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THE BITTER CRY OF THE CHILDREN


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A TYPICAL SCENE

The matron of a Day Nursery examining a child's throat. The two "Little Mothers" are typical.

THE BITTER CRY OF THE CHILDREN

BY

JOHN SPARGO

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY

ROBERT HUNTER

AUTHOR OF "POVERTY"

New York

THE MACMILLAN COMPANY

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TO MY FRIEND

MRS. WILLIAM SHARMAN

Fide et Amore

INTRODUCTION

I COUNT myself fortunate in having had a hand in bringing this remarkable and invaluable volume into existence. Quite incidentally in my book *Poverty* I made an estimate of the number of underfed children in New York City. If our experts or our general reading public had been at all familiar with the subject, my estimate would probably have passed without comment, and, in any case, it would not have been considered unreasonable. But the public did not seem to realize that this was merely another way of stating the volume of distress, and, consequently, for several days the newspapers throughout the country discussed the statement and in some instances severely criticised it. One prominent charitable organization, thinking that my estimate referred to starving children, undertook, without delay, to provide meals for the children. In the midst of the excitement Mr. Spargo kindly volunteered to investigate the facts at first hand. His inquiry was so searching and impartial and the data he gathered so interesting and valuable that I urged him to put his material in some permanent form. The following admirable study of this problem is the result of that suggestion.

I am safe in saying that this book is a truly powerful one, destined, I believe, to become a mighty factor in awakening all classes of our people to the necessity of undertaking measures to remedy the conditions which exist. The appeal of adults in poverty is an old appeal, so old indeed that we have become in a measure hardened to its pathos and insensitive to its tragedy. But this book represents the cry of the child in distress, and it will touch every human heart and even arouse to action the stolid and apathetic. The originality of the book lies in the mass of proof which the author brings before the reader showing that it is not alone, as most of our charitable experts believe, the misery of the neglected or the actively maltreated child that should receive attention. Even more important is the misery of that one whose whole future is darkened and perhaps blasted by reason of the fact that during his early years of helplessness he has not received those elements of nutritious food which are necessary to a wholesome physical life.

Few of us sufficiently realize the powerful effect upon life of adequate nutritious food. Few of us ever think of how much it is responsible for our physical and mental advancement or what a force it has been in forwarding our civilized life. Mr. Spargo does not attempt in this book to make us realize how much the more favored classes owe to the

fact that they have been able to obtain proper nutrition. His effort here is to show the fearful devastating effect upon a certain portion of our population of an inadequate and improper food supply. He shows the relation of the lack of food to poverty. The child of poverty is brought before us. His weaknesses, his mental and physical inferiority, his failure, his sickness, his death, are shown in their relation to improper and inadequate food. He first proves to our satisfaction that this child of misery is born into the world with powerful potentialities, and he then shows, with tragic power, how the lack of proper food during infancy makes it inevitable that this child become, if he lives at all, an incompetent, physical weakling. It is perhaps unnecessary to point out that the problem of poverty is largely summed up in the fate of this child, and when the author deals with this subject he is in reality treating of poverty in the germ.

There have been many books written about the children of the poor, but, in my opinion, none of them give us so impressive a statement as is contained here of the most important and powerful cause of poverty. Among many reasons which may be found for the existence of distress, the author has taken one which seems to be more fundamental than the others. But, while this is true, there is no dogmatic treatment of the problem, for the author realizes that the

causes of poverty in this country of abundance are numerous. Indeed, wherever one looks, one may see conditions which are fertile in producing it. Students of the poor find some of these causes in the conditions surrounding the poor. Students of finance and of modern industry find causes of poverty in the methods and constitution of this portion of our society. The causes, therefore, of poverty cannot be gone into fully in any partial study of modern society. It is even maintained, and not without reason, that if all men were sober, competent, and industrious, there would be no lĕss poverty in the world. But however that may be, one thing is certain, and that is that as the race as a whole could not have advanced beyond savagery without a fortuitous provision of material necessities, so it is not possible for the children of the poor to overcome their poverty until they are assured in their childhood of the physical necessities of life. We should have no civilization to-day, our entire race would still be a wild horde of brutalized savages, but for the meat and milk diet or the grain diet assured to our earliest forefathers. And it should not be forgotten that as this is true of the life of the race, so is it true of that portion of our community which lives in poverty unable to procure proper food to give its children. This is the great fundamental fact which lies at the base of the problem of poverty and which

is the theme of this book. It is a fact which should be best known to the men and women who work in the field of our philanthropies, and yet it must be said that it is a fact which has heretofore been almost entirely ignored by this class of workers.

For this reason I welcome this volume. I am convinced that it will mark the beginning of an epoch of deeper study and of sounder philanthropy. I look to see in the near future some effort made to establish a standard of physical well-being for the children. I expect to see the community insisting that some provision shall be made whereby every child born into the world will receive sufficient food to enable him to possess enough vitality to overcome unnecessary and preventable disease and to grow into a manhood physically capable of satisfactorily competing in industrial or intellectual pursuits. I do not believe that this is a dream impossible of realization. About a hundred years ago our forefathers decided that there should be a universal standard of literacy. To bring this about the following generations of men established a free school system which was meant to assure to every child a certain minimum of education. If that can be done for the mind, the other thing can be done for the body. And when it is done for the body, we shall make another striking advance in civilization not unlike that recorded in the history of mankind when the free

people of this American continent established a system of free and universal education.

If such a momentous thing should follow the publication of this book, and similar studies which will without doubt subsequently be made, its publication would indeed mark an epoch. But, of course, it must be said that before any far-reaching result can come, the general public must be acquainted with the conditions which exist. It is for this reason that I hope Mr. Spargo's book will be read by hundreds of thousands of people, and that it will awaken in them a determination to respond wisely and justly to the bitter cry of the children of the poor.

ROBERT HUNTER.

PREFACE

THE purpose of this volume is to state the problem of poverty as it affects childhood. Years of careful study and investigation have convinced me that the evils inflicted upon children by poverty are responsible for many of the worst features of that hideous phantasmagoria of hunger, disease, vice, crime, and despair which we call the Social Problem. I have tried to visualize some of the principal phases of the problem — the measure in which poverty is responsible for the excessive infantile disease and mortality; the tragedy and folly of attempting to educate the hungry, ill-fed school child; the terrible burdens borne by the working child in our modern industrial system.

In the main the book is frankly based upon personal experience and observation. It is essentially a record of what I have myself felt and seen. But I have freely availed myself of the experience and writings of others, as reference to the book itself will show. I have tried to be impartial and unbiassed in my researches, and have not "winnowed the facts till only the pleasing ones remained." At times, indeed, I have found it necessary, while writ-

ing this book, to abandon ideas which I had held and promulgated for years. That is an experience not uncommon to those who submit opinions formed as a result of general observation to strict scientific scrutiny. I had long believed and had promulgated the opinion that the great mass of the children of the poor were blighted before they were born. The evidence given before the British Interdepartmental Committee, by recognized leaders of the medical profession in England, pointed to a fundamentally different view. According to that evidence, the number of children born healthy and strong is not greater among the well-to-do classes than among the very poorest. The testimony seemed so conclusive, and the corroboration received from many obstetrical experts in this country was so general, that I was forced to abandon as untenable the theory of antenatal degeneration.

In view of the foregoing, I need hardly say that I do not claim any originality for the view that Nature starts all her children, rich and poor, physically equal, and that each generation gets practically a fresh start, unhampered by the diseased and degenerate past.* The tremendous sociological significance of this truth — if truth it be — will, I think, be generally recognized. Readers of Ruskin's *Fors Clavigera* will remember the story of the dressmaker

* For the necessary qualifications of this broad generalization see the illustrative material in Appendix C, I.

with a broken thigh, who was told by the doctors in St. Thomas's Hospital, London, that her bones were in all probability brittle because her *mother's grandfather* had been employed in the manufacture of sulphur. If this theory of antenatal degeneration is wrong, and we have not to reckon with grandfathers and great-grandfathers, the solution of the problem of arresting and repairing the deterioration of the race is made so much easier. It may be thought by some readers that I have accepted the brighter, more hopeful view too readily, and with too much confidence. I can only say that I have read all the available evidence upon the other side, and found myself at last obliged to accept the brighter view. I cannot but feel that the actual experience of obstetricians dealing with thousands of natural human births every year is far more valuable and conclusive than any number of artificial experiments upon guinea pigs, mice, or other animals.

The part of the book devoted to the discussion of remedial measures will probably attract more criticism than any other. I expect, and am prepared for, criticism from those, on the one hand, who will accuse me of being too radical and revolutionary, and, on the other hand, those who will say I have ignored almost all radical measures. I have purposely refrained from considering any of the far-reaching speculations of the "schools," and confined myself

entirely to those measures which have been tried in various places with sufficient success to warrant their general adoption, and which do not involve any revolutionary change in our social system. I have tried, in other words, to formulate a programme of practical measures, all of which have been subjected to the test of experience.

A word of personal explanation may not be out of place here. I have been privileged to know something of the leisure and luxury of wealth, and more of the toil and hardship of poverty. When I write of hunger I write of what I have experienced — not the enviable hunger of health, but the sickening hunger of destitution. So, too, when I write of child labor. I *know* that nothing I have written of the toil of little boys and girls, terrible as it may seem to some readers, approaches the real truth in its horror. I have not tried to write a sensational book, but to present a careful and candid statement of facts which seem to me to be of vital social significance.

As far as possible, I have freely acknowledged my indebtedness to other writers, either in the text or in the list of authorities at the end of the book. It was, however, impossible thus to acknowledge all the help received from so many willing friends in this and other countries. Hundreds of school principals and teachers, physicians, nurses, settlement workers, public officials, and others, in this country

and in Europe, have aided me. It is impossible to name them all, and I can only hope that they will find themselves rewarded, in a measure, by the work to which they have contributed so much.

I take this opportunity, however, of expressing my sincere thanks to Mr. Robert Hunter; to Mr. Owen R. Lovejoy, of the National Child Labor Committee; to Dr. George W. Goler, of Rochester, N.Y.; to Dr. S. E. Getty, of St. John's Riverside Hospital, Yonkers, N.Y.; to Dr. Louis Lichtschein, of New York City; to Dr. George W. Galvin, of Boston, Mass.; and to Professor G. Stanley Hall, of Clark University, for many valuable suggestions and criticisms. To Mr. Fernando Linderberg, of Copenhagen; to his Excellency, Baron Mayor des Planches, the Italian Ambassador at Washington; and to Professor Emile Vinck, of Brussels, I am indebted for assistance in securing valuable reports which would otherwise have been inaccessible. I am also indebted to my colleague, Miss C. E. A. Carman, of Prospect House; and especially to Mr. W. J. Ghent for his expert assistance in preparing the book for the press. Finally, I am indebted to my wife, whose practical knowledge of factory conditions, especially as they relate to women and children, has been of immense service to me.

J. S.

PROSPECT HOUSE, YONKERS, N.Y.
December, 1905.

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NOTE. — I am indebted to Miss Marjory Hall of New York for the pictures of day nurseries and *crèches;* to Dr. G. W. Goler of Rochester, N.Y., for permission to use several illustrations of his work; to the Rev. Peter Roberts for the excellent illustration, "Breaker Boys at Work"; and to the Pennsylvania Child Labor Committee for several other illustrations of working children. — J. S.

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THREE "LITTLE MOTHERS" AND THEIR CHARGES

THE BITTER CRY OF THE CHILDREN

I

THE BLIGHTING OF THE BABIES

"Oh, room for the lamb in the meadow,
And room for the bird on the tree!
But here, in stern poverty's shadow,
No room, hapless baby! for thee."

— E. M. MILNE.

I

THE burden and blight of poverty fall most heavily upon the child. No more responsible for its poverty than for its birth, the helplessness and innocence of the victim add infinite horror to its suffering, for the centuries have not made tolerable the idea that the weakness or wrongdoing of its parents or others should be expiated by the suffering of the child. Poverty, the poverty of civilized man, which is everywhere coexistent with unbounded wealth and luxury, is always ugly, repellent, and terrible either to see or to experience; but when it assails the cradle it assumes its most hideous form. Underfed, or badly fed, neglected, badly housed, and improperly clad, the child of poverty is terribly handicapped at the very start; it has not an even chance

to begin life with. While still in its cradle a yoke is laid upon its after years, and it is doomed either to die in infancy, or, worse still, to live and grow up puny, weak, both in body and in mind, inefficient and unfitted for the battle of life. And it is the consciousness of this, the knowledge that poverty in childhood blights the whole of life, which makes it the most appalling of all the phases of the poverty problem.

Biologically, the first years of life are supremely important. They are the foundation years; and just as the stability of a building must depend largely upon the skill and care with which its foundations are laid, so life and character depend in large measure upon the years of childhood and the care bestowed upon them. For millions of children the whole of life is conditioned by the first few years. The period of infancy is a time of extreme plasticity. Proper care and nutrition at this period of life are of vital importance, for the evils arising from neglect, insufficient food, or food that is unsuitable, can never be wholly remedied. "The problem of the child is the problem of the race,"[1] and more and more emphatically science declares that almost all the problems of physical, mental, and moral degeneracy originate with the child. The physician traces the weakness and disease of the adult to defective nutrition in early childhood; the penologist traces moral

perversion to the same cause; the pedagogue finds the same explanation for his failures. Thanks to the many notable investigations made in recent years, especially in European countries, sociological science is being revolutionized. Hitherto we have not studied the great and pressing problems of pauperism and criminology from the child-end; we have concerned ourselves almost entirely with results while ignoring causes. The new spirit aims at prevention.

To the child as to the adult the principal evils of poverty are material ones, — lack of nourishing food, of suitable clothing, and of healthy home surroundings. These are the fundamental evils from which all others arise. The younger children are spared the anxiety, shame, and despair felt by their parents and by their older brothers and sisters, but they suffer terribly from neglect when, as so often happens, their mothers are forced to abandon the most important functions of motherhood to become wage-earners. The cry of a child for food which its mother is powerless to give it is the most awful cry the ages have known. Even the sound of battle, the mingled shrieks of wounded man and beast, and the roar of guns, cannot vie with it in horror. Yet that cry goes up incessantly: in the world's richest cities the child's hunger-cry rises above the din of the mart. Fortunate indeed is the child whose lips have never uttered that cry, who has never gone breakfastless

to play or supperless to bed. For periods of destitution come sooner or later to a majority of the proletarian class. Practically all the unskilled laborers and hundreds of thousands engaged in the skilled trades are so entirely dependent upon their weekly wages, that a month's sickness or unemployment brings them to hunger and temporary dependence. Not long ago, in the course of an address before the members of a labor union, I asked all those present who had ever had to go hungry, or to see their children hungry, as a result of sickness, accident, or unemployment to raise their hands. No less than one hundred and eighty-four hands were raised out of a total attendance of two hundred and nineteen present, yet these were all skilled workers protected in a measure by their organization.

It is not, however, the occasional hunger, the loss of a few meals now and then in such periods of distress, that is of most importance; it is the chronic underfeeding day after day, month after month, year after year. Even where lack of all food is rarely or never experienced, there is often chronic underfeeding. There may be food sufficient as to quantity, but qualitatively poor and almost wholly lacking in nutritive value, and such is the tragic fate of those dependent upon it that they do not even know that they are underfed in the most literal sense of the word. They live and struggle and go down to their



A GROUP OF "LUNG BLOCK" CHILDREN

The white symbol of a child's death hangs on a door in the background.

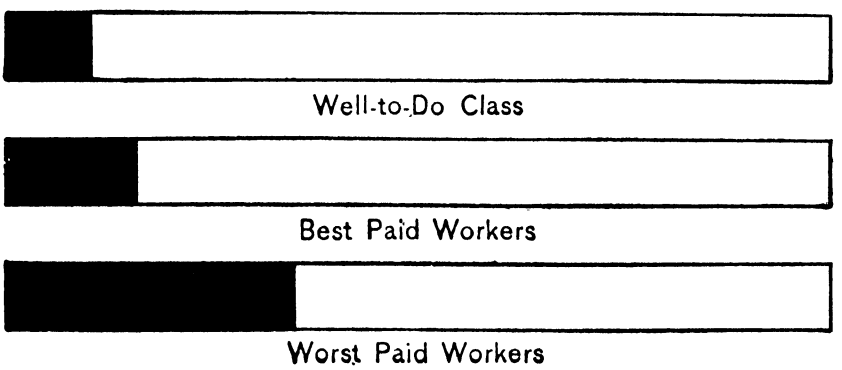
graves without realizing the fact of their disinheritance. A plant uprooted and left lying upon the ground withers quickly and dies; planted in dry, lifeless, arid soil it would wither and die, too, less quickly perhaps but as surely. It dies when there is no soil about its roots and it dies when there is soil in abundance, but no nourishing qualities in the soil. As the plant is, so is the life of a child; where there is no food, starvation is swift, mercifully swift, and complete; when there is only poor food lacking in nutritive qualities starvation is partial, slower, and less merciful. The thousands of rickety infants to be seen in all our large cities and towns, the anæmic, languid-looking children one sees everywhere in working-class districts, and the striking contrast presented by the appearance of the children of the well-to-do bear eloquent witness to the widespread prevalence of underfeeding.

Poverty and Death are grim companions. Wherever there is much poverty the death-rate is high and rises higher with every rise of the tide of want and misery. In London, Bethnal Green's death-rate is nearly double that of Belgravia;[2] in Paris, the poverty-stricken district of Ménilmontant has a death-rate twice as high as that of the Elysée;[3] in Chicago, the death-rate varies from about twelve per thousand in the wards where the well-to-do reside to thirty-seven per thousand in the tenement wards.[4] The ill-

developed bodies of the poor, underfed and overburdened with toil, have not the powers of resistance to disease possessed by the bodies of the more fortunate. As fire rages most fiercely and with greatest devastation among the ill-built, crowded tenements, so do the fierce flames of disease consume most readily the ill-built, fragile bodies which the tenements shelter. As we ascend the social scale the span of life lengthens and the death-rate gradually diminishes, the death-rate of the poorest class of workers being three and a half times as great as that of the well-to-do. It is estimated that among 10,000,000 persons of the latter class the annual deaths do not number more than 100,000, among the best paid of the working-class the number is not less than 150,000, while among the poorest workers the number is at least 350,000.[5] The following diagram illustrates these figures clearly and needs no further comment: —

DIAGRAM

SHOWING RELATIVE DEATH-RATES PER 100,000 PERSONS IN DIFFERENT CLASSES.



This difference in the death-rates of the various social classes is even more strongly marked in the case of infants. Mortality in the first year of life differs enormously according to the circumstances of the parents and the amount of intelligent care bestowed upon the infants. In Boston's "Back Bay" district the death-rate at all ages last year was 13.45 per thousand as compared with 18.45 in the Thirteenth Ward, which is a typical working-class district, and of the total number of deaths the percentage under one year was 9.44 in the former as against 25.21 in the latter. Wolf, in his classic studies based upon the vital statistics of Erfurt for a period of twenty years, found that for every 1000 children born in working-class families 505 died in the first year; among the middle classes 173, and among the higher classes only 89. Of every 1000 illegitimate children registered — almost entirely of the poorer classes — 352 died before the end of the first year.[6] Dr. Charles R. Drysdale, Senior Physician of the Metropolitan Free Hospital, London, declared some years ago that the death-rate of infants among the rich was not more than 8 per cent, while among the very poor it was often as high as 40 per cent.[7] Dr. Playfair says that 18 per cent of the children of the upper classes, 36 per cent of the tradesman class, and 55 per cent of those of the working-class die under the age of five years.[8]

And yet the experts say that the baby of the tenement is born physically equal to the baby of the mansion.[9] For countless years men have sung of the Democracy of Death, but it is only recently that science has brought us the more inspiring message of the Democracy of Birth. It is not only in the tomb that we are equal, where there is neither rich nor poor, bond nor free, but also in the womb of our mothers. At birth class distinctions are unknown. For long the hope-crushing thought of prenatal hunger, the thought that the mother's hunger was shared by the unborn child, and that poverty began its blighting work on the child even before its birth, held us in its thrall. The thought that past generations have innocently conspired against the well-being of the child of to-day, and that this generation in its turn conspires against the child of the future, is surcharged with the pessimism which mocks every ideal and stifles every hope born in the soul. Nothing more horrible ever cast its shadow over the hearts of those who would labor for the world's redemption from poverty than this spectre of prenatal privation and inherited debility. But science comes to dispel the gloom and bid us hope. Over and over again it was stated before the Interdepartmental Committee by the leading obstetrical authorities of the English medical profession that the proportion of children born

healthy and strong is not greater among the rich than among the poor.[10] The differences appear after birth. Wise, patient Mother Nature provides with each succeeding generation opportunity to overcome the evils of ages of ignorance and wrong, with each generation the world starts afresh and unhampered, physically, at least, by the dead past.

"The world's great age begins anew,
The golden years return."

And herein lies the greatest hope of the race; we are not handicapped from the start; we can begin with the child of to-day to make certain a brighter and nobler to-morrow as though there had never been a yesterday of woe and wrong.*

II

In England the high infantile mortality has occasioned much alarm and called forth much agitation. There is a world of pathos and rebuke in the grim truth that the knowledge that it is becoming increasingly difficult to get suitable recruits for the army and navy has stirred the nation in a way that the fate of the children themselves and their inability to become good and useful citizens could not do.[11]

* For a contrary view of this question, see Dr. Paton's article on "The Influence of Diet in Pregnancy on the Weight of the Offspring," *Lancet*, July 4, 1903; and Dr. Ballantyne's "Antenatal Pathology and Hygiene."

Alarmed by the decline of its industrial and commercial supremacy, and the physical inferiority of its soldiers so manifest in the South African war, a most rigorous investigation of the causes of physical deterioration has been made, with the result that on all sides it is agreed that poverty in childhood is the main cause. Greater attention than ever before has been directed to the excessive mortality of infants and young children. Of a total of 587,830 deaths in England and Wales in 1900 no less than 142,912, or more than 24 per cent of the whole, were infants under one year, and 35.76 per cent were under five years of age. That this death-rate is excessive and that the excess is due to essentially preventable causes is admitted, many of the leading medical authorities contending that under proper social conditions it might be reduced by at least one-half. If that be true, and there is no good reason for doubting it, the present death-rate means that more than 70,000 little baby lives are needlessly sacrificed each year.

No figures can adequately represent the meaning of this phase of the problem which has been so picturesquely named "race suicide." Only by gathering them all into one vast throng would it be possible to conceive vividly the immensity of this annual slaughter of the babies of a Christian land. If some awful great child plague came and swept away every

child under a year old in the states of Massachusetts, Idaho, and New Mexico, not a babe escaping, the loss would be less than those that are believed to be needlessly lost each year in England and Wales. Or, to put it in another form, the total number of these infants believed to have died from causes essentially preventable in the year 1900 was greater than the total number of infants of the same age living in the following six states, — Connecticut, Maine, Delaware, Florida, Colorado, and Idaho. Even if the estimate of the sacrifice be regarded as being excessive, and we reduce it by half, it still remains an awful sum.

Unfortunately, there is no reason to suppose that the infantile death-rate in the United States is nearly so far below that of England as is generally supposed. The general death-rate is given in the census returns as 16.3 per thousand, or about two per thousand less than in England. But owing to a variety of causes, chief of which is the defective system of registration in several states, these figures are not very reliable, and it is generally agreed that the mortality for the whole country cannot be less than for the "Registration Area," 17.8 per thousand. Similarly, the difference in the infantile death-rate of the two countries is much less than the following crude figures contained in the census reports appear at first to indicate:—

United States		England and Wales	
Deaths at all ages,	1,039,094	Deaths at all ages,	587,830
Deaths under 1 year,	199,325	Deaths under 1 year,	142,912
Deaths under 5 years,	317,532	Deaths under 5 years,	209,960

In the English returns the death of every child having had a separate existence is counted, even though it lived only a few seconds, but in this country there is no uniform rule in this respect. In Chicago, for instance, "no account is taken of deaths occurring within twenty-four hours after birth," [12] and in Philadelphia a similar custom prevailed until 1904.[13] Such facts seriously vitiate comparisons of the infantile death-rates of the two countries which are based upon the crude statistics of census returns.

But while the difference is much less than the figures given would indicate, it is still safe to assume that the infantile death-rate is lower in this country than in England. Such a condition might reasonably be expected for numerous reasons. We have a larger rural population with a higher economic status; new virile blood is being constantly infused by the immigration of the strongest and most aggressive elements of the population of other lands; our people, especially our women, are more temperate. All these factors would tend naturally to a lower death-rate at all ages, but especially of infants.



