls are made to speed beyond their strength; the facts regarding the struggle of womanhood in the past and in the present we *know*. What we want now and want badly, is the will to do and hearts unafraid to do it. The woman's cause is not only man's, it is the cause of all of us together and in this city at least it awaits the energy of those who have the knowledge and leisure and money and life to respond.

THE WORKER'S MAY-POLE

WALTER CRANE