Danny's Best Smile



Rickety, Ill fed, and Neglected

RACHITIC TYPES

That with all these favorable conditions our infantile mortality should so nearly approximate that of England, that of every thousand deaths 307.8 should be of children under five years of age — according to the crude figures of the census, more if a correct registration upon the same basis as the English figures could be had — is a matter of grave national concern. If we make an arbitrary allowance of 20 per cent, to account for the slight improvement shown by the death-rates and for other differences, and regard 30 per cent of the infantile death-rate as being due to socially preventable causes, instead of 50 per cent, as in the case of England, we have an appalling total of more than 95,000 unnecessary deaths in a single year.

And of these "socially preventable" causes there can be no doubt that the various phases of poverty represent fully 85 per cent, giving an annual sacrifice to poverty of practically 80,000 baby lives. If some modern Herod had caused the death of every male child under twelve months of age in the state of New York in the year 1900, not a single child escaping, the number thus brutally slaughtered would have been practically identical with this sacrifice. Poverty is the Herod of modern civilization, and Justice the warning angel calling upon society to "arise and take the young child" out of the reach of the monster's wrath.

III

If our vital statistics were specially designed to that end, they could not hide the relation of poverty to disease and death more effectually than they do now. It is impossible to tell from any of the elaborate tables compiled by the census authorities what proportion of the total number of infant deaths were due to defective nutrition or other conditions primarily associated with poverty. No one who has studied the question doubts that the proportion is very great, but it is impossible to present the matter statistically, except in the form of a crude estimate. There is much of value in our great collections of statistics, but the most vital facts of all are rarely included in them.

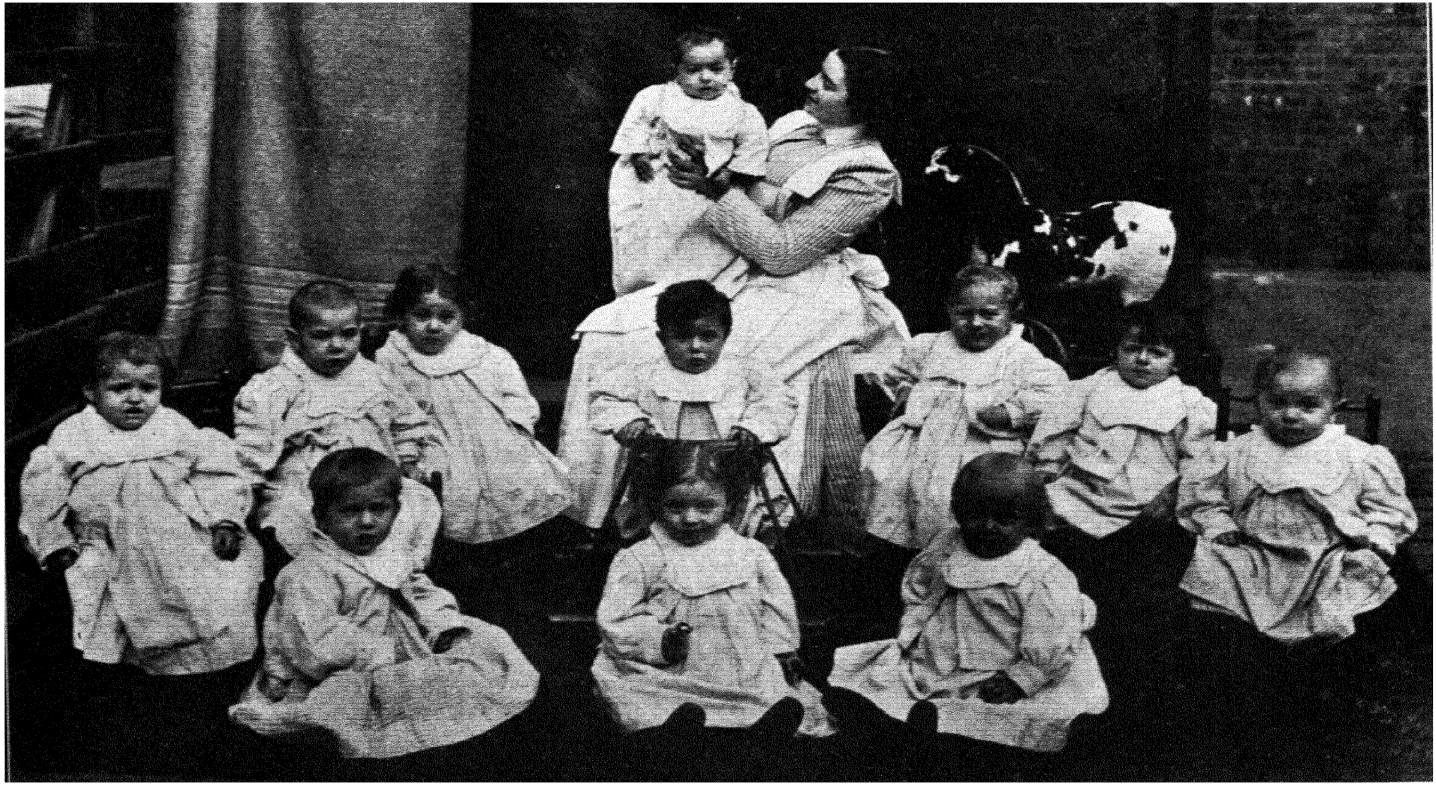
In the great dispensary a little girl of tender years stands holding up a baby not yet able to walk. She is a "little mother," that most pathetic of all poverty's victims, her childhood taken away and the burden of womanly cares thrust upon her. "Please, doctor, do somethin' fer baby!" she pleads. Baby is sick unto death, but she does not realize it. Its breath comes in short, wheezy gasps; its skin burns, and its little eyes glow with the brightness that doctors and nurses dread. One glance is all the doctor needs; in that brief glance he sees the ill-shaped head and the bent and twisted legs that tell

of rickets. Helpless, with the pathetically perfunctory manner long grown familiar to him he gives the child some soothing medicine for her tiny charge's bronchial trouble and enters another case of "bronchitis" upon the register. "And if it wasn't bronchitis, 'twould be something else, and death soon, anyhow," he says. Death does come soon, the white symbol of its presence hangs upon the street door of the crowded tenement, and to the long death-roll of the nation another victim of bronchitis is added — one of the eleven thousand so registered under five years of age. The record gives no hint that back of the bronchitis was rickets and back of the rickets poverty and hunger. But the doctor knows — he knows that little Tad's case is typical of thousands who are statistically recorded as dying from bronchitis or some other specific disease when the real cause, the inducing cause of the disease, is malnutrition. Even as the Great White Plague recruits its victims from the haunts of poverty, so bronchitis preys there and gathers most of its victims from the ranks of the children whose lives are spent either in the foul and stuffy atmosphere of overcrowded and ill-ventilated homes, or on the streets, underfed, imperfectly clad, and exposed to all sorts of weather.

For nearly half a century rachitis, or "rickets," has been known as the disease of the children of the

poor. It has been so called ever since Sir William Jenner noticed that after the first two births, the children of the poor began to get rickety, and careful investigation showed that the cause was poverty, the mothers being generally too poor to get proper nourishment while nursing them.[14] It is perhaps the commonest disease from which children of the working-classes suffer. A large proportion of the children in the public schools and on the streets of the poorest quarters of our cities, and a majority of those treated at the dispensaries or admitted into the children's hospitals, are unmistakably victims of this disease. One sees them everywhere in the poor neighborhoods. The misshapen heads and the legs bent and twisted awry are unmistakable signs, and the scanty clothing covers pitiful little "pigeon-breasts." The small chests are narrowed and flattened from side to side, and the breast-bones are forced unnaturally forward and outward. Tens of thousands of children suffer from this disease, which is due almost wholly to poor and inadequate food. Here again statistical records hide and imprison the soul of truth, failing to yield the faintest idea of the ravages of this disease. The number of deaths credited to it in 1900 was only 351 for the whole of the United States, whereas 10,000 would not have been too high a figure.

Seldom, if ever, fatal by itself, rickets is indirectly



BABIES WHOSE MOTHERS WORK—THEY ARE CARED FOR IN A DAY NURSERY

responsible for a tremendous quota of the infantile death-rate.[15] In epidemics of such infectious diseases as measles, whooping-cough, and others, the rickety child falls an easy victim. In these diseases, as well as in bronchitis, pneumonia, convulsions, diarrhœa, and many other disorders, the mortality is far higher among rickety children than among others. Nor do the evils of rachitis cease with childhood, but in later life they are unquestionably important and severe. There is no escape for the victim even though the storms of childhood be successfully weathered, but like some cruel, relentless Nemesis the consequences pursue the adult. The weakening of the constitution in infancy through poverty and underfeeding cannot be remedied, and epilepsy and tuberculosis find easy prey among those whose childhood had laid upon it the curse of poverty in the form of rickets.

An epidemic of measles spreads over the great city. Silently and mysteriously it enters and, unseen, touches a single child in the street or the school, and the result is as the touch of the blazing torch to dry stubble and straw; only it is not stubble but the nation's heart, its future citizenry, that is attacked. From child to child, home to home, street to street, the epidemic spreads; mansion and tenement are alike stricken, and the city is engaged in a fierce battle against the foe which assails its chil-

dren. In the tenement districts doctors and nurses hurry through the sun-scorched streets and wearily climb the long flights of stairs hour after hour, day after day; in the districts where the rich live, doctors drive in their carriages to the mansions, and nurses tread noiselessly in and out of the sick rooms. Rich and poor alike struggle against the foe, but it is only in the homes of the poor that there is no hope in the struggle; only there that the doctors can say no comforting words of assurance. When the battle is over and the victims are numbered, there is rejoicing in the mansion and bitter, poignant sorrow in the tenement. For poor children are practically the only ones ever to die from measles. Nature starts all her children equally, rich and poor, but the evil conditions of poverty create and foster vast inequalities of opportunity to live and flourish.

Dr. Henry Ashby, an eminent authority upon children's diseases, says: "*In healthy children among the well-to-do class the mortality* (from measles) *is practically nil, in the tubercular and wasted children to be found in workhouses, hospitals, and among the lower classes, the mortality is enormous, no disease more certainly being attended with a fatal result.* William Squires places it in crowded wards at 20 to 30 per cent of those attacked. Among dispensary patients the mortality generally amounts to 9 or 10 per cent. In our own dispensary, during the six

years, 1880–1885, 1395 cases were treated with 128 deaths, making a mortality of 9 per cent. Of the fatal cases 73 per cent were under two years of age and 9 per cent under six months of age." [16]

These are terrible words coming as they do from a great physician and teacher of physicians. Upon any less authority one would scarcely dare quote them, so terrible are they. They mean that practically the whole 8645 infant deaths recorded from measles in the United States in the year 1900 were due to poverty — to the measureless inequality of opportunity to live and grow which human ignorance and greed have made. Moreover, the full significance of this impressive statement will not be realized if we think only of its relation to one disease. The same might be said of many other diseases of childhood which blight and destroy the lives of babies as mercilessly as the sharp frosts blight and kill the first tender blossoms of spring. The same writer says: "It may be taken for granted that no healthy infants suffer from convulsions; those who do are either rickety or the children of neurotic parents." [17] And there were no less than 14,288 infant deaths from convulsions in the United States in the census year. It would probably be a considerable underestimate to regard 10,000 of these deaths, or 70 per cent of the whole, as due to poverty.

It is not my intention to attempt the impossible

task of sifting the death returns so as to measure the sum of infantile mortality due to poverty. These figures and the table which follows are not introduced for that purpose; I have taken only a few of the diseases more conspicuously associated with defective nutrition and other conditions comprehended by the term poverty, and, supported by a strong body of medical testimony, made certain more or less arbitrary allowances for poverty's influence upon the sum of mortality from each cause. Some of the estimates may perhaps be criticised as being too high, — no man knows, — but I am convinced that upon the whole the table is a conservative one. No competent judge will dispute the statement that some of the estimates are very low, and when it is remembered that only a few of the many causes of infantile mortality are included and that there are many others not enumerated in which poverty plays an important part, I think it can safely be said that in this country, the richest and greatest country in the world's history, poverty is responsible for at least 80,000 infant lives every year — more than two hundred every day in the year, more than eight lives each hour, day by day, night by night throughout the year. It is impossible for us to realize fully the immensity of this annual sacrifice of baby lives. Think what it means in five years—in a decade—in a quarter of a century.

TABLE SHOWING INFANTILE MORTALITY FROM ELEVEN GIVEN CAUSES AND THE ESTIMATED INFLUENCE OF POVERTY THEREON

DISEASE	NO. OF DEATHS UNDER FIVE YEARS	EST. PER CENT DUE TO BAD CONDITIONS	EST. NO. OF DEATHS DUE TO BAD CONDITIONS — POVERTY
Measles	8,465	85	7,195
Inanition	10,687	90	9,618
Convulsions	14,288	70	10,000
Consumption . . .	4,454	60	2,648
Pneumonia	37,206	45	14,340
Bronchitis	10,900	50	5,450
Croup	10,897	45	4,900
Debility and Atrophy	12,130	75	9,397
Cholera Infantum . .	25,563	45	11,502
Diarrhœa	3,962	45	1,782
Cholera Morbus . .	3,180	45	1,431
	151,732	51.57	78,263

IV

There are doubtless many persons, lay and medical, who will think that the foregoing figures exaggerate the evil. But I would remind them that I have only ascribed 30 per cent of the infantile death-rate to "socially preventable causes," and only 85 per cent of that number to poverty in the broadest sense of that word.* I have purposely set my esti-

* Drs. Baillestre and Gillette have estimated that three-fourths of the infantile death-rate of France are due to avoidable causes. Five years of ignorance, they say, has cost France 220,000 lives — equal to the loss of an army corps of 45,000 men annually. — *Lancet*, February 2, 1901.

mate much lower than I am convinced it should be. All the facts point irresistibly to the conclusion that even 50 per cent would be a conservative estimate.

In connection with the New York Foundling Asylum on Randall's Island, it was decided some few years ago to introduce the Straus system of Pasteurizing the milk given to the babies. The year before the system was introduced there were 1181 babies in the asylum, of which number 524, or 44.36 per cent, died. In the year following, during which the system was in operation, the number of children was 1284 and the number of deaths only 255, or 19.80 per cent. In other words, there were 8.03 per cent more children and 48.66 per cent fewer deaths.[18]

Even more important is the testimony furnished by the Municipal "Clean Milk" depots of Rochester, New York. Some years ago the Health Officer, Dr. George W. Goler, called the attention of the city authorities to the high infantile mortality occurring over a period of several years during the months of July and August. After thorough investigation it was fairly established that impure milk was one very important reason for this high death-rate among children under five years of age. Accordingly the Pasteurization system was introduced. Depots were opened in the poorest parts of the city and placed in charge of trained nurses. After three years it was decided that instead of Pasteurizing the milk obtained

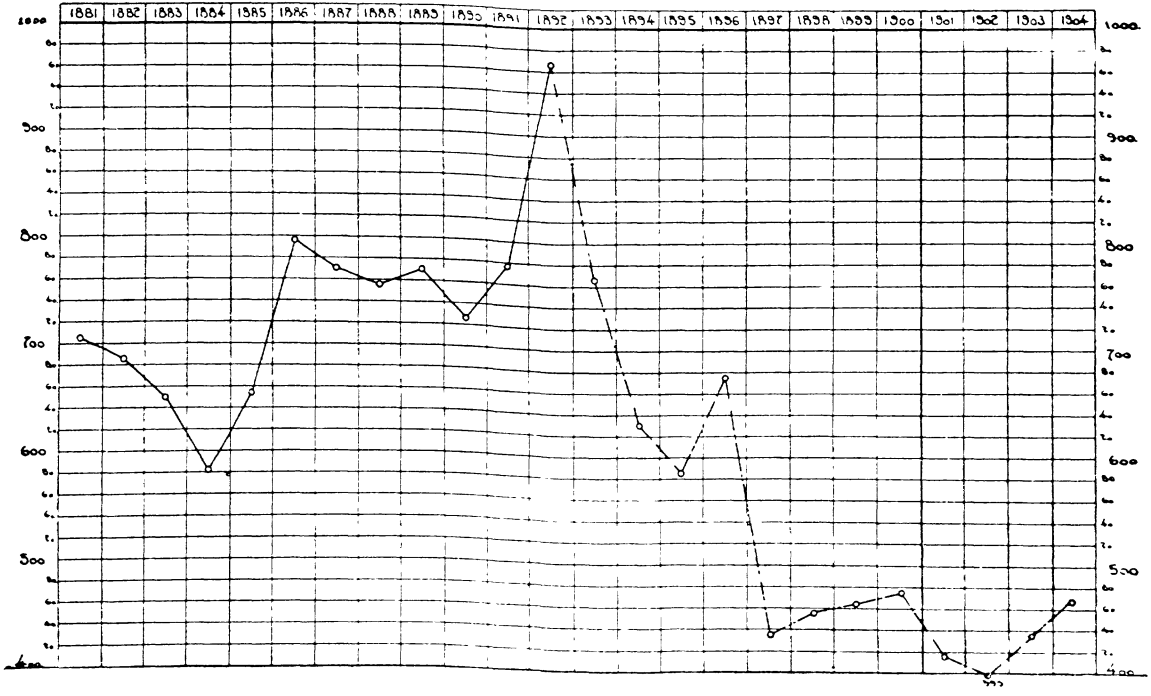
CITY OF ROCHESTER, N.Y.

Deaths in Children Under 5 Years of Age

1892 Began Efficient Milk Inspection

1897 Municipal Milk Stations Established

1900 Established a Municipal Standard of 10,000 Bacteria per cc



from all sorts of places, with all its contained bacteria and dirt, a central depot on a farm should be established and all energies should be devoted to the insuring of a pure, clean, and wholesome supply by keeping dirt and germs out of the milk and sterilizing all bottles and utensils. Strict control is also exercised in this way over the farmer with whom the contract for supplying the milk is made.

Some idea of the important effects of this scientific attention by the Board of Health to the staple diet of the vast majority of children may be gathered from the following figures, which do not, however, tell the whole story. In the months of July and August during the eight years, 1889–1896, prior to the establishment of the Municipal Milk Stations, there were 1744 deaths under five years of age from all causes; in the same months during eight following years, 1897–1904, there were only 864 deaths under five years of age from all causes, a decrease of 50.46 per cent, despite a progressive increase of population.[19] It can hardly be questioned, I think, that these figures suggest that my estimate is altogether conservative.

The yearly loss of these priceless baby lives does not, however, represent the full measure of the awful cost of the poverty which surrounds the cradle. It is not only that 75,000 or 80,000 die, but that as many more of those who survive are irreparably

weakened and injured. Not graves alone but hospitals and prisons are filled with the victims of childhood poverty. They who survive go to school, but are weak, nervous, dull, and backward in their studies. Discouraged, they become morose and defiant, and soon find their way into the "reformatories," for truancy or other juvenile delinquencies. Later they fill the prisons, for the ranks of the vagrant and the criminal are recruited from the truant and juvenile offender. Or if happily they do not become vicious, they fail in the struggle for existence, the relentless competition of the crowded labor mart, and sink into the abysmal depths of pauperism. Weakened and impaired by the privations of their early years, they cannot resist the attacks of disease, and constant sickness brings them to the lowest level of that condition which the French call *la misère.*

V

However interesting and sociologically valuable such an analysis might be, the separation of the different features of poverty so as to determine their relative influence upon the sum of mortality and sickness is manifestly impossible. We cannot say that bad housing accounts for so many deaths, poor clothing for so many, and hunger for so many more. These and other evils are regularly associated in cases of poverty, the underfed being almost invari-

ably poorly clad, and housed in the least healthy homes. We cannot regard them as distinct problems; they are only different phases of the same problem of poverty, — a problem which does not lend itself to dissection at the hands of the investigator. Still, notwithstanding that for many years all efforts to reduce the rate of mortality among infants have dealt only with questions of bad housing and of unhygienic conditions in general, — on the assumption that these are the most important factors making for a high rate of infant mortality, — it is now generally admitted that, important as they are in themselves, these are relatively unimportant factors in the infant death-rate. "Sanitary conditions do not make any real difference at all," and "It is food and food alone," was the testimony of Dr. Vincent before the British Interdepartmental Committee,[20] and he was supported by some of the most eminent of his colleagues in that position. That the evils of underfeeding are intensified when there is an unhygienic environment is true, but it is equally true that defect in the diet is the prime and essential cause of an excessive prevalence of infantile diseases and of a high death-rate.

Perhaps no part of the population of our great cities suffers so much upon the whole from overcrowding and bad housing as the poorest class of Jews, yet the mortality of infants among them is

much less than among the poor of other nationalities, as, for instance, among the Irish and the Italians. Dr. S. A. Knopf, one of our foremost authorities upon the subject of tuberculosis, places underfeeding and improper feeding first, and bad housing and insanitary conditions in general second as factors in the causation of children's diseases. In Birmingham, England, an elaborate study of the vital statistics of nineteen years showed that there had been a large decrease in the general death-rate, due, apparently, to no other cause than the extensive sanitary improvements made in that period, but the rate of infantile mortality remained absolutely unchanged. The average general death-rate for the nine years, 1873–1881, was 23.5 per thousand; in the ten years, 1882–1891, it was only 20.6. But the infantile death-rate was not affected, and remained at 169 per thousand during both periods. There had been a reduction of 12 per cent in the general death-rate, while that for infants showed no reduction. Had this been decreased in like degree, the infantile mortality would have fallen from 169 to 148 per thousand.[21]

Extensive inquiries in the various children's hospitals and dispensaries in New York, and among physicians of large practice in the poorer quarters of several cities, point with striking unanimity to the same general conclusion. The Superintendents of six large dispensaries, at which more than 25,000

children are treated annually, were asked what proportion of the cases treated could be ascribed, on a conservative estimate, primarily to inadequate nutrition, and the average of their replies was 45 per cent.

In one case the Registrar in a cursory examination of the register for a single day pointed out eleven cases out of a total of seventeen, due almost beyond question entirely to under-nutrition.

The Superintendent of the New York Babies' Hospital, Miss Marianna Wheeler, kindly copied from the admission book particulars of sixteen consecutive cases. The list shows malnutrition as the most prominent feature of 75 per cent of the cases. Miss Wheeler says: "The large majority of our cases are similar to these given; in fact, if I kept on right down the admission book, would find the same facts in case after case."

VI

As in all human problems, ignorance plays an important rôle in this great problem of childhood's suffering and misery. The tragedy of the infant's position is its helplessness; not only must it suffer on account of the misfortunes of its parents, but it must suffer from their vices and from their ignorance as well. Nurses, sick visitors, dispensary doctors, and those in charge of babies' hospitals tell pitiful stories of almost incredible ignorance of which babies are the victims. A child was given cabbage by its mother

when it was three weeks old; another, seven weeks old, was fed for several days in succession on sausage and bread with pickles! Both died of gastritis, victims of ignorance. In another New York tenement home a baby less than nine weeks old was fed on sardines with vinegar and bread by its mother. Even more pathetic is the case of the baby, barely six weeks old, found by a district nurse in Boston in the family clothes-basket which formed its cradle, sucking a long strip of salt, greasy bacon and with a bottle containing beer by its side. Though rescued from immediate death, this child will probably never recover wholly from the severe intestinal disorder induced by the ignorance of its mother. Yet, after all, it is doubtful whether the beer and bacon were worse for it than many of the patent "infant foods" of the cheaper kinds commonly given in good faith to the children of the poor. If medical opinion goes for anything, many of these "foods" are little better than slow poisons.[22] Tennyson's awful charge is still true, that:—

"The spirit of murder works in the very means of life."

Nor is the work of this spirit of murder confined to the concoction of "patent foods" which are in reality patent poisons. The adulteration of milk with formaldehyde and other base adulterants is responsible for a great deal of infant mortality, and its

ravages are chiefly confined to the poor. It is little short of alarming that in New York City, out of 3970 samples of milk taken from dealers for analysis during 1902, no less than 2095, or 52.77 per cent, should have been found to be adulterated.[23] Mr. Nathan Straus, the philanthropist whose Pasteurized milk depots have saved many thousands of baby lives during the past twelve years, has not hesitated to call this adulteration by its proper name, child-murder. He says: —

"If I should hire Madison Square Garden and announce that at eight o'clock on a certain evening I would publicly strangle a child, what excitement there would be!

"If I walked out into the ring to carry out my threat, a thousand men would stop me and kill me — and everybody would applaud them for doing so.

"But every day children are actually murdered by neglect or by poisonous milk. The murders are as real as the murder would be if I should choke a child to death before the eyes of a crowd.

"It is hard to interest the people in what they don't see."[24]

Ignorance is indeed a grave and important phase of the problem, and the most difficult of all to deal with. Education is the remedy, of course, but how shall we accomplish it? It is not easy to educate after the natural days of education are passed. Mrs.

Havelock Ellis has advocated "a noviciate for marriage," a period of probation and of preparation and equipment for marriage and maternity.[25] But such a proposal is too far removed from the sphere of practicality to have more than an academic interest at present. Simply worded letters to mothers upon the care and feeding of their infants, supplemented by personal visits from well-trained women visitors, would help, as similar methods have helped, in the campaign against tuberculosis. Many foreign municipalities have adopted this plan, notably Huddersfield, England, and several American cities have followed their example with marked success. There should be no great difficulty about its adoption generally. One great obstacle to be overcome is the resentment of the mothers whom it is most necessary to reach, as many of those engaged in philanthropic work know all too well. One poor woman, whose little child was ailing, became very irate when a lady visitor ventured to offer her some advice concerning the child's clothing and food, and soundly berated her would-be adviser. "You talk to me about how to look after my baby!" she cried. "Why, I guess I know more about it than you do. I've buried nine already!" It is not the naïve humor of the poor woman's wrath that is most significant, but the grim, tragic pathos back of it. Those four words, "I've buried nine already!" tell more eloquently

than could a hundred learned essays or polished orations the vastness of civilization's failure. For, surely, we may not regard it as anything but failure so long as women who have borne eleven children into the world, as had this one, can say, "I've buried nine already!"

But circular letters and lady visitors will not solve the problem of maternal ignorance; such methods can only skim the surface of the evil. This ignorance on the part of mothers, of which the babies are victims, is deeply rooted in the soil of those economic conditions which constitute poverty in the broadest sense of the term, though there may be no destitution or absolute want. It is not poverty in the narrow sense of a lack of the material necessities of life, but rather a condition in which these are obtainable only by the concentrated effort of all members of the family able to contribute anything and to the exclusion of all else in life. Young girls who go to work in shops and factories as soon as they are old enough to obtain employment frequently continue working up to within a few days of marriage, and not infrequently return to work for some time after marriage. Especially is this true of girls employed in mills and factories; their male acquaintances are for the most part fellow-workers, and marriages between them are numerous. Where many women are employed men's wages are, as a consequence,

almost invariably low, with the result that after marriage it is as necessary that the woman should work as it was before.

When the years which under more favored conditions would have been spent at home in preparation for the duties of wifehood and motherhood are spent behind the counter, at the bench, or amid the whirl of machinery in the factory, it is scarcely to be wondered at that the knowledge of domestic economy is scant among them, and that so many utterly fail as wives and mothers. Deprived of the opportunities of helping their mothers with the housework and cooking and the care of the younger children, marriage finds them ill-equipped; too often they are slaves to the frying-pan, or to the stores where cooked food may be bought in small quantities. Bad cooking, extravagance, and mismanagement are incidental to our modern industrial conditions.

VII

But there is a great deal of improper feeding of infants which, apparently due to ignorance, is in reality due to other causes, and the same is true of what appears to be neglect. In every large city there are hundreds of married women and mothers who must work to keep the family income up to the level of sufficiency for the maintenance of its members. According to the census of 1900 there were 769,477

married women "gainfully employed" in the United States, but there is every reason to believe that the actual number was much greater, for it is a well-known fact that married women, especially in factories, often represent themselves as being single, for the reason, possibly, that it is considered more or less of a disgrace to have to continue working after marriage. Moreover, it is certain that many thousands of women who work irregularly, a day or two a week, or, as in many cases, only at intervals during the sickness or unemployment of their husbands, were omitted. A million would probably be well within the mark as an estimate of the number of married women workers, the census figures notwithstanding. These working mothers may be conveniently divided into two classes, the home workers, such as dressmakers, "finishers" employed in the clothing trades, and many others; and the many thousands who are employed away from their homes in cigar-making, cap-making, the textile industries, laundry work, and a score of other occupations including domestic service.

The proportion of married women having small children is probably larger among those employed in the home industries than in those which are carried on outside of the homes. Out of 748 female home "finishers" in New York, for instance, 658 were married and 557 had from one to seven children

each.[26] The percentage could hardly equal that in the outside industries. While there are exceptional cases, as a rule no married woman, especially if she has young children, will go out to work unless forced to do so by sheer necessity. Dr. Annie S. Daniel, in a most interesting study of the conditions in 515 families where the wives worked as finishers, found that no less than 448, or 86.78 per cent of the whole, were obliged to work by reason of poverty arising from low wages, frequent unemployment, or sickness of their husbands. Of the other 67 cases, 45 of the women were widows, 15 had been deserted, and 7 had husbands who were intemperate and shiftless. Of all causes low wages was the most common, the average weekly income of the men being only $3.81. The average of the combined weekly earnings of man and wife was $4.85, and rent, which averaged $8.99 per month, absorbed almost one-half of this. In addition to the earnings of the men and women, there were other smaller sources of income, such as children's wages and money received from lodgers, which brought the average income per family of 4½ persons up to $5.69 per week.[27]

Nothing could be further from the truth than the comfortable delusion under which so many excellent people live, that so long as the work is done at home the children will not be neglected nor suffer. While it is doubtless true that home employment of the



POLICE STATION USED AS A "CLEAN MILK" DEPOT, ROCHESTER, N.Y.

mother is somewhat less disadvantageous to the child than if she were employed away from home, — though more injurious from the point of view of the mother herself, — the fact is that such employment is in every way prejudicial to the child. Even if the joint income of both parents raises the family above want, the conditions under which that income is earned must involve serious neglect of the child. The mother is taken away from her household duties and the care of her children; her time is given an economic value which makes it too precious to be spent upon anything but the most important thing of all, — provision for their material needs. She has no time for cooking and little for eating; the children must shift for themselves.

Thus the employment of the mother is responsible for numerous evils of underfeeding, improper feeding, and neglect. She works from early morn till night, pausing only twice or thrice a day to snatch a hasty meal of bread and coffee with the children. Her pay varies with the kind of work she does, from one-and-a-half to ten cents an hour. Ordinarily she will work from twelve to fourteen hours daily, but sometimes, when the work has to be finished and delivered by a fixed time, she may work sixteen, eighteen, or even twenty hours at a stretch. And then there are the "waiting days" when work is slack, and hunger, or the fear of hunger, weighs

heavily upon her and crushes her down. Hard is her lot, for when she works there is food, but little time for eating and none for cooking or the care of her children; when there is no work there is time enough, but little food.

In Brooklyn, in a rear tenement in the heart of that huge labyrinth of bricks and mortar near the Great Bridge, such a mother lives and struggles against poverty and the Great White Plague. She is an American, born of American parents, and her husband is also native-born but of Scotch parentage. He is a laborer and when at work earns $1.75 per day, but partly owing to frequently recurring sickness and partly also to the difficulty of obtaining employment, it is doubtful whether his wages average $6 a week the year through. Of six children born only two are living, their ages being seven years and two-and-a-half years respectively. Both are rickety and weak and stunted in appearance. As she sat upon her bed sewing, only pausing to cough when the plague seemed to choke her, she told her story: "It's awful," she said, "but I must work else we shall get nothing to eat and be turned into the street besides. I have no time for anything but work. I must work, work, work, and work. Often we go to our beds as we left them when I haven't time or strength to shake them up, and Joe, my husband, is too tired or sick to do it. Cooking?

Oh, I cook nothing, for I haven't time; I must work. I send the little girl out to the store across the way and she gets what she can, — crackers, cake, cheese, anything she can get — and I'm thankful if I can only make some fresh tea." Neither of this woman's two little children has ever known the experience of being decently fed, and their weak, rickety bodies tell the results. From a bare account of their diet it might be inferred that the mother must be ignorant or neglectful, but she is, on the contrary, a most intelligent woman and devoted to her children. Under better conditions she would perhaps have been a model housewife and mother, but it is not within the possibilities of her toil-worn, hunger-wasted body to be these and at the same time a wage-earner. So, without attempting to minimize the part which ignorance plays, it is well to emphasize the fact, so often lost sight of and forgotten, that what appears to be ignorance or neglect is very frequently only poverty in one of its many disguises.

VIII

As a contributory cause of excessive mortality and sickness among young children, the employment of mothers away from their homes is even more important. There is no longer any serious dispute upon that point, though twenty-five years ago it was the subject of a good deal of vigorous contro-

versy on both sides of the Atlantic.[28] Professor Jevons thoroughly established his claim that the employment of mothers and the ensuing neglect of their infants is a serious cause of infantile mortality and disease. So important did he consider the question to be that he strenuously advocated the enactment of legislation forbidding the employment of mothers until their youngest children were at least three years old.[29] When one who is familiar with the facts considers all that the employment of mothers involves, it is difficult to imagine how its evil effects upon the children could ever have been questioned. In too many cases the toil continues through the most critical periods of pregnancy; the infants are weaned early in order that the mother may return to her employment, and placed in charge of some other person — often a mere child, inexperienced and ignorant. These "little mothers" have been much praised and idealized until we have become prone to forget that their very existence is a great social menace and crime. It is true that many of them show a wonderful amount of courage and precocity in dealing with the babies intrusted to their care. But in praising these qualities we must not forget that they are still children, necessarily unfitted for the responsibilities thus placed upon them. Moreover, they themselves are the victims of a great social crime when their childhood



BABIES OF A NEW YORK DAY NURSERY

The mothers of all these babies work away from their homes.

is taken away and the cares of life which belong to grown men and women are thrust upon them.

In a personal letter to the writer, Mr. Roscoe Doble, Clerk to the Health Board of Lawrence, Massachusetts, says: "Relative to the high infantile mortality, I can only say that ignorance in the preparation of food, illy ventilated tenements, and, in many cases, unavoidable neglect occasioned by the mothers being obliged to work away from the homes, often leaving their babies in the care of other children, seem to be the prime factors in the high mortality among children." Similar testimony has been given by physicians and nurses wherever I have made inquiries, indicating a general consensus of opinion among experts upon the subject. A striking instance of the ignorance of these little girls to whom infants are intrusted was observed in Hamilton Fish Park when one of them gave a baby, apparently not more than four or five months old, soda water, banana, ice cream, and chewed cracker — all inside of twenty minutes.

In several factory towns I made careful investigations of the home conditions of a number of families where the mothers were employed away from their homes, noting particularly the rates of infantile mortality among them. The following typical schedule relates to five cases noted in the course of a single day in one of the small towns of New York:—

SCHEDULE

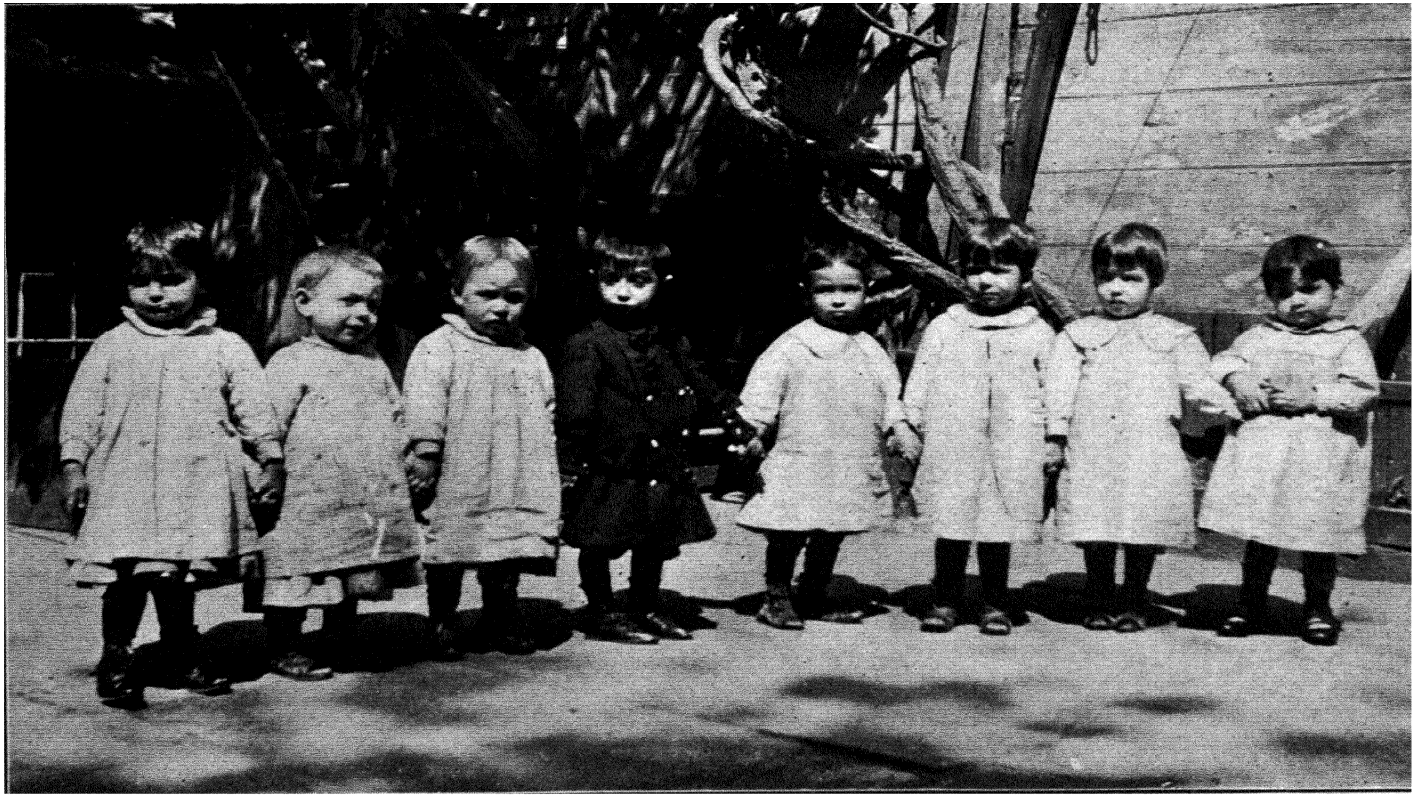
Name	Age	Average Weekly Earnings	Husband's Work, Wages, etc.	Total Number of Children Born	No. of Children having Died	No. of Children now Alive	Nationality of the Parents	Age of Youngest Child	How Children are cared for while Mother Works	General Remarks
Mrs. M.	43	$7.00	Mill laborer. Wages $9.00 week, but is often sick. Drinks heavily.	5	5	—	Mother, Irish; Father, Scotch.	—	—	All five died under 18 months of age; three of them under 6 months. All the children were cared for by other children while mother worked. Three died of convulsions, two of diarrhœa.
Mrs. K.	38	$6.50	Laborer. Often unemployed. Average wage the year round not more than $7.00 week.	7	5	2	Mother, Irish-American; Father, Swede.	10 months.	By girl, aged 9 years.	All five that died were under 12 months of age. Two of them died of convulsions, one of acute gastritis, two of measles. The baby is a puny little thing.

Mrs. C.	34	$7.00	Deserted wife.	6	4	2	Mother, German; Father, Austrian.	18 months.	By oldest girl, aged 9 years.	One child was scalded to death while mother was at work; one died of convulsions and two of bronchitis.
Mrs. S.	29	$6.00	Sick two years and unable to work. Was a laborer formerly.	6	3	3	Mother, English; Father, American.	2 years.	By father and girl of 7 years.	The first two children and the last born are alive; the third, fourth, and fifth are dead, each of them dying within the first year. Mother says they were poor, puny babies. Causes of death: Debility, 2; convulsions, 1.
Mrs. H.	41	$6.00	Dead 6 months. Was a laborer, often sick and unemployed. Widow does not think he earned $6.00 a week the year round.	8	5	3	Mother, American; Father (deceased), French-Canadian.	20 months.	By oldest girl, 11 years old.	The first two and the eighth born are alive; the five intervening are dead. Four of these died within the first year. Causes of death: Debility, 2; intestinal dyspepsia, 2; bronchitis, 1.

It will be observed that out of a total of 32 children born only 10 were alive at the time of the inquiry, and that of the number dead no less than 18 were under one year of age, the cause of death in most cases being associated with neglect and defective diet. Of the ten children surviving, six were decidedly weak, and the mothers said that they were "generally sick" and that somehow it seemed as if they "took" every sort of disease, a well-known condition of the undernourished child.

In the same town the case of a poor Hungarian mother was brought to my attention by one perfectly familiar with all the details, a witness of unassailable veracity. This poor Hungarian child-wife and mother was barely fifteen when her baby was born, but she had been working fully three years in the mill. When the child was born the father disappeared. "He was afraid he could never pay the cost," the wife said in his defence. On the ninth day after her confinement she returned to her work, leaving the baby in charge of a girl nine years old.

Upon the day the baby was two weeks old, word came to the mother while at work that it had been taken suddenly ill and imploring her to return to it at once. Terrified, she sought the foreman of her department and begged to be allowed to go home. "Ma chil seek! Ma chil die!" she cried. But the foreman needed her and scowled; they were "rushed"



A GROUP OF CHILDREN WHOSE MOTHERS ARE EMPLOYED AWAY FROM THEIR HOMES

in the winding-room. And so he refused to grant her the permission she sought — refused with foul objurgations. Heartbroken, she went to another, superior, foreman and in broken English begged to be allowed to go to her sick babe. "Ma chil seek! Ma chil die!" she cried incessantly. This foreman also refused at first to let her go. Perhaps it was because he thought of his own daughter that he relented at last and gave her permission to go home — *permission* to give a mother's care to the child born of her travail! Eye-witnesses say that she sank down upon her knees and, with hysterical gratitude, kissed the foreman's rough, dirty hands. "You good man! You good man!" she shrieked, then fled from the mill with frenzied haste.

But when she reached her little tenement home in "Hunk's town" the baby was already dead, and there was only a lifeless form for her to clasp in her arms. The life of an infant child is too frail a thing, and too uncertain, to permit us to say that a mother's care would have sufficed to save that babe. But the doctor said neglect was the cause of death, and the poor mother has moaned daily these many months, "If I no work, ma chil die not. I work an' kill ma chil!"

Thirty-five years ago Paris was besieged by Germany's vast army. For months the war raged with terrible cost to invader and invaded; industry was paralyzed and factories were closed down, with the

result that there was the most frightful poverty due to unemployment. But, because the mothers were forced to stay at home, and were thus enabled to give their children their personal care and attention instead of trusting them to the "little mothers," the mortality of infants decreased by 40 per cent. No other explanation of that striking fact, so far as I am aware, has ever been attempted.[30] Very similar was the effect upon the infantile death-rate during the great cotton famine in Lancashire as a result of the prolonged unemployment of so many hundreds of mothers. Notwithstanding the immense increase in poverty, the fact that the mothers could personally care for their infants more than compensated for it and lowered the rate of mortality in a most striking manner.[31] These examples of a profound social fact are sufficient for our present purpose, though, were it necessary, they might be indefinitely multiplied.

IX

Perhaps the employment of mothers too close to the time of childbirth, both before and after, is almost as important as the subsequent neglect and intrusting of children to the tender mercies of ignorant and irresponsible caretakers. Élie Reclus tells us that among savages it is the universal custom to exempt their women from toil during stated periods prior to and following childbirth,[32] and in most

countries legislation has been enacted forbidding the employment of women within a certain given period from the birth of a child. In Switzerland the employment of mothers is prohibited for two months before confinement and the same period afterwards.[33] At present the English law forbids the employment of a mother within four weeks after she has given birth to a child, and the trend of public opinion seems to be in favor of the extension of the period of exemption to the standard set by the Swiss law.[34] So far as I am aware there exists no legislation of this kind in the United States, in which respect we stand alone among the great nations, and behind the savage of all lands and ages.

Wherever women are employed in large numbers, as, for example, in the textile industries and in cigar-making, the need for such legislation has presented itself, and it is impossible, unfortunately, to think that the absence of it in this country indicates a like absence of need for it. Cases in which women endure the agony of parturition amid the roar and whirl of machinery, and the bed of childbirth is the factory floor, are by no means uncommon. From a large mill, less than twenty miles from New York City, four such cases were reported to me in less than three months. Careful personal investigation in each case revealed the fact that the unfortunate women had begged in vain that they might be al-

lowed to go home. One such case occurred on the morning of June 27 of this year, and was reported to me that same evening by letter. The writer of the letter is well known to me and his testimony unimpeachable.

A poor Slav woman, little more than a child in years, begged for permission to go home because she felt ill and unable to stand. Notwithstanding that her condition was perfectly evident, her appeal was denied with most brutal oaths. Cowering with fear she shrank away back to her loom with tears of shame and physical agony. Soon afterward her shrieks were heard above the din of the mill and there, in the presence of scores of workers of both sexes, — many of whom were girls of fourteen years of age, — her child was born. Perhaps it is fortunate that the child did not live to be a constant reminder to the poor woman of that hour of unspeakable shame and suffering! The young daughter of my correspondent was one of the witnesses of this shameful, inhuman thing. Subsequently I secured ample corroboration of the story from the local Slav priest who knew the poor woman and visited her soon after the occurrence. When I showed the letter of my informant to a local physician, he acknowledged that he had heard of other similar cases occurring and begged me to see one of the principal owners of the mill and secure the discharge of the foreman whose

June 27/05.

Dear Friend

This happened to day June 27th, in the Cotton Room of the mill A poor Slav girl asked permission to go home as she felt very sick. Permission was absolutly refused. The result was that the unfortunate girl had a premature birth right in the room in front of a large number of men Women & children

The boss's name who refused the permission for the girl to go home is

Jane

A SAMPLE REPORT

Careful investigation showed this report to be absolutely correct except for the fact that the birth was normal and not "premature."

name was given. As if that could do any good! What good would be accomplished by securing the discharge of the man, and possibly bringing him and his family to poverty? That it would salve the conscience of the mill owner is probable. That it would be a well-deserved rebuke of the foreman's inhumanity is likewise true. But it would not contribute in any way to the solution of the problem of which the case in question was but one of many examples.

Not long ago, in one of the largest cigar factories in New York, a woman left her bench with a cry of agony and sank down in a corner of the factory, where, in the presence of scores of workers of both sexes, whose gay laughter and chatter her shrieks had stilled, she became a mother. The poor woman afterwards confessed that she had feared that it might happen so, but said she "wanted to get in another day so as to have a full week's pay and money for the doctor." Within two weeks she was back again at her trade, but in another shop, her baby being left in the care of an old woman of seventy who supports herself by caring for little children at a charge of five cents per day. In another factory a woman returned to work on the seventh day after her confinement, but was sent back by the foreman. This woman, a Bohemian, explained that she did not feel well enough to work but feared that she might lose her place if she remained longer away. The

dread prospect of unemployment and hunger had forced her from her bed to face the awful perils attendant upon premature exertion and exposure. Had she been a "savage heathen" in the kraal of some Kaffir tribe in Africa she would have been shielded, protected, and spared this peril, but she was in a civilized country, in the richest city of the world, and therefore unprotected!

In many factories, probably a majority, women in whom the signs of approaching motherhood are conspicuous are discharged. "It don't take two people to run this loom," or "Two can't work at one job," are typically brutal examples of the language employed by bosses of a certain type upon such occasions. The fear of being discharged causes many a poor woman to adopt the most pitiful means to hide her condition from the boss. "It wouldn't be so bad if we were only laid off for a few weeks, but it's getting fired and the trouble of finding a new job that hurts," they say. But the consequences are too serious alike to mother and child, to justify legislative neglect or the dependence upon the wisdom or humanity of employers or foremen. In many cases, doubtless, sympathy for the women themselves and the knowledge that discharge, or even suspension for a few weeks, would mean increased poverty and hardship, induces foremen to allow them to remain at work as long as they can stand. But

in many other instances the condition of business and the needs of the employer at the moment determine the question. If the mill or factory is busy and in need of hands, the pregnant woman is rarely discharged; if there is difficulty in obtaining workers in certain unpopular departments, like the winding-room of a textile mill, for instance, such a woman will frequently be given the option of ceasing work or going into the less popular department, generally at less wages.

The evil is apparent, but the remedy is not so obvious. That no woman should be permitted to work during a period of six or eight weeks immediately before and after childbirth may be agreed, but then the necessity arises for some adequate means of securing her proper maintenance during her necessary and enforced idleness. To forbid her employment without making provision for her needs would possibly be an even greater evil than now cries for remedy. The question really resolves itself into this: Is civilized man equal to the task which the savage everywhere fulfils? Private philanthropy has occasionally grappled with this problem and the results have been highly significant of what might be accomplished if what has been done as a matter of charity in a few cases could be done generally as a matter of justice and right. Of these private experiments perhaps the most famous of all are those

of the celebrated Alsatian manufacturer, M. Jean Dolphus, and the Messrs. Fox Brothers, of Wellington, Somerset, England.

M. Dolphus found that in his factory at Mülhausen, where a large number of married women were employed, the mothers lost over 40 per cent of their babies in the first year, though the average at that age for the whole district was only 18 per cent. He noticed, moreover, that the mortality was greatest in the first three months of life, and that set him thinking of a remedy. He decided therefore to require all mothers to remain away from their work for a period of six weeks after childbirth, during which time he undertook to pay them their wages in full. The results were astonishing, the decrease in infantile mortality in the first year being from more than 40 to less than 18 per cent.[35] Other employers followed with similarly beneficent results, among these being the firm of Fox Brothers, who employed considerably over one thousand persons, more than half of whom were women. They paid wages for three weeks only, but provided excellent *crèches* with competent matrons in charge for the care of the infants whose mothers were at work. There, also, the infantile death-rate was very materially reduced, though, owing to the fact that no statistics showing the rate among children whose mothers were employed by the firm prior to the introduction of the plan exist,

it cannot be statistically represented. Mr. Charles H. Fox, head of the firm, is authority for the statement that the reduction was extensive.[36] The importance of these experiments, especially in conjunction with the experiences of Paris in the great siege and Lancashire in the cotton famine, cannot easily be overestimated. They clearly show that not only hunger, but that other aspect of poverty hardly less important, the neglect of infants through industrial conditions which force the mothers to neglect them, are responsible for an alarming sacrifice of life year by year, and that it is possible to reduce materially the rate of infant mortality by improving the economic circumstances of the parents.

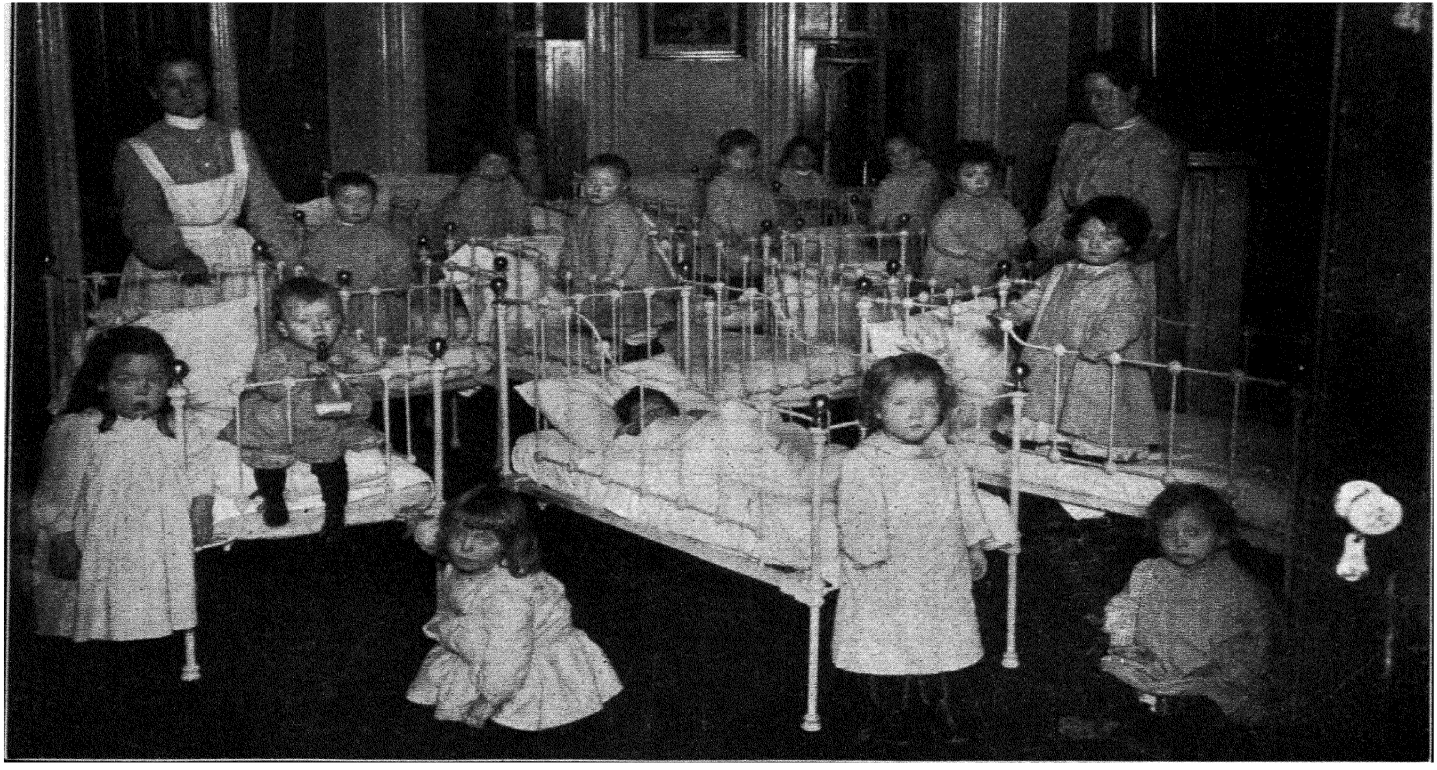
X

No study of this problem can be regarded as satisfactory which ignores the question of poverty and its relation to the number of still-births, yet we can only touch briefly upon it. No brutal Malthusian cynicism, but a calm view of such facts as those cited, leaves the impression that, however it might be under other and more humane social conditions, still-birth means very often a child's escape from a life of suffering and misery. It is surely better that a babe should be strangled in the process of delivery from its mother's womb, never to utter a cry, than that it should live to cry of hunger which its mother

cannot appease, or from the torture of food unsuited to its little stomach! When a mother suffers all the pain and anxiety caused by the struggling life within her, and in her travail goes down to the brink of the grave, only to be mocked at last by a lifeless thing, she suffers the supreme anguish of her kind. Last year there were more than 6000 such tragedies in the city of New York alone, and the number in the whole country was probably not less than 80,000.

Some of the best authorities upon the subject of vital statistics insist that still-births should be included in the death-rates, and in many foreign cities, notably Berlin,[37] they are so included. If such a method were adopted in this country, it is easy to see how important the effects would be upon the tables of mortality. Whatever opinions they may hold upon the moot question of regarding still-births as deaths in all enumerations, all authorities appear to agree that the circumstances of the mothers influence the numbers of the still-born as surely as they do the actual infantile death-rates. Six physicians of large obstetrical experience were asked to estimate what percentage of the still-born should be ascribed to the influence of poverty, and the average of their replies was 60 per cent.

That may be an overestimate, or it may be, and probably is, an underestimate. If we assume it to be fairly correct, it means that in one city something



BABIES WHOSE MOTHERS WORK CARED FOR IN A *CRÈCHE*

like 3700 mothers needlessly endured the supreme agony, and as many lives were sacrificed to poverty. It means that to the 80,000 babies annually devoured by the wolf of poverty must be added another 45,000 killed by the same cruel foe in the passage of the race from the womb of dependence to a separate existence. Whatever the number may be, it is certain that many are still-born because of the fatigue and overexertion of the mothers in the critical periods of pregnancy and that many more are suffocated in the passage from the womb because of the employment of untrained and unskilled midwives — especially, as often is the case, when the "midwife" is only a kindly neighbor called in because of the poverty of the family to which the child comes. And it may be added, incidentally, that still-birth is not by any means the only danger from this source, nor the most lamentable. Many accidents of a non-fatal character occur at birth which seriously affect the whole of life. Carelessness, inexperience, and ignorance may cause the suffocation of the child, or by pressure upon some delicate nerve centre irreparable injury may be caused to it, such as paralysis for life or hopeless imbecility.[38]

XI

It is a strange fact of social psychology that people in the mass, whether nations or smaller communities, or crowds, have much less feeling and conscience

than the same people have as individuals. People whose souls would cry out against such conditions as we have described coming under their notice in a specific case, *en masse* are unmoved. As individuals we fully recognize that charity can never take the place of justice, but collectively, as citizens, we are prone to solace ourselves with the thought that charity, organized and unorganized, somehow meets the problem, and we blind ourselves to the contrary evidences which everywhere confront us. But it is only too true that charity — "that damnably cold thing called charity" — fails utterly to meet the problem of poverty in general and childhood's poverty in particular. Nothing could be more pathetic than the method employed by so many charitable persons and societies of attempting to solve the latter problem by finding employment for the mother, as if that were not the worst phase of all from any sane view of the child's interest. Charity degrades and demoralizes, and there is little or no compensating effective help. In the vast majority of cases it fails to reach the suffering in time to save them from becoming chronic dependents. More and more the heart and brain of the world are coming to a recognition of the fact that charity, however well organized, cannot solve the problems which the gigantic and blind forces inhering in the laws of social development have called into being.

While the causes of poverty remain active in the forces which govern their lives, it is impossible to reclaim the victims. Were nothing but charity possible, consideration of this and other phases of our growing social misery might well plunge us into the deepest and blackest pessimism. But surely we may see in those experiments in the work of social reconstruction, which wise and enlightened municipalities have undertaken, a widening sense of social responsibility and the rays of the hope-light for which men have waited through the years. Such social efforts as the municipal milk depots of Europe and this country, based upon the *Gouttes de Lait* of France;[39] the provision of free, well-regulated *crèches*[40] and the extension of free medical service at the public cost, have been attended with important beneficial results and point the way to further efforts in the same direction. Experience points clearly to the need of some provision to enable the mother to remain with her infant child instead of leaving it to the care of others while she joins the great machine, and becomes part of it, in the interests of that world-supremacy in commerce and industry which is our boast and dream, and for which we are paying too terrible a price.

It is, of course, true that even these measures will not banish poverty from the world. They can only palliate the evils, not eradicate them. Eradication

can only be accomplished by greater, foundational changes which will make it possible for every child to flourish as befits the inheritors of the ages of strife and suffering which the world is slowly coming to regard as so many experiences and lessons in the art of life. Between the present wrong and that ideal there must come golden years of opportunity for enlightened social statesmanship consecrated to the rescue of the nation's children from the curse and thrall of cruel and relentless poverty, which otherwise must be bequeathed again to the generations yet unborn to damn their lives. In the child's cry of to-day wisdom will hear the nation of to-morrow pleading that it may be saved from the blight and decay of a poverty which our vast resources and treasuries of wealth declare to be as needless as it is shameful and wrong.

II

THE SCHOOL CHILD

"'It is good when it happens,' say the children,
'That we die before our time.'"

— Mrs. Browning.

I

In a New York kindergarten one winter's morning a frail, dark-eyed girl stood by the radiator warming her tiny blue and benumbed hands. She was poorly and scantily clad, and her wan, pinched face was unutterably sad with the sadness that shadows the children of poverty and comes from cares which only maturer years should know. When she had warmed her little hands back to life again, the child looked wistfully up into the teacher's face and asked: —

"Teacher, do you love God?"

"Why, yes, dearie, of course I love God," answered the wondering teacher.

"Well, I don't — I hate Him!" was the fierce rejoinder. "He makes the wind blow, and I haven't any warm clothes — He makes it snow, and my shoes have holes in them — He makes it cold, and we haven't any fire at home — He makes us hungry,

and mamma hadn't any bread for our breakfast — Oh, I hate Him!" [1]

This story, widely published in the newspapers two or three years ago and vouched for by the teacher, is remarkable no less for its graphic description of the thing called poverty than for the child's passionate revolt against the supposed author of her misery. Poor, scanty clothing, cheerless homes, hunger day by day, — these are the main characteristics of that heritage of poverty to which so many thousands of children are born. Tens of thousands of baby lives are extinguished by its blasts every year as though they were so many candles swept by angry winds. But their fate is far more merciful and enviable than the fate of those who survive.

For the children who survive the struggle with poverty in their infant years, and those who do not encounter that struggle until they have reached school age, not only feel the anguish and shame which comes with developed consciousness, but society imposes upon them the added burden of mental effort. Regarding education as the only safe anchorage for a Democracy, we make it compulsory and boast that it is one of the fundamental principles of our economy that every child shall be given a certain amount of elementary instruction. This is our safeguard against those evils which other generations regarded as being inherent in popular, repre-

sentative government. The modern public school, with its splendid equipment devised to promote the mental and physical development of our future citizens, is based upon motives and instincts of self-preservation as distinct and clearly defined as those underlying our systems of naval and military defences against armed invasion, or the systems of public sanitation and hygiene through which we seek to protect ourselves from devastating plagues within.

The past fifty or sixty years have been attended with a wonderful development of the science of education, as remarkable and important in its way as anything of which we may boast. We are proud, and justly so, of the admirable machinery of instruction which we have created, the fine buildings, laboratories, curricula, highly trained teachers, and so on, but there is a growing conviction that all this represents only so much mechanical, rather than human, progress. We have created a vast network of means, there is no lack of equipment, but we have largely neglected the human and most important factor, the child.[2] The futility of expecting efficient education when the teacher is handicapped by poor and inadequate means is generally recognized, but not so as yet the futility of expecting it when the teacher has poor material to work upon in the form of chronically underfed children, too weak in mind and body to do the work required of them. We are

forever seeking the explanation of the large percentage of educational failures in the machinery of instruction rather than in the human material, the children themselves.

The nervous, irritable, half-ill children to be found in such large numbers in our public schools represent poor material. They are largely drawn from the homes of poverty, and constitute an overwhelming majority of those children for whom we have found it necessary to make special provision,— the backward, dull pupils found year after year in the same grades with much younger children. In a measure the relation of a child's educability to its physical health and comfort has been recognized by the correlation of physical and mental exercises in most up-to-date schools, but its larger social and economic significance has been almost wholly ignored. And yet it is quite certain that poverty exercises the same retarding influences upon the physical training as upon mental education. There are certain conditions precedent to successful education, whether physical or mental. Chief of these are a reasonable amount of good, nourishing food and a healthy home. Deprived of these, physical or mental development must necessarily be hindered. And poverty means just that to the child. It denies its victim these very necessities with the inevitable result, physical and mental weakness and inefficiency.



A "LUNG BLOCK" CHILD IN A TRAGICALLY SUGGESTIVE POSITION

II

In a careful analysis of the principal data available, Mr. Robert Hunter has attempted the difficult task of estimating the measure of privation, and his conclusion is that in normal times there are at least 10,000,000 persons in the United States in poverty.[3] That is to say, there are so many persons underfed, poorly housed, underclad, and having no security in the means of life. As an incidental condition he has observed that poverty's misery falls most heavily upon the children, and that there are probably not less than from 60,000 to 70,000 children in New York city alone "who often arrive at school hungry and unfitted to do well the work required."[4] By a section of the press that statement was garbled into something very different, that 70,000 children in New York city go "breakfastless" to school every day. In that form the statement was naturally and very justly criticised, for, of course, nothing like that number of children go absolutely without breakfast. It is not, however, a question of children going without breakfast, but of children who are *underfed,* and the latter word would have been better fitted to express the real meaning of the original statement than the word "hungry." Many thousands of little children go breakfastless to school at times, but the real problem is much more extensive

than that and embraces that much more numerous class of children who are chronically underfed, either because their food is insufficient in quantity, or, what is the same thing in the end, poor in quality and lacking in nutriment.

It is noteworthy that no serious criticism of the estimate that there are 10,000,000 in poverty has been attempted. Some of the most experienced philanthropic workers in the country have indeed urged that it is altogether too low. I am myself convinced that the estimate is a most conservative one. It would be warranted alone by the figures of unemployment, which show that in 1900, a year of fairly normal industrial conditions, 2,000,000 male wage-earners were unemployed for from four to six months. But to these figures Mr. Hunter adds a mass of corroborative facts which suggest that the only just criticism which can be made of his estimate is that it is an understatement. And, if there are 10,000,000 persons in poverty in the United States, there must be at least 3,300,000 of that number under fourteen years of age.

To test the accuracy of the statistics of unemployment, low wages, sickness, charitable relief, etc., by detailed investigation would be an impossible task for any private investigator. No such test could be effectively carried out in a single great city by private agencies. But, while they are open to the criticisms

which all such statistics are subject to, those given by Mr. Hunter represent the most reliable data available. They justify, I believe, the conclusion that in normal times there are not less than 3,300,000 children under fourteen years of age in poverty, and a considerably greater number in periods of unusual depression. If we divide this number into two age groups, those under five and those from five to fourteen, we shall find that there are 1,455,000 in the former group and 1,845,000 in the latter. It is a well-known fact, however, that poverty is far more prevalent among children over five years of age than among younger children, and it is safe to assume that of the total number of children estimated to be in poverty, there are fully 2,000,000 between the ages of five and fourteen years, nearly 12 per cent of the total number of children living in that age period. The importance of this from an educational point of view is apparent when it is remembered that from five to fourteen years is the principal period of school attendance.

III

This problem of poverty in its relation to childhood and education is, to us in America, quite new. We have not studied it as it has been studied in England and other European countries where, for many years, it has been the subject of much investigation and experiment. When it was suggested that 60,000 or 70,000

children go to school in our greatest city in an underfed condition, and when Dr. W. H. Maxwell, superintendent of the Board of Education of New York City, declared in a public address that there are hundreds of thousands of children in the public schools of the nation unable to study or learn because of their hunger,[5] something of a sensation was caused from one end of the land to the other. But in England, where for more than twenty years investigators have been studying the problem and experimenting, and have built up a considerable literature upon the subject, which has become one of the most pressing political problems of the time, they have become so conversant with the facts that no fresh recital, however eloquent, can create anything like a sensation. And what is true of England is true of almost every other country in Europe. Only we in the United States have ignored this terrible problem of child hunger. We have so long been used to express our commiseration with the Old World on account of the heavy burden of pauperism beneath which it groans, and to boast of our greater prosperity and happiness, that we have hardly observed the ominous signs that similar causes at work among us are fast producing similar results. Now we have awakened to the fact that here, too, are two nations within the nation, — the nation of the rich and the nation of the poor, — and that Fourier's terrible prophecy of "poverty through

plethora," has found fulfilment in the land where he fondly dreamed that his Utopia might be realized. The poverty problem is to-day the supreme challenge to our national conscience and instincts of self-preservation, and its saddest and most alarming feature is the suffering and doom it imposes upon the children.

Such investigations as have been made by Mr. Hunter, myself, and others in New York and other large cities, meagre as they have been, tend to the conclusion that the extent of the evil of underfeeding has not been exaggerated. It is true that the Board of Education of New York City appointed a special committee to investigate the subject and that their report, based upon the testimony of a number of school principals and teachers, would indicate that only a very small number of children in our public schools suffer from underfeeding. Many persons who regarded that report as the conclusive answer of the expert were at once satisfied. In order that the reader may better understand the investigations herein summarized and view them without prejudice, it may be well to digress somewhat to discuss that very optimistic report.

At a very early period of the agitation upon the subject, and before the Board of Education had discussed it, I undertook a series of investigations with a view to testing as far as possible Mr. Hunter's estimate. My investigations included personal obser-

vation and inquiry in a number of public schools in various parts of the city having a total attendance of something more than 28,000 children. When the Board of Education took action upon the matter and appointed its special committee, I was already far advanced in that work. Realizing that the value of such an inquiry as the Board of Education had decided upon must depend entirely upon the methods adopted, I turned my attention to the task of watching carefully the "investigation." It was a case of investigating an investigation. When the special committee met I laid before the members certain evidence of the utter worthlessness of the reports they had received from the schools, as well as some of the information I had gathered concerning the extent of the evil of underfeeding, in the hope that the committee might be induced to undertake a careful and extensive investigation of the whole subject by a body of experts.

In the first place, the official inquiry had been confined to the number of "breakfastless" children, and, secondly, the principals had no instructions as to the manner in which their inquiries should be conducted. The various District Superintendents merely requested the principals to "carefully investigate" and report the number of children attending school without breakfast, in some cases forty-eight hours being allowed and in many others only twenty-

four hours. The result of this lack of method and system was most deplorable, many of the principals adopting methods of investigation which not only proved quite futile, but, what is more important, effectually destroyed all chances of proper investigation for the time being. From the statements submitted to the committee, I quote two examples as showing the character of the "evidence" upon which its report was based.

IV

The principal of a large school on the West Side reported that "after careful inquiries" he had found only one little girl who came to school without breakfast, and she did so from choice, saying, "Because I never used to have any breakfast in Germany, sir, and didn't want any." There were also two boys, Syrians, who said that they had three meals each day but could never get enough to eat. The little girl insisted that she "always had a good lunch." Here, then, was a big school with over two thousand pupils, representing twenty different nationalities, in which there were only three possible cases of underfeeding, the element of doubt being strong in each case! Every one who has had the least experience of work amongst the poor knows perfectly well that it would be absolutely impossible to gather together 2000 children from the tenements of any city without including many more cases of undoubted hardship

and suffering. And the neighborhood of this school is a particularly poor one. Close to the school are some of the foulest tenements to be found in the whole city. The crowding of two families in one room is common, and poverty and squalor are abundantly evidenced on every hand.

After the principal had told me of his report I went over the district with the Captain of the neighboring Slum Post of the Salvation Army. The Captain knew personally several children attending the school who were literally half starved. Out of 26 children, boys and girls, at the free breakfast one morning there were 22 from the school, and their hunger and misery were beyond question. One little boy was barely seven years old, and a more woful appearance than he presented cannot well be imagined. He had come to the breakfast station two days before the date of our visit, the Captain said literally famishing, filthy, and covered with sores. The good woman had fed and cleaned the poor little waif and bandaged his feet and legs. "It was an awful job," she said, "for he was so dirty. It took four changes of water to get him well cleaned. Then I bandaged him and got some old but clean clothes for him." Even so, after two days of such feeding and care as he had never known before, the poor child looked forlorn, weak, and inexpressibly miserable. Little Mike's case was doubtless exceptionally

bad, but it is not too much to say that the whole district is a wen of terrible poverty. Yet from the principal's report it would seem that the children bear no share of its hardships and privations. And this is impossible. It is the children who suffer most of all.

To account for the principal's roseate and obviously misleading report, it is only necessary to understand how the inquiry was made upon which the report was based. Asked to explain how he had made his investigation, the principal said, "I went to every class and asked all those children who had had no breakfast to stand up." When it is remembered that children are naturally very sensitive about their poverty, regarding it as being something in the nature of a personal degradation, nothing need be said to show the futility of such a method of inquiry. I have frequently known children on the verge of exhaustion to deny that they were hungry, so keenly do they feel that poverty is a disgrace. I saw the little girl and the two Syrian boys in the presence of the principal upon the occasion of my second visit to the school and questioned them. The two boys said, through an interpreter, that they had bread and coffee for every meal and vigorously denied having had butter, jam, milk, eggs, or meat of any kind. They certainly looked anæmic, weak, and underfed. The little girl's story, which I could get only by dint of careful and sympathetic questioning, epitomizes

the whole problem of underfeeding as it affects thousands of children. She gave at first practically the same answer as she had given the principal, saying that she did not have breakfast because she was not accustomed to it and didn't need it, and that she always had a good lunch.

But her full story revealed a very different condition from what these innocent replies would indicate. Both her parents go out to work, leaving home soon after five o'clock in the morning. The father is a laborer employed at the docks, and the mother works in the kitchen of a cheap restaurant. They go away leaving the little girl in bed, and when she rises there is generally some cold coffee and bread for her. But there is no clock, and she does not know the time and is afraid of being late to school and does not stay to eat. "Sometimes, when papa has no work, there is no food left for me to eat," she said. Then she told of her "good lunch." Generally there is five cents left upon the table for her to buy lunch with. "Only when papa is not working is there no money left." On the day of my interview with her she had spent her five cents for a cup of coffee with nothing at all to eat, as she had done for two or three successive days. Asked why she had not bought something to eat, or a glass of milk, instead of coffee, she answered, "Because coffee is hot, sir, and I was so cold." Her father returns home at

six o'clock in the evening and sends her to the delicatessen store to buy something — generally bologna sausage — for their evening meal. The mother, who eats at the restaurant, does not return until about two hours later. From this fuller story of the little girl's life it is seen that her "good lunch" day after day consists of a cup of coffee without a morsel of food, and that she fasts frequently, almost constantly, from the evening of one day to the evening of the next.

Such tactlessness on the part of the principal of a great public school seems almost incredible. But it is a fact that most teachers seem to have no other method of finding out anything from their children than by calling upon them to "show hands," notwithstanding that experience proves it to be a most unreliable one. Children not only shrink from confessing their poverty and hunger, but they are also quick to give the answers desired by the teacher, even though the teacher's feelings are only manifested by a slight inflection of voice. Public examination of the children is a useless as well as most cruel method to adopt. But it was generally adopted, and I could cite case after case from my notes. One other case, however, must suffice. The principal of one of the smallest schools in the city, situated on the East Side in a poor Italian district, assured me that there were practically no hungry or underfed children

in the school. Asked to estimate the number of such children, she said that they were "less than 1 per cent of the attendance." She had found 9 cases of destitution just previously as a result of an inquiry made through the teachers, which, as was pointed out to her, meant fully 2 per cent of the attendance. For the total enrolment in this school is less than 500 and the average attendance not more than 450. Asked how the 9 cases had been discovered, the principal replied, "Why, I simply went to each class and asked, 'What little boy or girl did not have breakfast to-day, or not enough breakfast? Please show hands.'" There was, she said, no doubt whatever that the 9 children were the victims of great poverty. That as many as 2 per cent of the children should, under the circumstances, confess their poverty is undoubtedly a most serious fact and indicates a much larger number of actual victims.

How such a method of examination intimidates the children and fails to elicit the truth, the following incident, related as nearly as possible in the principal's own words, will show. It relates to a little boy whom we will call Tony: —

"I went to a classroom and asked: 'How many children had no breakfast to-day? Show hands!' Not a single hand went up. Then the teacher said, 'Why, I am sure that boy, Tony, looks as if he were half starved.' And he really did, so I told him to



A TYPICAL "LITTLE MOTHER"

stand up and questioned him. 'Did you have any breakfast this morning, Tony?' I asked. He hung his head for a minute and then said, 'No, mum.'

"'Now, Tony, wouldn't you like to have a good breakfast every morning, — some hot coffee and nice rolls?'

"'Yes, mum.'

"'Well, do you know the Salvation Army where they give breakfasts to little boys who need them?'

"'Yes, mum.'

"'Well, if I get you a ticket, won't you go there to-morrow and get your breakfast?'

"The little fellow's eyes flashed and he looked straight at me and said, 'No, mum, I don't want it.' Really, I admired his spirit. Poor as he was, he did not want charity."

Better than any argument the principal's own words show the cruel, inquisitorial method and its effectiveness in suppressing the truth. I repeat, that was the method of inquiry generally adopted, and it was upon reports based upon the results of such examinations that the special committee of the Board of Education based its report.

V

Of course, not all teachers are so tactless. A very large number are merely unobservant, possibly because they have become inured to the pitiful appear-

ance of the children and their painfully low physical development. It is common to hear teachers in poor districts say: "When I first came to this school my heart used to ache with pity on account of the poverty-stricken appearance of many of the children and the sad tales they sometimes tell. But now I have grown used to it all." That, in many cases, tells the whole secret — they have grown accustomed to the sight of stunted bodies and wan, pinched faces. There are teachers, earnest men and women devoted to their profession, and consecrating it by an almost religious passion, who study the home life and social environment of the children intrusted to their care; but they are, unhappily, exceptions. The number of teachers having no idea of how a healthy child should look is astonishingly large. The hectic flush of disease is often mistaken by teachers and principals for the bloom of health.

In one large school the principal, in the course of a personally conducted visit to the different classrooms, singled out a little Italian girl, and asked with a note of pride in his voice: "Wouldn't you call this a healthy child? I do. Look at her round, full face." There were a great many signs of ill health in that little girl's appearance which the good principal did not recognize. I pointed out some of the signs of grave nervous disorder, due, as I afterward learned, almost beyond question, to malnutrition.

Her cheeks were well rounded, but her pitifully thin arms indicated a very ill-developed body. I pointed out her nervous hand, the baggy fulness under her eyes, and the abrasions at the corners of her twitching mouth,[6] and asked that the teacher might be consulted as to the girl's school record. "She is not a very bright child," said the teacher, "and what to do with her is a problem. She is very nervous, irritable, and excitable. She seems to get exhausted very soon, and it is impossible for her to apply herself properly to her work. I think very likely that she is underfed, for she comes from a very poor home." Subsequent investigation at her home, on Mott Street, showed that her father, who is a consumptive, earns from sixty cents to a dollar a day peddling laces, needles, and other small articles, the rest of the income supporting the family of seven persons being derived from the mother's labor. They occupy one small room, and the only means of cooking they have is a small gas "ring" such as is sold for ten cents in the cheap stores.

Where principals and teachers declined to assist, it was impossible to make inquiries in the schools, and it was useless to make them in schools where the children had already been openly questioned. Wherever it was possible to secure the coöperation of principals or teachers, I got them to question the children privately and sympathetically. In 16 schools, 12,800

children were thus privately examined, and of that number 987, or 7.71 per cent, were reported as having had no breakfast upon the day of the inquiry, and 1963, or 15.32 per cent, as having had altogether too little. Teachers were asked to exclude as far as possible all cases of an obviously accidental nature from the returns, as, for instance, when a child known to be in fairly comfortable circumstances had come to school without breakfast merely because of lack of appetite. They were also requested to regard as having had inadequate breakfasts only children who had had bread only (with or without tea or coffee), or such things as crackers or crullers in place of bread, but without milk, cereals, cake, butter, jam, eggs, fruit, fish, or meat of any kind. That this standard was altogether too low will probably be admitted without question, but there was no way of examining the actual meals of the children, and some sort of arbitrary rule was necessary. The figures given are therefore based on a very low standard, and most certainly do not include all cases either of the unfed or underfed. It is more than probable that some children who had gone without breakfasts refused to admit the fact, and there were several instances in which children known to be desperately poor, and who, the teachers felt, were certainly underfed, gave the most surprising accounts — which must have been drawn from their imaginations[7] — of

elaborate breakfasts. Out of 12,800 children, then, 2950, or more than 23 per cent, were found either wholly breakfastless or having had such miserably poor breakfasts as described. And that is certainly an understatement of the evil of underfeeding in those schools.

One of the most notable of these school investigations was undertaken by the principal of a large school to "prove conclusively that really there is no such thing as a serious problem of underfeeding among our school children." The principal is a devoted believer in the theory of the survival of the fittest, and in the elimination of the weak by competition and struggle. "If you attempt to take hardship and suffering out of their lives by smoothing the pathway of life for these children, you weaken their character, and, by so doing, you sin against the children themselves and, through them, against society," he said. With the view of Huxley and others that the real interest and duty of society is to make as many as possible fit to survive, he expressed himself as having no sympathy, on the ground that it conflicts with nature's immutable law of struggle. But, as often happens, his deeds frequently run counter to his merciless creed, and he is one of the most generous and compassionate of men. The children trust him, and the sense of an intimate friendship between him and them is the most delightful impression the

visitor receives. There is no absence of real, effective discipline, but it is discipline based upon sympathy, friendship, and trust. The principal declared that he did not believe that 5 children could be found in the whole school of 1500 who could be described as badly underfed, or who came to school breakfastless.

The district in which this school is situated is one of the poorest in the city, the population consisting almost exclusively of Italians. Most of the men are unskilled laborers working for very low wages and irregularly employed. Many of them are recent immigrants and subject to the vicious padrone system. Every fresh batch of immigrants intensifies the already keen and brutal competition, and to maintain even the low standard of living to which they are accustomed, the wives frequently work as wage-earners. The people are housed in vile tenements, and the crowding of two families into one small room is by no means uncommon. "Little mothers" and their rickety infant charges crowd the pavements. In the early morning, even during the winter months, groups of shivering children gather outside the school waiting for admission hours before the time of opening, and at lunch time instead of going to their homes they hasten away with their pennies and nickels to buy ice cream, pickles, peppers, or cream puffs for their midday meal. Knowing these to be the

conditions existing in the neighborhood, it was impossible to accept the optimistic views of the principal without serious questioning, and it was to convince me that he was right that he undertook to have the investigation made while we went over the school.

The teachers were requested to examine every child privately, and to report the number of children having had no breakfast that morning and the number having had inadequate breakfasts. Some of the teachers absolutely refused to ask the children "such questions," and two or three sent in obstinately stupid reports such as "nobody underfed but the teacher." Reports were received from 19 classes with an actual attendance of 865 children, of which number 104 were reported as having had no breakfast and 54 as having had too little. Not all the reports were of equal value, I afterward found, some of the teachers having ignored the rule and regarded coffee and bread as sufficient. In one case there were three children who declared that they had only cold coffee without any food. They should have been reported as breakfastless, but in fact they were not reported in either column. So that it is probable that in this case also the figures given are an understatement of actual conditions. In one class of 43 children 13 were reported as having had no breakfast and 12 as having had insufficient, and when the report was sent back with instructions that the teacher try

to find out *why* the 13 children had no breakfast, it was returned with the postscript in the teacher's handwriting, "There was no food for them to eat." In another class out of 65 children no less than 30 were reported as having had no breakfast, but of these 12 had had either tea or coffee. As they did not have food of any kind other than the tea or coffee, the teacher reported them as breakfastless. Making all allowances for discrepancies and differences of value in the teachers' reports, it is surely most serious that no less than 17.81 per cent of the children examined should be reported as either breakfastless or very inadequately fed that day. It should be said that this inquiry took place in the winter, the season when there is most unemployment among unskilled laborers, and it is not probable that the same amount of poverty would be found all the year round.

One incident in connection with the investigation in this school is worthy of record. A lad of about 13 or 14 years of age in one of the highest grades, who had been reported as having had no breakfast, was seen in the principal's office at noon. He seemed to be quite rugged and healthy, and the principal said that he was "the brightest boy in the school, and a good lad, too." He showed us his lunch — a roll of bread and two small pieces of almost transparent cheese. "Isn't that enough for a boy?" asked the principal, laughingly. The boy responded: "Yes,

but I had no breakfast, and this has to do me all day. I don't have any breakfast most times, and sometimes no lunch or supper. You know that Mr. B—— used to give me some very often." And the principal confirmed this part of the lad's story with a tender, "Yes, I know, sonny." The boy told us a saddening story of a mother cowed down by a brutal husband, and of the latter's vice. He is a cook and has often beaten his wife, who works in an embroidery factory. A year or so ago he went to Italy, leaving his wife here. Soon afterward he wrote to her for money to pay his passage back. She was penniless, but, the lad quaintly said, "she made a debt of a hundred dollars" to send to him. "Then she had to pay every week, and there wasn't much food." The rest of his tale of shame — shame of a father's sin — need not be told. It is too horrible. "Why doesn't your mother leave him and just take you with her? You are the only child, aren't you?" asked the principal. "Yes, I'm the only one, but there are ten dead," was the boy's startling reply. It was, unconsciously, a significant comment upon the good principal's theory of the survival of the fittest.

In another school the principal told me that she had reported to the District Superintendent that of 1000 children on the register at least 100 were badly underfed. She told of children fainting in school or in the yard from lack of food, and of others suffering

from disorders of the bowels due to the same cause. Many of these children were pointed out in the course of several visits to the school. "Ignorance plays a large part in the problem," said the principal, "but I think it is mostly poverty. When work is hard to get, or there is sickness in the family, or when there is a strike, then the children suffer most, and that shows that it is poverty in most cases." Upon one of my visits to this school, I encountered one of those pathetic incidents of which I have gathered so many in the course of these investigations. Little Patsey, the American-born child of Irish parents, had for some days been ailing and unable to attend properly to his lessons. The teacher suspected that improper food was the cause, and Patsey's account of his diet confirmed her in that opinion. So she advised Patsey to tell his mother that oatmeal would be better for him. "Get oatmeal, Patsey, it's better — and very cheap, too." There were tears in the principal's eyes as she told how, that very morning, the teacher had found what she supposed to be powdered chalk upon the floor and was about to scold the culprit, when she discovered that it was Patsey's oatmeal! *Poor little Patsey had for three days been spending his daily lunch allowance of three cents upon oatmeal and eating it dry. Teacher had said that it was better!* Only the thought of the teacher's influence, and the hope that through the medium of

such influence as hers it may be possible to dispel much of the ignorance of which so many children are the victims, relieves the pathos of the incident and brightens it.

VI

Soon after the foregoing investigations were made, Dr. H. M. Lechstrecker, of the New York State Board of Charities, conducted an examination of 10,707 children in the Industrial Schools of New York City. He found that 439, or 4.10 per cent, had had no breakfast on the date of the inquiry, while 998, or 9.32 per cent, exhibited anæmic conditions apparently due to lack of proper nourishment. Upon investigation the teachers found that the breakfasts of each of the 998 consisted either of coffee only, or of coffee with bread only. Only 1855, or 17.32 per cent, started the day with what Dr. Lechstrecker considered to be an adequate meal.[8] Other independent inquiries in several cities show that the problem is by no means peculiar to New York.

In Buffalo the principal of one large school, Mr. Charles L. Ryan, is reported as saying that of the 1500 children in his school at least one-tenth come to school in the morning without breakfast. In 8 schools in Buffalo, having a total average attendance of 7500 pupils, the principals estimated that 350, or 4.46 per cent, have no breakfasts at all, and that 800 more have too little to insure effective work. No

less than 5105 of the 7500 children were reported as having tea or coffee with bread only.[9] It is rather difficult to analyze these figures satisfactorily, but it would appear that no less than 17.33 per cent of the total number of children in these 8 schools are believed by the principals and teachers to be appreciably handicapped by defective nutrition, and that only 16.80 per cent are adequately and satisfactorily fed.

In Chicago several independent investigations have been made. Mr. William Hornbaker, principal of the Oliver Goldsmith school, says: "We have here 1100 children in a district which is so crowded that all our pupils come from an area comprising only about twenty acres. When I began work here, I discovered that many of the pupils remained all day without food. A great majority of the parents in this district, as well as the older children, are at work from dawn to dusk, and have no time to care for the little ones. Such children have no place to go when dismissed at noon."[10] At this school a lunch room has been established, and two meals a day are provided for about 50 of the most necessitous children. At first these meals were sold at a penny per meal, but it was found that even pennies were too hard to obtain. Mr. Hornbaker points out that the pride of the larger children restrains them, and it is most difficult to get them to admit their hunger, but the

younger children are not so sensitive. He says that "unquestionably a majority of the children are improperly fed, especially in the lower grades." Out of a total attendance of 5150 children in 5 Chicago schools 122 were reported as breakfastless, 1464 as having only bread with coffee or tea, a total of 30.79 per cent.[11]

In Philadelphia several inquiries were made, with the result that of 4589 children 189 were reported as going generally or often without breakfast of any kind, while 2504 began the day on coffee or tea and bread, a total of 58.52 per cent.[12] In Cleveland, Boston, and Los Angeles, among many other cities, teachers and others declare that the evil is quite as extensive.

Massing the figures given from New York, Philadelphia, Buffalo, and Chicago, we get a total of 40,746 children examined, of which number 14,121, or 34.65 per cent, either went breakfastless to school or got miserably poor breakfasts of bread and tea or coffee. At least bread and tea must prove to be a poor diet, wholly insufficient to meet the demands of a growing human body, and the difficulty of obtaining good, wholesome bread in our cities intensifies the evil. The wholesale adulteration of food is indeed a most serious menace to life and health to which the poor are constantly subjected.

These figures are not put forward as being in any

sense a statistical measure of the problem. The investigations described, and others of a like nature, afford no adequate basis for scientific estimates. They are all confined to the one morning meal, and the standard adopted for judging of the adequateness of the meals given to the children is necessarily crude and lacking in scientific precision. It cannot be too strongly emphasized that it is not a question of whether so many children go without breakfast occasionally, but whether they are *underfed*, either through missing meals more or less frequently or through feeding day by day and week by week upon food that is poor in quality, unsuitable, and of small nutritive value, and whether in consequence the children suffer physically or mentally, or both. Only a comprehensive examination by experts of a large number of children in different parts of the country, a careful inquiry into their diet and their physical and mental development, would afford a satisfactory basis for any statistical measure of the problem which could be accepted as even approximately correct. Yet such inquiries as those described cannot be ignored; in the absence of more comprehensive and scientific investigations they are of great value, on account of the mass of observed facts which they give; and the results certainly tend to show that the estimate that fully 2,000,000 children of school age in the United States are badly underfed is not exaggerated.

VII

As stated, all the investigations described were confined to the breakfast meal. There has been practically no effort made, so far as I am aware, to determine how many children there are who go without lunches back to their lessons, or, what is quite as important, how many there are to whom are given small sums of money to procure lunches for themselves; and what kind of lunches they buy. Even in Europe most of the investigations made have been confined to the morning meal. Yet this lunch question is probably even more important than the other. There are doubtless many more children who go without lunch than without breakfast. Thousands of children who get some sort of breakfast, even if it is only coffee and bread, get nothing at all for lunch, and a still larger number — in some schools I have found as many as 20 per cent — get small sums of money, ranging from one to five cents, to buy lunches for themselves. And in most cases the condition of these is just as deplorable as if they had nothing at all, if not much worse. Their tragedy lies in the fact that in most cases the money they spend would be quite sufficient to provide decent, nourishing meals if it were wisely spent, instead of which they get what is positively injurious.

When a child of eight or nine years of age whose

breakfast consists of tea and bread lunches day after day upon pickles, its digestive system must of necessity be impaired. Wise discrimination cannot be expected from young children, and the temptation of the candy stores and of the push carts laden with ice cream or fruit is great. Often the fact that children in the very poorest districts spend so many pence is urged as evidence that no serious problem of poverty exists, but that is a wholly unwarranted assumption. There may not be absolute destitution; the family income may be sufficient to keep its members above the line of primary poverty, but the conditions under which it is earned, necessitating the employment of the mother, involve the suffering of the children. The mother is taken away from her legitimate work, the care of her home and children, and they are left to their own resources. In the course of these investigations I have found hundreds of children going back to their lessons without having had any lunch, and hundreds more of the class just described. In one class of 40 in an East Side school I found 11 with pennies to buy their own lunches. These children were all between the ages of eight and ten years. In another school the principal said that there were 50 such children known to her out of a total of less than 500. In 4 other schools, with an attendance of 4500, the principals' estimates of the number of such children aggregated 521, or 11.51 per cent.

This phase of the problem of child hunger is not peculiar to New York. The reports of teachers in many cities and towns and my own observations show that this evil is invariably associated with poverty; and European investigations all support that view.[13] It is probable that in some of the smaller manufacturing towns it prevails to a larger proportional extent than in cities like New York, Boston, Cleveland, Chicago, and St. Louis, but of that matter there are no data. The answers of teachers and others to inquiries as to what such children buy have been monotonously alike. They buy candy, cream puffs, ice cream, fruit (very often damaged, decayed, or unripe), pickles, and other unwholesome things. One cold day last winter I visited the neighborhood of a large school with an idea that it might be possible to ascertain just exactly what a number of children would buy for lunch. Any one who has ever watched the outpouring of children from a large school will realize how utterly impossible it is to keep any considerable number of them under observation. Like a great river that has broken its banks the human torrent rushes through the streets and crowds them awhile, then spreads far and wide. I found 14 children in a delicatessen store, 8 boys and 6 girls. Seven of them bought pickles and bread; 4 bought pickles only; 2 bought bologna sausage and rye bread, and 1 bought pickled fish and bread. In a

neighboring street I made similar observations one day during the summer. Out of 19 children 8 bought pickles, 2 of them with bread, the others without; 6 bought ice cream, 2 bought bananas, and 3 others bought candy. For the children of the poor there seems to be some strange fascination about pickles. One lad of ten said that he always bought pickles with his three cents. "I must have pickles," he said. It would seem that the chronic underfeeding creates a nervous craving for some kind of a stimulant which the child finds in pickles. The adult resorts to whiskey very often for much the same reason. There is every reason to believe that this malnutrition lays the foundation for inebriety in later years. The custom of giving the children money instead of prepared lunches is also responsible for a good deal of gambling, especially among the boys. Little Tony plays "craps" and loses his lunch, and the boy who wins gets a particularly big unwholesome "blow out," or adds a packet of cigarettes to his meal of pickles or cream puffs.

In one large school on the West Side the principal confidently declared that 10 per cent would be altogether too low an estimate of the number of badly underfed children in that school. "If you mean only the breakfastless ones," she said, "why, it is too high, but if you include those whose breakfasts are totally inadequate, and those who have no lunches,

those whose lunches at home are as inadequate as their breakfasts, and those who get only the bad things they buy for lunch — in a word, if you include all who suffer on account of defective, low nutrition, the estimate of 10 per cent is too low for this school. There are whole blocks in this district from which we scarcely get a child who is not, at some time or other in the course of a year, in want of food. The worst cases are in the primary grades, for many of the older children drop out. The boys find odd jobs to do, and the girls are needed at home to care for the smaller children." The population of this district is largely Irish and most of the men belong to that class of unskilled laborers which, more than any other industrial class, suffers from irregularity of employment. Many are longshoremen, others are truckmen, builders' laborers, and so on. No other class of workers suffers so much from what may be called accidental causes as this. A war in some far-away land may for a while seriously divert the stream of commerce, and the longshoreman of New York suffers unemployment and its attendant poverty; a strike of bricklayers or carpenters will throw the laborers and their families into the maws of all-devouring misery, or a week of bad weather may cause inexpressible hardship. When employment is steady the wages they receive are in most cases only sufficient to keep their families just above the line of

poverty; when there is sickness or unemployment, even for a couple of weeks, there is privation and the growth of a burden of debt which remains to crush them downward when wages begin to come in again. Want actually continues in such cases through what, judged by the wage standard, appears to be a time of normal prosperity. It is hardly to be wondered at that there is a good deal of intemperance and improvidence. These conditions are the economic soil in which intemperance, thriftlessness, and irresponsibility flourish.

In this district, with the coöperation of a well-trained and experienced woman investigator, a careful investigation of the condition of 50 families represented in the school was made. The number of children attending school from the 50 families was 79. Of that number there were 24 who had no breakfast of any kind on the days they were visited, while of the 55 more fortunate ones no less than 30 had only bread with tea or coffee. Only 35 of the children had any lunch, or money with which to procure any, 44 missing that meal entirely. Terrible as they are, these figures do not tell the whole story. It is impossible to appreciate what going without lunch means to these children unless we take into account the fact that those who go without lunch, and those who eat only the deleterious things they buy, are in most cases the same children who either go break-

fastless or have only bread and coffee day after day. And their evening meal is very often a repetition of the morning meal, bread and coffee or tea. From the schedule showing the actual dietary of the children in question contained in the report of my co-investigator I give, in the following table, the particulars relating to 6 families. They are perfectly typical cases and demonstrate very clearly the woful inadequacy of diet common to children of the poor.

Family	No. of School Children	Breakfast	Lunch	Supper
1	2	Bread and tea only.	None.	Bread and tea.
2	1	None.	Soup from charity.	Coffee and bread.
3	1	Coffee and rolls (no butter or jam).	Coffee and bread.	Tea and bread.
4	3	Bread and tea only.	None.	Bread and tea only.
5	2	None.	Soup with the soup-meat.	Piece of bread.
6	1	Bread and jam with coffee.	None.	Tea and bread with jam.

It is a horrible fact that many of these children whose diet is so unwholesome cannot eat decent food, even when they are most hungry. It is not merely a question of appetite, but of stomachs too weak by reason of chronic hunger and malnutrition to

stand good and nutritious food. This has been frequently observed in connection with Fresh Air Outings for poor children in the tenement districts. I have known scores of instances. Very often these children have to be patiently taught to eat. Sometimes it takes several days to induce them to take milk and eggs. They crave for their accustomed food — coffee and bread, or pickles. The same fact has been observed in connection with adults in the hospitals. When the Salvation Army started its free breakfast stations in New York, the newspapers made a good deal of the fact that the children refused to eat the good soup and milk porridge at first provided. That was regarded as conclusive evidence that they were not hungry, for a hungry child is supposed to eat almost anything. That is true in a measure of children who are merely hungry, but these children are more than hungry. They are weak and unhealthy as the result of chronic underfeeding. I myself saw many children at the Salvation Army free breakfast depots whose hunger was only too apparent try bravely to eat the soup until they actually vomited. They would beg for a piece of bread, and when it was given them eat it ravenously. In an uptown school a little English boy fainted one morning while at his lessons. He had fainted the day before in the school yard, but the teacher thought that it was due to overexertion while at play. When



A COSMOPOLITAN GROUP OF "FRESH AIR FUND" CHILDREN

he fainted the second time she took him to the principal's office, and they discovered that he had not eaten anything that day, and only a piece of bread the day before. The principal sent for some milk, and when it was warmed in the school kitchen she gave it to the lad with a couple of dainty chicken sandwiches from her own lunch, expecting him to enjoy a rare treat. But he didn't. He took only a bite or two and a sup of milk, then began to vomit. He could not be induced to eat any more nor even to drink the milk. Presently, however, he said to the teacher, "I think I could eat some bread, teacher," and when they sent out for some rolls and coffee he ate as though he had seen no food for a week. Very few people, it may be added, incidentally, realize how much the teachers and principals of schools in the poorest districts give out of their slender incomes to provide children with food, clothing, and shoes. But how little it all amounts to in the way of solving the problem is best expressed in the words of one principal, "What I can give in that way to the worst cases only lessens the evil in just the same degree as a handful of sands taken from the seashore lessens the number of grains."

VIII

The physical effects of such underfeeding cannot be easily overestimated. No fact has been more

thoroughly established than the physical superiority of the children of the well-to-do classes over their less fortunate fellows. In Moscow, N. V. Zark, a famous Russian authority, found that at all ages the boys attending the Real schools and the Classical Gymnasium are superior in height and weight to peasant boys.[14] In Leipzic, children paying 18 marks school fees are superior in height and weight to those paying only 9, and gymnasium boys are superior to those of the lower Real and Burger schools.[15] Studies in Stockholm and Turin show the same general results, the poorer children being invariably shorter, lighter, and smaller of chest. The British Anthropometric Committee found that English boys at ten in the Industrial Schools were 3.31 inches shorter and 10.64 pounds lighter than children of the well-to-do classes, while at fourteen years the differences in height and weight were 6.65 inches and 21.85 pounds, respectively.[16] Dr. Charles W. Roberts gives some striking results of the examination of 19,846 English boys and men.[17] Of these, 5915 belong to the non-laboring classes of the English population, namely, public school boys, naval and military cadets, medical and university students. The remaining 13,931 belong to the artisan class. The difference in height, weight, and chest girth, from thirteen to sixteen years of age, is as follows: —

AVERAGE HEIGHT IN INCHES

Age	13	14	15	16
Non-laboring class	58.79	61.11	63.47	66.40
Artisan class	55.93	57.76	60.58	62.93
Difference	2.66	3.35	2.89	3.47

AVERAGE WEIGHT IN POUNDS

Age	13	14	15	16
Non-laboring class	88.60	99.21	110.42	128.34
Artisan class	78.27	84.61	96.79	108.70
Difference	10.33	14.60	13.63	19.64

AVERAGE CHEST GIRTH IN INCHES

Age	13	14	15	16
Non-laboring class	28.41	29.65	30.72	33.08
Artisan class	25.24	26.28	27.51	28.97
Difference	3.17	3.37	3.21	4.11

It will be seen, therefore, that the children of the non-laboring class at thirteen years of age exceed those of the artisan class in height almost three inches, in weight almost ten and a half pounds, and in chest girth almost three and a quarter inches. And these figures by no means represent fully the contrast in physique which exists between the very poorest and

well-to-do children. The difference between the children of the best-paid artisans and the poorest-paid of the same class is nearly as great. Mr. Rowntree found that in York, England, the boys of the poorest section of the working-class were on an average three and one-half inches shorter than the boys of the better-paid section of the working-class. As regards weight Mr. Rowntree found the difference to be eleven pounds in favor of the child of the best-paid artisan.[18]

Dr. W. W. Keen quotes the figures of Roberts with approval as applying almost equally to this country,[19] and all the studies yet made by American investigators seem to justify that opinion. There exists a somewhat voluminous, but scattered, American literature tending to the same general conclusions as the European. The classic studies of Dr. Bowditch,[20] in Boston, and Dr. Porter,[21] in St. Louis, showed very distinctly that the children of the poorer classes in those cities were decidedly behind those of the well-to-do classes in both height and weight. The more recent investigations of Dr. Hrdlicka[22] fully bear out the results of these earlier studies.

The Report on Physical Training (Scotland) calls attention once more to the fact that children in the pauper, reformatory, and industrial schools are superior in physique to the children in the ordinary elementary schools. Says the report: "The contrast

between the condition of such children as are seen in the poor day schools and the children of parents who have altogether failed in their duty is both marked and painful." [23] Commenting upon which an English Socialist writer says: "The obvious deduction is that if you are doing your duty . . . and your children are brought up in the way they should go, they will not be half as well off as if they were truants or thieves. Therefore, . . . the best thing you can do for them . . . is to turn your children into little criminals." [24] Without accepting these cynical deductions, the fact remains that in a great many instances those children who, by reason of the criminality of their parents or their complete failure to provide for their offspring, find their way into such institutions, are far better off, physically, than their fellows in the ordinary schools whose parents are careful and industrious. But for the taint of institutional life, and the crushing out of individuality which almost invariably accompanies it, they would be far better equipped for the battle of life.

The real significance of this physical superiority is not so obvious as the writer quoted appears to assume. The fact is that these children are generally below the average even of their own class when they are admitted to these institutions. Their superior physique shows the regeneration which proper food and hygienic conditions produce in the worst cases.

IX

More than two thousand years ago Aristotle pointed out that physical health was the basis of mental health, and the importance of a sound physical development as an essential condition of successful education. "First the body must be trained and *then* the understanding," declared the great Stagirite. The "new spirit" of modern education is admirably expressed in the Aristotelian maxim. This new spirit is a protest against the practice, futile from the standpoint of society, and brutal from the standpoint of the child, of attempting to educate hungry, physically weak, and ill-developed children who are unfitted to bear the strain and effort involved in the educational process. No one who has studied the matter at all can doubt that the physical deterioration which accompanies the impoverishment of the workers is of tremendous significance educationally. All the evidence gathered upon the subject in Europe and this country tends to the conclusion that physical weakness and underdevelopment account for a very large percentage of our educational failures. The studies of Porter, in St. Louis, Smedley and Christopher, in Chicago, and of Professor Beyer, who is perhaps our greatest authority, all tend to confirm the results of European investigations, that children of superior physique make the best pupils. Dull,

backward pupils are generally inferior in physical development.[25]

The number of dull and backward children in our public schools is so great that a study from this physiological point of view would seem to be quite as desirable and important as the many exhaustive and valuable psychological studies with which the literature of Child Study abounds. For many years special tutorial methods and institutions have existed for idiot and feeble-minded children and such other classes of distinctly defective children as epileptics, the blind, the deaf, and the dumb. But it is only in recent years that any effort has been made to deal with that far larger class of children distinguished equally from these distinctly defective classes and from normal, typical children. These pseudo-atypical children, as Dr. Groszmann terms them, are much more numerous than is generally supposed. Professor Monroe, of Stanford University, gathered particulars relating to 10,000 children in the public schools of California and found that 3 per cent of the children were feeble-minded and not less than 10 per cent backward and mentally dull, needing special care and attention.[26] These children who "skirt the borderland of abnormity" cannot properly be dealt with in the ordinary classes, and it has been found necessary in most cities to establish special classes for their benefit. While some of these classes have children

whose backwardness is more apparent than real, the children of foreign immigrants, for example, whose difficulties with the language cause them to be placed in grades with much younger children, the problem is still serious when all possible allowance has been made for these. In districts where the number of foreign-born children is very small the percentage of backward children is very great. The percentage found in the schools of California by Professor Monroe is probably not too high for the country as a whole. In a general way it corroborates the findings of European investigators, and a number of educators to whom I submitted the question have given estimates based upon their personal observations ranging from 10 to 15 per cent.

If we accept the California figures and apply them to the whole country, we get a total of about 1,500,000 such children enrolled in the public schools, for not more than one-fourth of whom has any special provision been made or attempted. The seriousness of this aspect of the problem will be apparent to teachers and others familiar with school work who know how seriously 1 or 2 such children in a class of 40 or 50 will impair the efficiency of the teacher's efforts. By reason of their dulness and slow mental action such children absorb too much of the teacher's time, which might more profitably be spent upon other children, and thus act as a drag upon all the members of the class.

Moreover, they become discouraged by their failures, and, hardened by constant rebuke and the taunts of their brighter companions, finally careless, defiant, and altogether incorrigible. In many cases they leave school before they are of the legal age, their leaving welcomed, and often suggested, by the teachers, who not unnaturally tire of the hindrance to their work. Yet they are the very children who can least of all afford to miss whatever education they are capable of. They, more than any others, need the training and development of their minds to fit them for the battle of life. How can they otherwise be expected to earn their daily bread in the competitive labor market, where dulness of brain must inevitably prove a serious handicap? And unless they can stand the test of that competition, they must become paupers. Many of these children are taken away from school and sent to work, because, their parents say, "they can't learn and are better helping to pay the rent than wasting their time in school." In connection with the movement for the prevention of child labor, we have come across hundreds of instances of this kind. Factory inspectors and physicians in industrial centres where child labor is prevalent have frequently pointed out that a very large number of child workers are quite unfit for work. They were sick and backward in school, and instead of that special care being given them which their

condition demanded in order that they might be equipped for the struggle for existence, they were removed altogether from the school's influences and subjected to conditions which tend to further deterioration, physical, mental, and moral.[27]

So that the problem is not merely one of economic waste represented by a fruitless and vain expenditure for the education of children who are not capable of benefiting by it. It is not merely a question of economic waste added to educational failure and the peril to society which that failure must involve in the crime which ignorance breeds and fosters. All these things are involved, and, in addition to them, is involved the terrible fact that we turn them adrift in the world, unfit for its service and unable to adjust themselves to its needs. In the very nature of things, because they are ill developed of body and mind, they must become industrially inefficient. They sink from depth to depth in the industrial abyss,

"To endure wrongs darker than death or night."

Where giant machines, inventors' brains, and ambitious immigrants in countless numbers all conspire to narrow the labor market, they are ruthlessly thrust aside. They are not only unemployed but unemployable. They become paupers, driven into the morass of pauperism by forces that are practically, for them, irresistible. Thus is the problem of

pauperism perpetuating itself. And to the economic waste represented by the expenditure upon them in the schools must be added the further cost of their support as dependants and paupers. It is a vicious circle.

X

That these same conditions are a fruitful source of criminality is unquestionable. All our studies of juvenile delinquency point to the fact that a very large proportion of the children who become truants, moral perverts, and criminals are drawn from this same class of physically degenerate children. It is commonplace nowadays to say that many of our criminals are not really criminals at all, but the victims of physical or mental abnormalities, often directly traceable to low nutrition. In observing a number of juvenile delinquents the proportion of ill-developed children is generally noticeable. Professor G. Stanley Hall says, "Juvenile criminals, as a class, are inferior in body and mind to normal children, and . . . their social environment is no less inferior." [28] Professor Dawson found among boys and girls in reformatory institutions a tendency to lighter weight, shorter stature, and less strength of grip; 16 per cent of them being "clearly sufferers from low nutrition." [29] Professor Kline has shown the same general condition in a striking study, and concludes that "low nutrition breeds discontent and a tendency to

run away."[30] A mass of very similar testimony might be cited from the records of the most competent investigators in this and other countries. It is the universal experience that a low standard of physical development is almost invariably associated with low mental and moral standards.

It is no mere coincidence that inferiority of physique should be thus universally and inseparably associated with inferiority of economic condition. It is not a mere coincidence that superiority of physique should be generally associated with mental superiority. Nor will the suggestion of coincidence suffice to explain the universal association of low physical and mental development with criminal propensities. These facts possess a very definite, and very obvious, relation as cause and effect. The three main divisions of degeneracy, physical, mental, and moral, are inseparable and spring from the same causes. From the investigations which have been made in this country and from the voluminous literature upon the subject which similar investigations in European countries have produced, I am satisfied that poor, defective nutrition lies at the root of the physical degeneration of the poor; and *a priori* reasoning would justify the conclusion that the mental degeneracy evidenced by the enormous number of backward children, educational failures, and the moral degeneracy evidenced by increasing juvenile delin-

quency and crime, are due to the same fundamental cause. From those data alone we might, with ample justification, adopt the words of a famous authority and say, "Defective nutrition lies at the base of all forms of degeneracy." [31] We need not, however, rely upon this method, for there is no lack of direct testimony to show that low nutrition is the prime and most fruitful cause of mental dulness and its attendant evils.

I do not wish to be understood as contending that physical, mental, or moral defects never exist except as a result of defective nutrition, or that malnutrition never exists except as a result of poverty. I know, for instance, that a great many children are backward in their studies because they are handicapped by defects of vision or hearing, adenoid growths, and the like. These are often easily curable, and the fitting of proper glasses, or the removal of adenoid growths by slight surgical operations, suffice to bring such children up to the standard of normality. In an examination of over 7000 children in New York public schools one-third were found to have "defects of vision, interfering with the proper pursuit of their studies." [32] In such cases malnutrition may or may not be the initial cause. That defective vision is often attributable to low and improper nutrition is beyond question. My contention is that the vast majority of dull and backward children, whose num-

ber makes a serious pedagogical problem, and a still more serious social problem in that so many of them become either inefficient and dependent, or criminal, are dull and backward as a result of physical inferiority directly traceable to poor and inadequate feeding.

A striking evidence of the association of underfeeding and mental dulness is afforded by the coincidence of numbers in the two classes wherever careful, expert investigations have been made. More than twenty years ago, as a result of some discussion upon the subject in the House of Commons, Dr. Crichton-Browne, the famous English authority upon mental diseases, prepared, at the request of the then vice-president of the Committee of Council on Education, Mr. Mundella, a report upon the physical and mental condition of the children in the elementary schools of London.[33] In that report Dr. Crichton-Browne pointed out that dulness, "sudden failure of intellect and languor of manner," so prevalent among poorer children, were generally associated with hunger and semi-starvation. Later, the British Medical Association appointed a committee consisting of Drs. Hack Tuke, D. E. Shuttleworth, Fletcher Beach, and Francis Warner. They visited 14 schools scattered over a wide area and having a total enrolment of about 5000 children. For the purposes of examination 809 children were selected, of which number 231 were classed in the report as being men-

tally dull, and 184 as showing evident signs of defective nutrition. The report adds, "We do not suppose that we noted defective nutrition in all cases in which it may have been present." Very often the conditions noted are coexistent, so a careful analysis of the figures was made, with the result that of the cases of mental dulness 28.50 per cent were found to be among those reported as suffering from defective nutrition, and the same proportion of mentally dull included in the cases of defective nutrition.[34] In the examination of the 7000 New York public school children already referred to, Dr. Cronin found 650 cases of "bad mentality" and 632 cases of "bad nutrition." Similar investigations in several European cities, notably Turin, Christiania, and Paris, show very similar results.

More conclusive still is the testimony of experience in cases where school meals have been introduced. In 1883 Mr. Mundella, M.P., introducing the education estimates in the House of Commons, described an experiment which was being carried on in the elementary schools at Rousden by Sir Henry Peek in the way of providing a cheap, wholesome, and nutritious midday meal for the children. The cost of the meals was, according to Mr. Mundella, who spoke from a statement furnished by Sir Henry Peek himself, less than two and a half cents per meal, five meals costing twelve cents. The school inspectors testified

that the results had been eminently satisfactory "both from a physical and educational point of view." The meals proved to be an incentive to more regular attendance and, by providing the children with the requisite stamina, increased their mental efficiency, the result being an increased average of passes in the government examination upon which the governmental grants-in-aid were based.[35] In the following year, 1884, Mr. Jonathan Taylor, a prominent member of the Social Democratic Federation, induced the Sheffield School Board to introduce a system of providing cheap school dinners. It was found that a good, substantial meal, which Mr. Taylor describes as "sufficient in quantity and excellent in quality, and forming such a dinner as satisfies myself, and which the teachers in the schools are in the habit of partaking of along with the children," could be provided at a cost of less than two cents per capita, that sum including the cost of fuel, cook's wages, and other working expenses. While, as the committee in charge reported to the school board, it was soon found that there were a large number of children who could not afford even two cents for a meal, the results of the experiment speedily manifested themselves in a marked physical and mental improvement in the children. It was particularly demonstrated that children who were formerly dull and backward showed much improvement in their work after they had par-

taken regularly of the school dinners for a short time.[37] During the twenty years which have elapsed since these initial experiments were made, many similar schemes have been introduced in British schools, and in every case so far as I have been able to ascertain the facts, there has been a marked improvement in the physical and mental condition of the children affected.

Mrs. Humphry Ward has given a most interesting account of an experiment in a "Special School for Defectives" at Tavistock Place, London, the pioneer school of its kind in London. That it is a special school for physically defective children does not detract from the importance of the results noted. For some time there had been an arrangement whereby the children were provided with a midday meal for which their parents were charged three cents a day, the deficit being met by the managers from the school fund. Complaint was made by some of the visitors interested in the experiment that the meals were not good enough, not sufficiently nourishing for children of that class, and the managers were prevailed upon to improve the dietary to a considerable extent. Mrs. Ward says: "The experiment of a more liberal and varied diet was tried. More hot meat, more eggs, milk, cream, vegetables, and fruit were given. In consequence the children's appetites largely increased, and the expense naturally increased

with them. The children's pence in May amounted to £3 13*s.* 6*d.* ($17.64), and the cost of the food was £4 7*s.* 2*d.* ($20.92); in June, after the more liberal scale had been adopted, the children's payments were still £3 13*s.* 10*d.* ($17.72), but the expenses had risen to £5 7*s.* 8*d.* ($25.84). Meanwhile the physical and mental results of the increased expenditure are already unmistakable. Partially paralyzed children have been recovering strength in hands and limbs with greater rapidity than before. . . . The effect, indeed, is startling to those who have watched the experiment. Meanwhile, the teachers have entered in the log-book of the school their testimony to the increased power of work that the children have been showing since the new feeding has been adopted. Hardly any child now wants to lie down during school time, whereas applications to lie down used to be common; and the children *both learn and remember better.*" [37]

In Birmingham, England, a voluntary organization started by the chairman of the School Board, Mr. George Dixon, provides meals during the winter months for something like 2500 children. This committee provides a dinner, absolutely free of cost to the child, consisting principally of lentil soup and bread and jam. The cost to the organization, according to Dr. Airy, H.M.I., who gave testimony before the Inter-Departmental Committee,[38] is less than one

cent per meal inclusive, the manager's present salary being $500 per year. Formerly it was $750, but he voluntarily accepted the reduction to $500 when subscriptions began to fall off. Dr. Airy explained to the committee that the 2500 children thus fed by this charity constitute about $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent of the child population of the entire city. No attempt whatever is made to deal with any children except those who are known to be "practically starving," the far larger number of children who, while being underfed and seriously so, still get some sort of food, enough to keep them from absolute destitution, being in no way provided for. One reason for the low standard of meals given is the desire of the committee to make them as unattractive as possible, so that few children will eat the dinners except absolutely forced by sheer hunger. Another reason I give in full from the "minutes of evidence" because of its bearing upon a phase of the problem already noted. Dr. Airy was asked concerning the lentil soup, "Is there any animal stock in it?" and replied: "Yes, there is a certain amount, but not very much. It has been found by incessant experiment — because this is an experimental business year by year — that lentil soup was the best. *A starving child cannot take anything good; its stomach rejects it at once. We gave far too good soup at first. It had to be found out by experiment what they would stand.*" [39] There is another

charity in Birmingham which provides breakfasts of bread and cocoa and milk to practically the same class of destitute children. Several teachers and others connected with educational work in Birmingham have, in response to my inquiries, assured me that notwithstanding the fact that the quality of meals given is so poor, and that only the very lowest class of children is touched by the charity, there has been a marked improvement in the mental capacity of the children. One of the teachers, in a personal letter, says: "Of course, I have no means of proving it statistically for you; our facilities for child study do not include any system of individual record books, by which method alone, it seems to me, could statistical data be gathered. But I know personally several children who have been in my own class in whom the mental improvement consequent upon their improved diet has been most marked. If observation counts for anything at all, and I suppose it does, I have no hesitation in saying that the mental improvement in a large number of children has been simply marvellous."

In Norway it has been for several years the custom of the school authorities in several municipalities to provide, free of charge, a good dinner for all school children who care to avail themselves of it. The dinners are prepared in a central kitchen-station and sent out in boxes to the various schools, special

appliances being used to keep the meals hot. The dinners consist usually of soup, porridge, meat, vegetables, and bread for the ordinary children, and a special dietary for weak, sick, or defective children.[40] This system of free dinners was introduced as a result of a series of experiments made in Christiania. It was found that the number of backward, dull children who came from the poorer districts was much higher than elsewhere, and that they were, as a rule, inferior in physical development. So great was the progress made by the children in several classes in which the experiment of giving them one good meal each day was tried that the school authorities were induced to introduce the system generally into the schools. A member of the Municipal Council of Trondhjem says, speaking of the free school dinner system, "Norway now interprets civilization to mean that society must conspire to save its children from the hostile forces of unequal economic conditions, and to secure for them equal opportunities and helpful conditions for the development of their highest and best gifts."

As a result of a careful study of the problem of how best to deal with the backward child, and a comparison of her own observations with those of teachers and others in Norway and France (where the *cantines scolaires* have been attended with results very similar to those attained in Norway), a New

York teacher in charge of a large class of such children decided to try the experiment of feeding them.[41] "To build up their intellects is the task we have to accomplish," she said to the writer, "and I have found that that can best be done through building up their bodies first and so securing a decent physical basis to work upon." The children contribute a cent each per day to a fund administered by the teacher, who provides each child with a cup of warm milk every morning in the middle of the session. Should any child for any reason be unable to contribute its share, it is not deprived of the milk on that account, the small deficit being made up out of the teacher's own purse. In addition to the milk the children get such of the products of the cooking classes as are suitable for them, three days a week. It is a small experiment, too small indeed to justify any sweeping generalization from it, but it is nevertheless important in that it confirms fully the experience of foreign investigators that a very large proportion of the children who are mentally dull need only to be properly fed in order to enable their minds to develop normally.

A somewhat similar method of feeding the children has been tried for three years at Speyer School, the practice and experimental school of Teachers College, Columbia University.[42] The children of the lower grades are supplied with milk and crackers at



"FRESH AIR FUND" CHILDREN FROM CITY TENEMENTS ENJOYING LIFE IN THE COUNTRY

ten o'clock in the morning, and "the teachers are unanimous in the statement that the children are all happier and more able to work" in consequence of being fed. These various experiments demonstrate beyond question that underfeeding is responsible for much of the mental degeneracy among school children and the resulting failure of so many of them to profit by the education which we provide for them. More than that, they point unerringly to the remedy.

XI

Summarizing, briefly, the results of this investigation, the problem of poverty as it affects school children may be stated in a few lines. All the data available tend to show that not less than 2,000,000 children of school age in the United States are the victims of poverty which denies them common necessities, particularly adequate nourishment. As a result of this privation they are far inferior in physical development to their more fortunate fellows. This inferiority of physique, in turn, is responsible for much mental and moral degeneration. Such children are in very many cases incapable of successful mental effort, and much of our national expenditure for education is in consequence an absolute waste. With their enfeebled bodies and minds we turn these children adrift unfitted for the struggle of life, which tends to become keener with every advance in our

industrial development, and because of their lack of physical and mental training they are found to be inefficient industrially and dangerous socially. They become dependent, paupers, and the procreators of a pauper and dependent race.

Here, then, is a problem of awful magnitude. In the richest country on earth hundreds of thousands of children are literally damned to lifelong, helpless, and debasing poverty. They are plunged in the earliest and most important years of character formation into that terrible maelstrom of poverty which casts so many thousands, ay, millions, of physical, mental, and moral wrecks upon the shores of our social life. For them there is little or no hope of escape from the blight and curse of pauperism unless the nation, pursuing a policy of enlightened self-interest and protection, decides to save them. In the main, this vast sum of poverty is due to causes of a purely impersonal nature which the victims cannot control, such as sickness, accident, low wages, and unemployment. Personal causes, such as ignorance, thriftlessness, gambling, intemperance, indolence, wife-desertion, and other vices or weaknesses, are also responsible for a good deal of poverty, though by no means most of it as is sometimes urged by superficial observers. There are many thousands of temperate and industrious workers who are miserably poor, and many of those who are thriftless

or intemperate are the victims of poverty's degenerating influences.[43] But whether a child's hunger and privation is due to some fault of its parents or to causes beyond their control, the fact of its suffering remains, and its impaired physical and mental strength tends almost irresistibly to make it inefficient as a citizen. Whatever the cause, therefore, of its privation, society must, as a measure of self-protection, take upon itself the responsibility of caring for the child.

There can be no compromise upon this vital point. Those who say that society should refuse to do anything for those children who are the victims of their parents' vices or weaknesses adopt a singularly indefensible attitude. In the first place it is barbarously unjust to allow the sins of the parents to bring punishment and suffering upon the child, to damn the innocent and unoffending. No more vicious doctrine than this, which so many excellent and well-intentioned persons are fond of preaching, has ever been formulated by human perversity. Carried to its logical end, it would destroy all legislation for the protection of children from cruel parents or guardians. It is strange that the doctrinaire advocates of this brutal gospel should overlook its practical consequences. If discrimination were to be made at all, it should be in favor of, rather than against, the children of drunken and profligate

parents. For these children have a special claim upon society for protection from wrongs in the shape of influences injurious to their physical and moral well-being, and tending to lead them into evil and degrading ways. The half-starved child of the inebriate is not less entitled to the protection of society than the victim of inhuman physical torture.

Should these children be excluded from any system of feeding adopted by the state upon the ground that their parents have not fulfilled their parental responsibilities, society joins in a conspiracy against their very lives. And that conspiracy ultimately and inevitably involves retribution. In the interests and name of a beguiling economy, fearful that if it assumes responsibility for the care of the child of inebriate parents, it will foster and encourage their inebriety and neglect, society leaves the children surrounded by circumstances which practically force them to become drunkards, physical and moral wrecks, and procreators of a like degenerate progeny. *Then* it is forced to accept the responsibility of their support, either as paupers or criminals. That is the stern Nemesis of retribution. Where an enlightened system of child saving has been followed, this principle has been clearly recognized. In Minnesota, for example, the state assumes the responsibility for the care of such children as a matter of self-protection. To quote the language of a report of the

State Public School at Owatonna: "It is for economic as well as for humane reasons that this work is done. The state is thus protecting itself from dangers to which it would be exposed in a very few years if these children were reared in the conditions which so injuriously affect them." [44] Whatever steps may be taken to punish, or make responsible to the state, those parents who by their vice and neglect bring suffering and want upon their children, the children themselves should be saved.

To the contention that society, having assumed the responsibility of insisting that every child shall be educated, and providing the means of education, is necessarily bound to assume the responsibility of seeing that they are made fit to receive that education, so far as possible, there does not seem to be any convincing answer. It will be objected that for society to do this would mean the destruction of the responsibility of the parents. That is obviously true. But it is equally true of education itself, the responsibility for which society has assumed. Some individualists there are who contend that society is wrong in doing this, and their opposition to the proposal that it should undertake to provide the children with food is far more logical than that of those who believe that society should assume the responsibility of educating the child, but not that of equipping it with the necessary physical basis for that education.

'The fact is that society insists upon the education of the children, not, primarily, in their interests nor in the interests of the parents, but in its own. All legislation upon child labor, education, child guardianship in general, is based upon a denial of proprietary rights to children by their parents. The child belongs to society rather than to its parents.

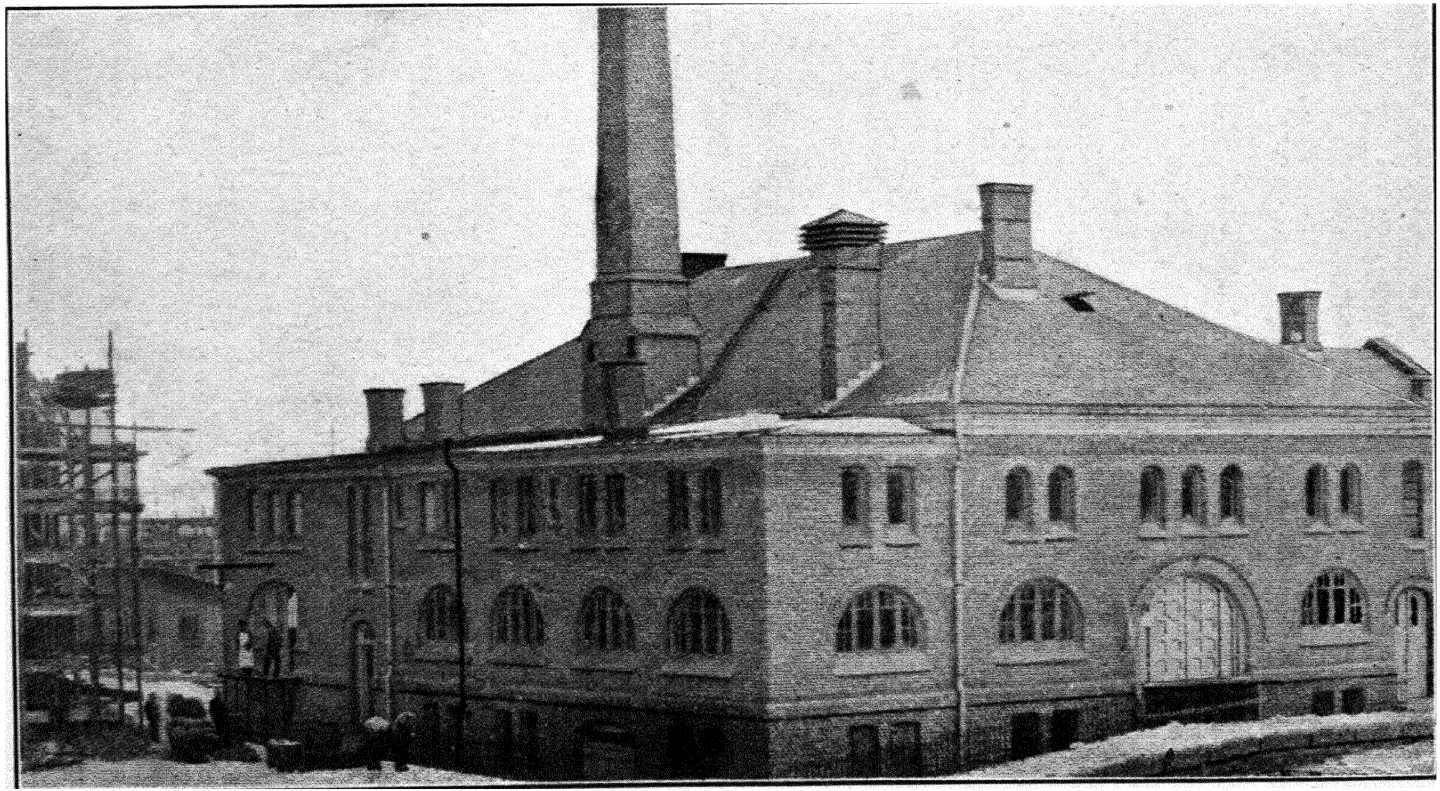
Further, private charity, which is the only alternative suggestion offered for the solution of this problem, equally removes responsibility from the parents and is open to other weightier objections. In the first place, where it succeeds, it is far more demoralizing than such a system of public support provided at the public cost, as the child's birthright, could possibly be. Still more important is the fact that private charity does not succeed in the vast majority of instances. To their credit, it must be remembered that the poor as a class refuse to beg or to parade their poverty. They suffer in silence and never seek alms. Pride and the shame of begging seal their lips. Here, too, the question of the children of inebriate, dissolute, worthless parents enters. Every one who has had the least experience of charitable work knows that these are the persons who are most relieved by charity. They do not hesitate to plead for charity. "I have not strength to dig; to beg I am ashamed," is the motto of the self-respecting, silent, suffering poor. The failure of

charity is incontestable. As some witty Frenchman has well said, "Charity creates one-half the misery she relieves, but cannot relieve one-half the misery she creates."

It is impossible to enter here into a discussion of the question of cost, but the argument that society could not afford to undertake this further responsibility must be briefly considered. In view of our well-nigh boundless resources there is small reason for the belief that we cannot provide for the needs of all our children. If it were true that we could not provide for their necessities, then wholesale death would be merciful and desirable. At any rate, it would be far better to feed them first, neglecting their education altogether, than to waste our substance in the brutally senseless endeavor to educate them while they starve and pine for bread. There can be little doubt that the economic waste involved in fruitless charity, and the still vaster waste involved in the maintenance of the dependent and criminal classes whose degeneracy is mainly attributable to underfeeding in childhood, amount to a sum far exceeding the cost of providing adequate nutrition for every child. It is essentially a question of the proper adjustment of our means to our needs. Otherwise we must admit the utter failure of our civilization and confess that, in the language of Sophocles, it is

"Happiest beyond compare
Never to taste of life;
Happiest in order next,
Being born, with quickest speed
Thither again to turn
From whence we came."*

* *Œdipus Coloneus.*



COMMUNAL SCHOOL KITCHEN, WHERE THE SCHOOL MEALS ARE PREPARED, CHRISTIANIA, NORWAY

III

THE WORKING CHILD

"In this boasted land of freedom there are bonded baby slaves,
And the busy world goes by and does not heed.
They are driven to the mill, just to glut and overfill
Bursting coffers of the mighty monarch, Greed.
When they perish we are told it is God's will,
Oh, the roaring of the mill, of the mill!"

— Ella Wheeler Wilcox.

I

It is a startling and suggestive fact that the very force which Aristotle, the profoundest thinker of antiquity, regarded as the only agency through which the abolition of slavery might be made possible, served, when at last it was evolved, not to destroy slavery, but to extend it; to enslave in a new form of bondage those who hitherto had been free. Aristotle regarded slavery as a basic institution and saw no possible means whereby it might ever be dispensed with, "except perhaps by the aid of machines." He said, "If every tool . . . could do the work that befits it, just as the creations of Dædalus moved of themselves, or the tripods of Hephæstos went of their own accord; if the weavers' shuttles were to weave of themselves, then there would be

no need of apprentices for the master workers, or slaves for the lords." [1] When more than two thousand years had passed, a machine, a wonderful, complex tool, almost literally fulfilling his conditions, was invented.

We speak of the power-loom as Cartwright's invention, but in truth it was the joint production of numberless inventors, most of them unknown to history, and some of whom lived and labored long before Aristotle sat at Plato's feet in the great school at Athens. Looking at a modern power-loom in one of our great factories not long ago, I asked the name of the inventor, which was readily enough given. But as I watched the marvellous mechanism with its many wheels, levers, and springs, I wondered how much of it could be said to have had its origin in the brain of the inventor in question. Who invented the wheel, the lever, the spring? Who invented the first rude loom, reproduced, in principle, in the wonderful looms of the twentieth century? No man knows. We do not know the name of the inventor of the loom figured in all its details upon the tomb of the ancient Egyptian at Beni Hassan;[2] we do not know who invented the loom which the Greek vase of 400 B.C. depicts, — a loom which, so William Morris tells us, is in all respects like those in use in Iceland and the Faroe Islands in the latter half of the nineteenth century.[3] Many thousands of

years ago, in the simple tribal communism of primitive man, the great bed-rock inventions were evolved. Thousands of years of human experience led up to the ribbon-loom which, in the early part of the sixteenth century, brought sentence of death upon the poor inventor of Danzig [4] whose very name has been forgotten. This ribbon-loom was a near approach to the wonderful tool of which Aristotle dreamed as the liberator of enslaved man.

The work of improvement went on, and the power-loom came; "weavers' shuttles were to weave of themselves" in a well-nigh literal sense. The great machine tool became an accomplished fact. It had been forged upon the anvil of human necessity through countless centuries. But the revolution it wrought, or, rather, the revolution of which it was the expression, was not a revolution of liberation. A hundred and twenty years have elapsed since then, and still the prophecy of freedom has not been fulfilled; there are still "slaves for the lords."

> "Fast and faster, our iron master,
> The thing we made, for ever drives,
> Bids us grind treasure and fashion pleasure,
> For other hopes and other lives."

Children have always worked, but it is only since the reign of the machine that their work has been synonymous with slavery. Under the old form of simple, domestic industry even the very young

children were assigned their share of the work in the family. But this form of child labor was a good and wholesome thing. There may have been abuses; children may have suffered from the ignorance, cupidity, and brutality of fathers and mothers, but in the main the child's share in the work of the family was a good thing. In the first place, the child was associated in its work with one or both of its parents, and thus kept under all those influences which we deem of most worth, the influences of home and parental care. Secondly, the work of the child constituted a major part of its education. And it was no mean education, either, which gave the world generation after generation of glorious craftsmen. The seventeenth-century glass-blower of Venice or Murano, for instance, learned his craft from his father in this manner, and in turn taught it to his son. There was a bond of interest between them; a parental pride and interest on the part of the father infinitely greater and more potent for good than any commercial relation would have allowed. On the part of the child, too, there was a filial pride and devotion which found its expression in a spirit of emulation, the spirit out of which all the rich glory of that wonderfully rich craft was born. So, too, it was with the potters of ancient Greece, and with the tapestry weavers of fourteenth-century France. In the golden age of the craftsman, child

labor was child training in the noblest and best sense. The training of hand and heart and brain was the end achieved, even where it was not the sole purpose of the child's labor.

But with the coming of the machine age all this was changed. The craftsman was supplanted by the tireless, soulless machine. The child still worked, but in a great factory throbbing with the vibration of swift, intricate machines. In place of parental interest and affection there was the harsh, pitiless authority of an employer or his agent, looking, not to the child's well-being and skill as an artificer, but to the supplying of a great, ever widening market for cash gain.

It is not without its significance that the ribbon-loom which in the latter part of the seventeenth century caused the workmen of England to riot, the same machine which, later, was publicly burnt in Hamburg by order of the Senate, should have been described as "enabling a totally inexperienced boy" to set the whole loom with all its shuttles in motion, "by simply moving a rod backwards and forwards."[5] It was as though the new mechanical invention had been designed with the express purpose of laying the burden of the world's work upon child shoulders; as though some evil genius had deliberately contrived that the nation of progress should

"— Stand, to move the world, on a child's heart."

II

There is no more terrible page in history than that which records the enslavement of mere babies by the industrial revolution of the eighteenth century in England. Not even the crucifixion of twenty thousand slaves along the highways by Scipio excels it in horror.

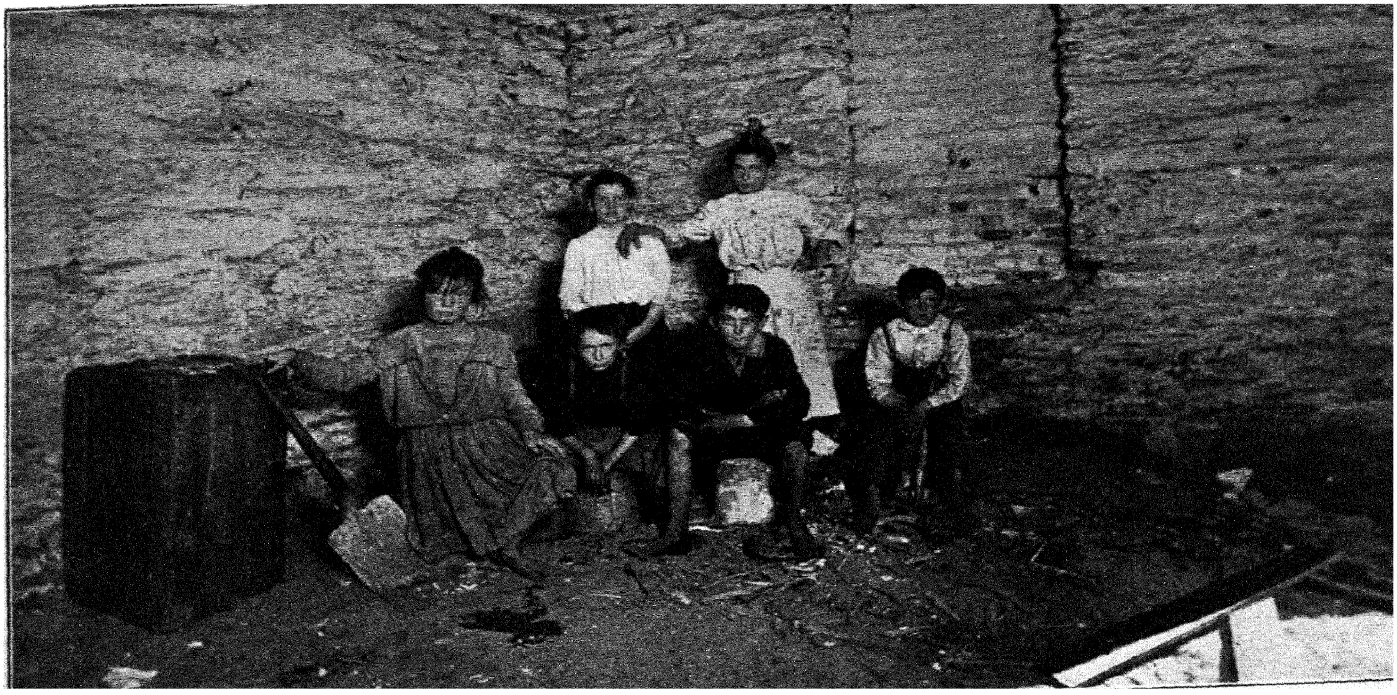
Writing in 1795, Dr. Aikin gives a vivid account of the evils which had already been introduced in the factory districts by the new system of manufacture.[6] He mentions the destruction of the best features of home life, the spread of filth, thriftlessness, poverty, and disease, and says that the demand for "children for the cotton mills" had become very great. To get children for the cotton mills was not easy at first. Parental love and pride were ranged against the new system, denying its demands. Accustomed to the old domestic system, the association of all the members of the family in manufacture as part of the domestic life, they regarded the new industrial forms with repugnance. It was considered a degradation for a child to be sent into the factories, especially for a girl, whose whole life would be blasted thereby. The term "factory girl" was an insulting epithet, and the young woman who bore it could not hope for other, better employment, nor yet for marriage with any but the very lowest and despised

of men. Not till they were forced by sheer hunger and misery, through the reduction of wages to the level of starvation, could the respectable workers be induced to send their children into the factories. In the meantime they made war upon the "iron men," as the machines were called, but of course in vain. To such a conflict there could be only one end, — human beings of flesh and blood could not prevail against the iron monsters, their competitors.

But the manufacturers wanted children, and they got them from the workhouses. It was not difficult to persuade Bumbledom to get rid of its pauper children, especially when its conscience was salved by the specious pretext that the children were to be taught new trades, as apprentices. "Alfred," the anonymous author of the *History of the Factory Movement*,[7] gives a thrilling description of the horrible inhumanity and wickedness of this practice of sending parish apprentices, "without remorse or inquiry, to be *used up* as the cheapest raw material in the market." The mill owners would first communicate with the overseers of the poor, and the latter would fix suitable dates for the manufacturers or their agents to examine the children. Those chosen were then conveyed to their destination, closely packed in wagons or canal-boats. Thenceforth they were doomed to the most miserable slavery. A class of "traffickers" in child slaves arose.

These men made a profitable business of supplying children to the manufacturers. They deposited their victims in dark, dank cellars, where the sales to the manufacturers or their agents were made. "The mill owners, by the light of lanterns being able to examine the children, their limbs and stature having undergone the necessary scrutiny, the bargain was struck, and these poor innocents were conveyed to the mills." Their plight was appalling. They received no wages, and they were so cheap, their places so easily filled, that the mill owners did not even take the trouble to give them decent food or clothing. "In stench, in heated rooms, amid the whirling of a thousand wheels, little fingers and little feet were kept in ceaseless action, forced into unnatural activity by blows from the heavy hands and feet of the merciless overlooker, and the infliction of bodily pain by instruments of punishment invented by the sharpened ingenuity of insatiable selfishness."

Robert Blincoe, himself an apprentice who, at seven years of age, was sent from a London workhouse to a cotton mill near Nottingham, gives a harrowing but well-authenticated account of actual experience.[8] He tells how the apprentices used to be fed upon the same coarse food as that given to the master's pigs, and how he and his fellow-victims used joyfully to say when they saw the swine being fed, "The pigs are served; it will be our turn next."



NEW YORK CELLAR PRISONERS

These children were found by Settlement Workers in New York City. Illegally employed, they were never allowed to go out of doors, their only recreation being taken in a dark, filthy cellar.

. . . "When the swine were hungry," he says, "they used to grunt so loud, they obtained the wash first to quiet them. The apprentices could be intimidated, and made to keep still." Blincoe describes how, for fattening, the pigs were often given meat balls, or dumplings, in their wash, and how he and the other apprentices who were kept near the pigsties used to slip away and slyly steal as many of these dumplings from the pigs as possible, hastening away with them to a hiding-place, where they were greedily devoured. "The pigs . . . learned from experience to guard their food by various expedients. Made wise by repeated losses, they kept a sharp lookout, and the moment they ascertained the approach of the half-famished apprentices, they set up so loud a chorus of snorts and grunts, it was heard in the kitchen, when out rushed the swineherd, armed with a whip, from which combined means of protection for the swine this accidental source of obtaining a good dinner was soon lost. Such was the contest carried on for some time at Litton Mill between the half-famished apprentices and the well-fed swine."

The children were worked sixteen hours at a stretch, by day and by night. They slept by turns and relays in beds that were never allowed to cool, one set being sent to bed as soon as the others had gone to their toil. Children of both sexes and all ages, from five years upward, were indiscriminately herded together,

with the result that vice and disease flourished. Sometimes the unfortunate victims would try to run away, and to prevent this all who were suspected of such a tendency had irons riveted on their ankles with long links reaching up to their hips. In these chains they were compelled to work and sleep, young women and girls as well as boys. Many children contrived to commit suicide, some were unquestionably beaten to death; the death-rate became so great that it became the custom to bury the bodies at night, secretly, lest a popular uprising be provoked.[9]

Worse still, the cupidity of British Bumbledom was aroused, and it became the custom for overseers of the poor to insist that one imbecile child at least should be taken by the mill owner, or the trafficker, with every batch of twenty children. In this manner the parish got rid of the expense of maintaining its idiot children. What became of these unhappy idiots will probably never be known, but from the cruel fate of the children who were sane, we may judge how awful that of the poor imbeciles must have been.

Even in the one factory of the time which was heralded as a model for the manufacturers to copy, the mill at New Lanark, Scotland, owned by Mr. David Dale and afterward made famous by the great and good Robert Owen, his son-in-law, conditions were, from a twentieth-century point of view, simply

shocking, despite the fact that it was the subject of glowing praise in the *Annual Register* for 1792, and that, like some of our modern factories, it had become generally regarded as a semi-philanthropic establishment. Robert Owen tells us in his autobiography that "children were received as early as six years old, the pauper authorities declining to send them at any later age." These little children worked from six in the morning till seven in the evening, *and after that they were supposed to be educated!* "The poor children hated their slavery; many absconded; . . . at thirteen or fifteen years old, when their apprenticeship expired, they commonly went off to Edinburgh or Glasgow, . . . altogether admirably trained for swelling the mass of vice and misery in the towns."[10] And all this while British philanthropists were agitating the question of negro emancipation, and raising funds for that object!

Thanks, mainly, to the agitation of Owen, a movement was begun to endeavor to improve the lot of these little child slaves. This movement received a tremendous impetus from the fearful epidemic which, in 1799–1800, spread through the factory districts of Manchester and the surrounding country. An inquiry into the causes of this epidemic ascribed it to overwork, scant and poor food, wretched clothing, bad ventilation, and overcrowding, especially among the children.[11] As a result the first act for

the protection of child workers was passed through the parliamentary exertions of Sir Robert Peel, himself a master manufacturer. It was a very small measure of relief which this act afforded, but it is nevertheless a most important statute to students of industrial legislation as the "first definitely in restraint of modern factory labor and in general opposition to the *laissez-faire* policy in industry."[12] It was the first factory act ever passed by the British Parliament. It placed no limit upon the age at which children might be employed; it applied only to apprentices, and not to children "under the supervision of their parents;" it reduced the hours of labor to twelve per day, and provided for the clothing, instruction, and religious training of the children. These provisions were clearly a survival of an industrial system based upon paternal interest and authority.

One immediate effect of the act of 1802 was the practical break-up of the pauper apprentice system. But it must be remembered that this system was already outworn, and it is extremely improbable that it would have continued to any great extent, even if the act of 1802 had not been passed. It had served its purpose, but was no longer essential to the manufacturers.[13] Notwithstanding that it introduced a revolutionary principle, as we have seen, the act excited no opposition from the manufacturers.

The reason for this is not difficult to determine. Wages had been forced down to the starvation level through the competition of the pauper apprentices with free, adult labor, with the result that poverty abounded. Parents were ready now to send their children into the mills. Hunger had conquered their prejudices — the iron man had triumphed over human flesh and blood.

It is not my purpose to trace the growth of English legislation against child labor. This brief historical sketch is introduced for quite another purpose, to wit, to show the origin of our modern problem of child slavery and degradation. Suffice it to say, then, that the "free" children who went into the mills by their parents' "consent" were almost as badly off as the pauper apprentices had been. They were treated just as brutally. Even in 1830, before a meeting of philanthropists and clergy in Bradford, Richard Oastler, the "King of the Factory Children," could hold up an overseer's whip, saying, "*This* was hard at work in this town last week."[14] And on the 16th of March, 1832, Michael Sadler, M.P., in moving the second reading of his Ten Hours Bill in the House of Commons, could say: "Sir, children are beaten with thongs prepared for the purpose. Yes, the females of this country, no matter whether children or grown up, I hardly know which is the more disgusting outrage, are beaten upon the

arms, face, and bosom — beaten in your 'free market' of labour, as you term it, like slaves. . . . These are the instruments!" (Here, says the report in *Hansard's Parliamentary Debates*, the honorable member exhibited some black, heavy leathern thongs, one of them fixed in a sort of handle, the smack of which, when struck upon the table, resounded through the House.) "They are quite equal to breaking an arm, but the bones of the young . . . are pliant. The marks, however, are long visible, and the poor wretch is flogged, I say, like a dog, by the tyrant overlooker. We speak with execration of the cart-whip of the West Indies, but let us see this night an equal feeling against the factory thong of England." [15] In some memorable verses this noble parliamentary leader of the movement for factory legislation has described such a whipping scene. The poem is too long to quote in its entirety: —

"'Father, I'm up, but weary,
I scarce can reach the door,
And long the way and dreary —
Oh, carry me once more!'

"Her wasted form seemed nothing —
The load was at his heart,
The sufferer he kept soothing
Till at the mill they part.
The overlooker met her,
As to her frame she crept,
And with his thong he beat her
And cursed her as she wept.

"All night with tortured feeling,
He watched his speechless child,
While, close beside her kneeling,
She knew him not, nor smiled.
Again the factory's ringing
Her last perceptions tried;
When, from her straw bed springing,
'Tis time!' she shrieked, and died!" [16]

A Committee of the House of Commons was appointed to investigate the grounds of Sadler's demand for the Ten Hours Bill. From the mass of evidence of almost unspeakable cruelty, I quote only one brief passage from the testimony of one Jonathan Downe, himself a mill hand: "Provided a child should be drowsy (there were plenty working at six years of age), the overlooker walks around the room with a stick in his hand, and he touches the child on the shoulder, and says, 'Come here!' In the corner of the room is an iron cistern; it is filled with water; he takes this boy, and holding him up by his legs, dips him overhead in the cistern, and sends him to his task for the remainder of the day; and that boy is to stand dripping as he is at his work — he has no chance of drying himself." [17]

Such, then, was child labor at its worst; such the immediate effects of the introduction of great mechanical inventions which the wisest of the ancients believed would liberate men from all forms of bondage and destroy every vestige of slavery, — a hope which

for many of us has not been shattered, even by a century and a quarter of disappointment. Happily, we in the United States have been practically free from some of the worst evils of England's experience, yet it is only too true that we have to-day a child-labor problem of terrible magnitude, challenging the heart and brain of the nation to find a solution. We, too, are permitting the giant "iron men" to enslave our babies. The machine is our modern Moloch, and we feed it with precious child lives.

III

I am not unmindful of the fact that the presentation of the darkest side of England's experience may have the effect of inducing in some minds a certain spirit of content, — a pharisaical thanksgiving that we are "not as other men" have been in a past that is not very remote. I accept, gladly, the issue implied in that attitude. It is no part of my purpose to discount the social and ethical gains which have resulted from the struggle against child labor, or to paint in unduly dark colors the problem as it presents itself to us in the United States to-day. No good purpose is served by exaggeration; progress is not quickened by denying the progress that has been made.

The inferno of child torture which the records of nineteenth-century England picture so vividly has



LITTLE TENEMENT TOILERS

With the exception of the infant in arms these are all working children. They were called away from the photographer to go on with their work!

more than historical interest for us. It was the result of a policy of *laissez faire* on the part of the government, and that policy has its advocates in the United States to-day. In our legislative assemblies, and through the press, able and earnest men — some of them earnest only in their devotion to Mammon — are advocating that policy and forever crying out, in the words of the old physiocrats, "Let alone; the world revolves of itself." When that cry of *laissez faire* is raised, despite the fact that children of four years are found at work in the canning factories of New York State,[18] and little girls of five and six years are found working by night in Southern cotton mills,[19] it is not too much to assume that only a vigilant and constantly protesting public conscience protects us from conditions as revolting as any of those experienced in the black night of England's orgy of greed. Capital has neither morals nor ideals; its interests are always and everywhere expressible in terms of cash profits. Capital in the United States in the twentieth century calls for children as loudly as it called in England a century ago.

Whatever advance has been made in the direction of the legislative protection of children from the awful consequences of premature exploitation, has been made in the face of bitter opposition from the exploiters. In the New York Legislature, during the session of 1903, the owners of the canning fac-

tories of the state used their utmost power to have their industry exempted from the humane but inadequate provisions of the Child Labor Law, notwithstanding that babies four years old were known to be working in their factories. The Northern owners of Alabama cotton mills secured the *repeal* of the law passed in that state in 1887 prohibiting the employment of children under fourteen years of age for more than eight hours in a day; and when, later, the Alabama Child Labor Committee sought to secure legislative protection for children up to twelve years of age, paid agents of the mill owners appeared before the legislature and persistently opposed their efforts.[20] Similar testimony might be given from practically every state where any attempt has been made to legislate against the evil of child labor. Even such a responsible organ of capitalist opinion as the *Manufacturers' Record* editorially denounces all child-labor legislation as wrong and immoral![21] There are, of course, honorable exceptions, but as a class the employers of labor are persistent in their opposition to all such legislation.

According to the census of 1900 there were, in the United States in that year, 1,752,187 children under sixteen years of age employed in gainful occupations. Of itself that is a terrible sum, but all authorities are agreed that it does not fully represent the magnitude of the child-labor problem. It is well known that

many thousands of children are working under the protection of certificates in which they are falsely represented as being of the legal age for employment. When a child of twelve gets a certificate declaring its age to be fifteen, it needs only to work a year, to be in reality thirteen years old, in order to be classed as an adult over sixteen years of age. Such certificates have been, and in many cases still are, ridiculously easy to obtain, it being only necessary for one of the parents or guardians of a child to swear before a notary that the child has reached the minimum age required by law. The result has been the promotion of child slavery and illiteracy through the wholesale perjury of parents and guardians.[22] I have known scores of instances in which children ten or eleven years old were employed through the possession of certificates stating that they were thirteen or fourteen. I remember asking one little lad his age, in Pittston, Pennsylvania, during the anthracite coal strike of 1902. He certainly did not look more than ten years old, but he answered boldly, "I'm thirteen, sir." When I asked him how long he had been at work, he replied, "More'n a year gone, sir." Afterward I met his father at one of the strikers' meetings, and he told me that the lad was only a few days over eleven years of age, and that he went to work as a "breaker boy" before he was ten. "We'm a big fam'ly," he said in excuse. "There's six kids an'

th' missis an' me. Wi' me pay so small, I was glad to give a quarter to have the papers (certificate) filled out so's he could bring in a trifle like other boys." Afterward I came across several similar cases.

That is only one of many reasons for supposing that the census figures do not adequately represent the extent to which child labor prevails. Another is the tremendous number of children of school age, and below the age at which they may be legally employed, who do not attend school. In New York State, for instance, there were more than 76,000 children between the ages of ten and fourteen years who were out of school during the whole of the twelve months covered by the census of 1900, and nearly 16,000 more in the same age period who attended school less than five months in the year.[23] Careful investigation in Philadelphia showed that in one year, "after deducting those physically unable to attend school, 16,100 children, between the ages of eight and thirteen," were out of school, and a similar condition is reported to exist throughout the whole of Pennsylvania.[24] The Child Labor Committee of Pennsylvania gives a list of nearly one hundred different kinds of work at which children between the ages of eight and thirteen were found to be employed in Philadelphia alone. In practically every industrial centre this margin of children of school age and below the

legal age for employment, who do not attend school, exists. It is impossible for any one who is at all conversant with the facts to resist the conclusion that, after making all possible allowances for other causes, by far the larger part of these absentees are at work. Thousands find employment in factories and stores; others find employment in some of the many street trades, selling newspapers, peddling, running errands for small storekeepers, and the like. Many others are not "employed" in the strict sense of the word at all, because they work in their homes, assisting their parents. Their condition is generally much worse than that of the children regularly employed in factories and workshops. In excluding them the census figures omit a very large class of child workers who are the victims of the worst conditions of all. I am convinced that the number of children under *fifteen* years of age who work is much larger than the official figures give, notwithstanding that these are supposed to give the number of all workers under *sixteen* years of age. It would, I think, be quite within the mark to say that the number of child workers under fifteen is at least 2,250,000.

From the point of view of the sociologist an accurate statistical measure of the child-labor problem would be a most valuable gain, but to most people such figures mean very little. If they could only

see the human units represented by the figures, it would be different. If they could only see in one vast, suffering throng as many children as there are men, women, and children in the state of New Jersey, they would be able to appreciate some of the meaning of the census figures. Even so, they would have only a vivid sense of the magnitude of such a number as 1,752,000; they would still have no idea of the awful physical, mental, and moral wreckage hidden in the lifeless and dumb figures. If it were only possible to take the consumptive cough of one child textile worker with lint-clogged lungs, and to multiply its volume by tens of thousands; to gather into one single compass the fevers that burn in thousands of child toilers' bodies, so that we might visualize the Great White Plague's relation to child labor, the nation would surely rise as one man and put an end to the destruction of children for profit. If all the people of this great republic could see little Anetta Fachini, four years old, working with her mother making artificial flowers, as I saw her in her squalid tenement home at eleven o'clock at night, I think the impression upon their hearts and minds would be far deeper and more lasting than any that whole pages of figures could make. The frail little thing was winding green paper around wires to make stems for artificial flowers to decorate ladies' hats. Every few minutes



JUVENILE TEXTILE WORKERS ON STRIKE IN PHILADELPHIA

her head would droop and her weary eyelids close, but her little fingers still kept moving — uselessly, helplessly, mechanically moving. Then the mother would shake her gently, saying: "*Non dormire, Anetta! Solamente pochi altri—solamente pochi altri.*" ("Sleep not, Anetta! Only a few more — only a few more.")

And the little eyes would open slowly and the tired fingers once more move with intelligent direction and purpose.

Some years ago, in one of the mean streets of Paris, I saw, in a dingy window, a picture that stamped itself indelibly upon my memory. It was not, judged by artistic canons, a great picture; on the contrary, it was crude and ill drawn and might almost have been the work of a child. Torn, I think, from the pages of the Anarchist paper *La Revolté*, it was, perchance, a protest drawn from the very soul of some indignant worker. A woman, haggard and fierce of visage, representing France, was seated upon a heap of child skulls and bones. In her gnarled and knotted hands she held the writhing form of a helpless babe whose flesh she was gnawing with her teeth. Underneath, in red ink, was written in rude characters, "The wretch! She devours her own children!" My mind goes back to that picture: it is literally true to-day, that this great nation in its commercial madness devours its babes.

IV

The textile industries rank first in the enslavement of children. In the cotton trade, for example, 13.3 per cent of all persons employed throughout the United States are under sixteen years of age.[25] In the Southern states, where the evil appears at its worst, so far as the textile trades are concerned, the proportion of employees under sixteen years of age in 1900 was 25.1 per cent, in Alabama the proportion was nearly 30 per cent. A careful estimate made in 1902 placed the number of cotton-mill operatives under sixteen years of age in the Southern states at 50,000. At the beginning of 1903 a very conservative estimate placed the number of children under fourteen employed in the cotton mills of the South at 30,000, no less than 20,000 of them being under twelve.[26] If this latter estimate of 20,000 children under twelve is to be relied upon, it is evident that the total number under fourteen must have been much larger than 30,000. According to Mr. McKelway, one of the most competent authorities in the country, there are at the present time not less than 60,000 children under fourteen employed in the cotton mills of the Southern states.[27] Miss Jane Addams tells of finding a child of five years working by night in a South Carolina mill;[28] Mr. Edward Gardner Murphy has photographed little

children of six and seven years who were at work for twelve and thirteen hours a day in Alabama mills.[29] In Columbia, S.C., and Montgomery, Ala., I have seen hundreds of children, who did not appear to be more than nine or ten years of age, at work in the mills, by night as well as by day.

The industrial revival in the South from the stagnation consequent upon the Civil War has been attended by the growth of a system of child slavery almost as bad as that which attended the industrial revolution in England a century ago. From 1880 to 1900 the value of the products of Southern manufactures increased from less than $458,000,000 to $1,463,000,000 — an increase of 220 per cent. Many factors contributed to that immense industrial development of the South, but, according to a well-known expert,[30] it is due "chiefly to her supplies of tractable and cheap labor." During the same period of twenty years in the cotton mills outside of the South, the proportion of workers under sixteen years of age decreased from 15.6 per cent to 7.7 per cent, but in the South it remained at approximately 25 per cent. It is true that the terrible pauper apprentice system which forms such a tragic chapter in the history of the English factory movement has not been introduced; yet the fate of the children of the poor families from the hill districts who have been drawn into the vortex of this indus-

trial development is almost as bad as that of the English pauper children. These "poor whites," as they are expressively called, even by their negro neighbors, have for many years eked out a scanty living upon their farms, all the members of the family uniting in the struggle against niggardly nature. Drawn into the current of the new industrial order, they do not realize that, even though the children worked harder upon the farms than they do in the mills, there is an immense difference between the dust-laden air of a factory and the pure air of a farm; between the varied tasks of farm life with the endless opportunities for change and individual initiative, and the strained attention and monotonous tasks of mill life. The lot of the pauper children driven into the mills by the ignorance and avarice of British Bumbledom was little worse than that of these poor children, who work while their fathers loaf. During the long, weary nights many children have to be kept awake by having cold water dashed on their faces, and when morning comes they throw themselves upon their beds — often still warm from the bodies of their brothers and sisters — without taking off their clothing. "When I works nights, I'se too tired to undress when I gits home, an' so I goes to bed wif me clo's on me," lisped one little girl in Augusta, Ga.

There are more than 80,000 children employed

in the textile industries of the United States, according to the very incomplete census returns, most of them being little girls. In these industries conditions are undoubtedly worse in the Southern states than elsewhere, though I have witnessed many pitiable cases of child slavery in Northern mills which equalled almost anything I have ever seen in the South. During the Philadelphia textile workers' strike in 1903, I saw at least a score of children ranging from eight to ten years of age who had been working in the mills prior to the strike. One little girl of nine I saw in the Kensington Labor Lyceum. She had been working for almost a year before the strike began, she said, and careful inquiry proved her story to be true. When "Mother" Mary Jones started with her little "army" of child toilers to march to Oyster Bay, in order that the President of the United States might see for himself some of the little ones who had actually been employed in the mills of Philadelphia, I happened to be engaged in assisting the strikers. For two days I accompanied the little "army" on its march, and thus had an excellent opportunity of studying the children. Amongst them were several from eight to eleven years of age, and I remember one little girl who was not quite eleven telling me with pride that she had "worked two years and never missed a day."

One evening, not long ago, I stood outside of a large flax mill in Paterson, N.J., while it disgorged its crowd of men, women, and children employees. All the afternoon, as I lingered in the tenement district near the mills, the comparative silence of the streets oppressed me. There were many babies and very small children, but the older children, whose boisterous play one expects in such streets, were wanting. "If thow'lt bide till th' mills shut for th' day, thow'lt see plenty on 'em — big kids as plenty as small taties," said one old woman to whom I spoke about it. She was right. At six o'clock the whistles shrieked, and the streets were suddenly filled with people, many of them mere children. Of all the crowd of tired, pallid, and languid-looking children I could only get speech with one, a little girl who claimed thirteen years, though she was smaller than many a child of ten. Indeed, as I think of her now, I doubt whether she would have come up to the standard of normal physical development either in weight or stature for a child of ten. One learns, however, not to judge the ages of working children by their physical appearance, for they are usually behind other children in height, weight, and girth of chest, — often as much as two or three years. If my little Paterson friend was thirteen, perhaps the nature of her employment will explain her puny, stunted body. She works in the "steam-

ing room" of the flax mill. All day long, in a room filled with clouds of steam, she has to stand barefooted in pools of water twisting coils of wet hemp. When I saw her she was dripping wet, though she said that she had worn a rubber apron all day. In the coldest evenings of winter little Marie, and hundreds of other little girls, must go out from the superheated steaming rooms into the bitter cold in just that condition. No wonder that such children are stunted and underdeveloped!

In textile mill towns like Biddeford, Me., Manchester, N.H., Fall River and Lawrence, Mass., I have seen many such children, who, if they were twelve or fourteen according to their certificates and the companies' registers, were not more than ten or twelve in reality. I have watched them hurrying into and away from the mills, "those receptacles, in too many instances, for living human skeletons, almost disrobed of intellect," as Robert Owen's burning phrase describes them.[31] I do not doubt that, upon the whole, conditions in the textile industries are better in the North than in the South, but they are nevertheless too bad to permit of self-righteous boasting and complacency. And in several other departments of industry conditions are no whit better in the North than in the South. The child-labor problem is not sectional, but national.

V

Of the fifteen divisions of the manufacturing industries, the glass factories rank next to the textile factories in the number of children they employ. In the year 1900, according to the census returns, the average number of workers employed in glass manufacture was 52,818, of which number 3529, or 6.88 per cent, were women, and 7116, or 13.45 per cent, were children under sixteen years of age. It will be noticed that the percentage of children employed is about the same as in the textile trades. There are glass factories in many states, but the bulk of the industry is centred in Pennsylvania, Indiana, New Jersey, and Ohio. The total value of the products of the glass industry in the United States in 1900 was $56,539,712, of which amount the four states named contributed $46,209,918, or 82.91 per cent of the entire value.[32] After careful investigation in a majority of the places where glass is manufactured in these four states, I am confident that the number of children employed is much larger than the census figures indicate.

Perhaps in none of the great industries is the failure to enforce the child-labor laws more general or complete than in the glass trade. There are several reasons for this, the most important, perhaps, being the distribution of the factories in small

towns and rural districts, and the shifting nature of the industry itself. Fuel is the most important item in the cost of materials in the manufacture of glass, and the aim of the manufacturers is always to locate in districts where fuel is cheap and abundant. For this reason Pennsylvania has always ranked first in the list of glass-manufacturing states. Owing, mainly, to the discoveries of new supplies of natural gas in Indiana, the glass products of that state increased fourfold in value from 1890 to 1900.[33] When the supply of gas in a certain locality becomes exhausted, it is customary to remove the factories to more favorable places. A few rough wooden sheds are hastily built in the neighborhood of some good gas supplies, only to be torn down again as soon as these fail. Hence it happens that glass factories bring new industrial life into small towns and villages, which soon become to a very large extent dependent upon them. Almost unconsciously a feeling is developed that, "for the good of the town," it will scarcely do to antagonize the glass manufacturers. I have heard this sentiment voiced by business men and others in several places. On the other hand, the manufacturers feel the strength of their position and constantly threaten to remove their plants if they are interfered with and prevented from getting boys.

I shall never forget my first visit to a glass factory

at night. It was a big wooden structure, so loosely built that it afforded little protection from draughts, surrounded by a high fence with several rows of barbed wire stretched across the top. I went with the foreman of the factory and he explained to me the reason for the stockade-like fence. "It keeps the young imps inside once we've got 'em for the night shift," he said. The "young imps" were, of course, the boys employed, about forty in number, at least ten of whom were less than twelve years of age. It was a cheap bottle factory, and the proportion of boys to men was larger than is usual in the higher grades of manufacture. Cheapness and child labor go together, — the cheaper the grade of manufacture, as a rule, the cheaper the labor employed. The hours of labor for the "night shift" were from 5.30 P.M. to 3.30 A.M. I stayed and watched the boys at their work for several hours, and when their tasks were done saw them disappear into the darkness and storm of the night. That night, for the first time, I realized the tragic significance of cheap bottles. One might well paraphrase Hood's lines and say: —

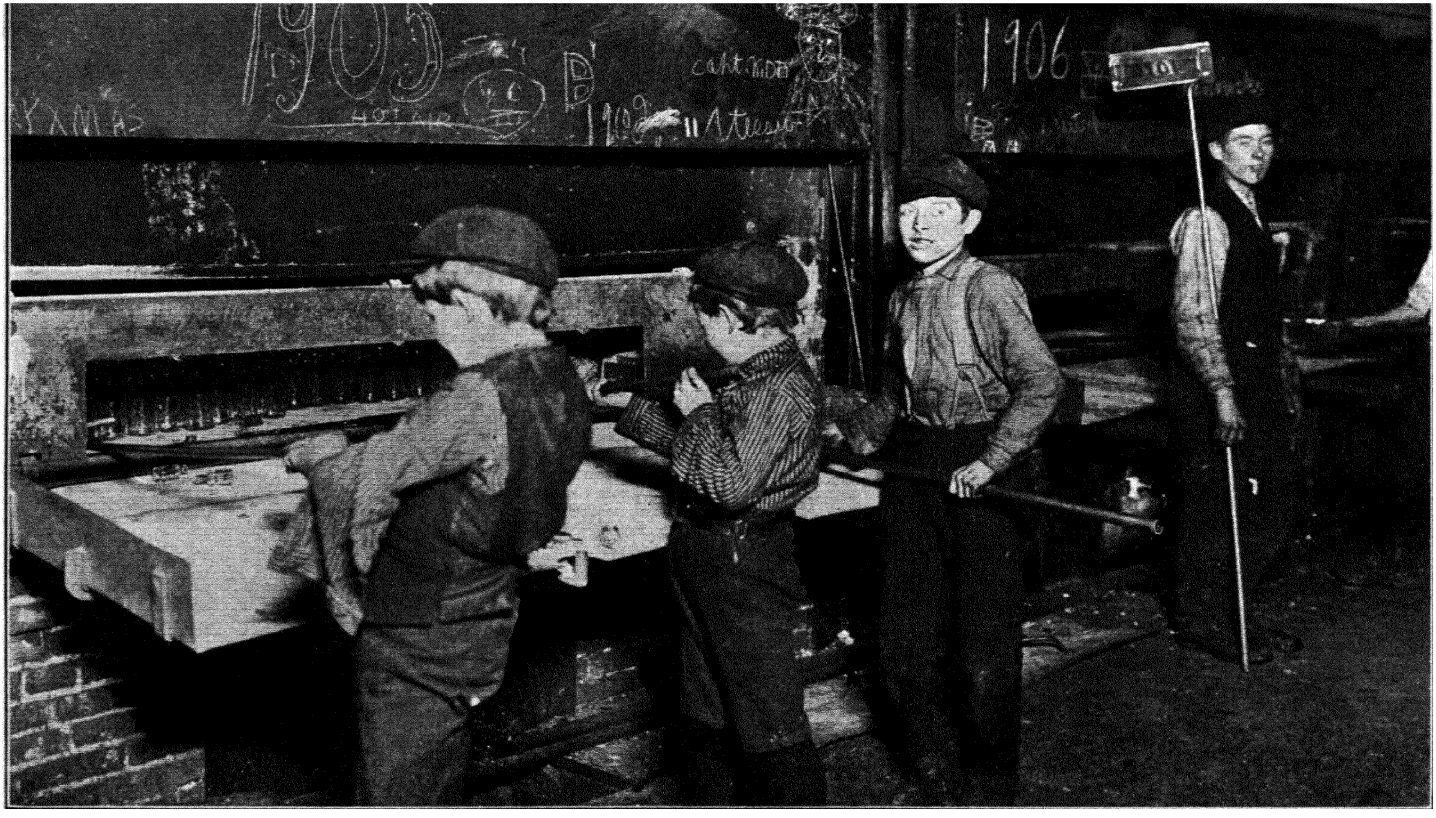
> "They are not bottles you idly break,
> But human creatures' lives!"

In the middle of the room was a large round furnace with a number of small doors, three or four feet from the ground, forming a sort of belt around

the furnace. In front of these doors the glass-blowers were working. With long wrought-iron blowpipes the blowers deftly took from the furnace little wads of waxlike molten "metal" which they blew into balls and then rolled on their rolling boards. These elongated rolls they dropped into moulds and then blew again, harder than before, to force the half-shaped mass into its proper form. With a sharp, clicking sound they broke their pipes away and repeated the whole process. There was not, of course, the fascination about their work that the more artistic forms of glass-blowing possess. There was none of that twirling of the blowpipes till they looked like so many magic wands which for centuries has made the glass-blower's art a delightful, half-mysterious thing to watch. But it was still wonderful to see the exactness of each man's "dip," and the deftness with which they manipulated the balls before casting them into the moulds.

Then began the work of the boys. By the side of each mould sat a "take-out boy," who, with tongs, took the half-finished bottles — not yet provided with necks — out of the moulds. Then other boys, called "snapper-ups," took these bodies of bottles in their tongs and put the small ends into gas-heated moulds till they were red hot. Then the boys took them out with almost incredible quickness and passed them to other men, "finishers," who shaped

the necks of the bottles into their final form. Then the "carrying-in boys," sometimes called "carrier pigeons," took the red-hot bottles from the benches, three or four at a time, upon big asbestos shovels to the annealing oven, where they are gradually cooled off to insure even contraction and to prevent breaking in consequence of too rapid cooling. The work of these "carrying-in boys," several of whom were less than twelve years old, was by far the hardest of all. They were kept on a slow run all the time from the benches to the annealing oven and back again. I can readily believe what many manufacturers assert, that it is difficult to get men to do this work, because men cannot stand the pace and get tired too quickly. It is a fact, however, that in many factories men are employed to do this work, especially at night. In other, more up-to-date factories it is done by automatic machinery. I did not measure the distance from the benches to the annealing oven, nor did I count the number of trips made by the boys, but my friend, Mr. Owen R. Lovejoy, has done so in a typical factory and very kindly furnished me with the results of his calculation.[34] The distance to the annealing oven in the factory in question was one hundred feet, and the boys made seventy-two trips per hour, making the distance travelled in eight hours nearly twenty-two miles. Over half of this distance the



NIGHT SHIFT IN A GLASS FACTORY

boys were carrying their hot loads to the oven. The pay of these boys varies from sixty cents to a dollar for eight hours' work. About a year ago I gathered particulars of the pay of 257 boys in New Jersey and Pennsylvania; the lowest pay was forty cents per night and the highest a dollar and ten cents, while the average was seventy-two cents.

In New Jersey, since 1903, the employment of boys under fourteen years of age is forbidden, but there is no restriction as to night work for boys of that age. In Pennsylvania boys of fourteen may work by night. In Ohio night work is prohibited for all under sixteen years of age, but so far as my personal observations, and the testimony of competent and reliable observers, enable me to judge, the law is not very effectively enforced in this respect in the glass factories. In Indiana the employment of children under fourteen in factories is forbidden. Women and girls are not permitted to work between the hours of 10 P.M. and 6 A.M., but there is no restriction placed upon the employment of boys fourteen years of age or over by night.[35]

The effects of the employment of young boys in glass factories, especially by night, are injurious from every possible point of view. The constant facing of the glare of the furnaces and the red-hot bottles causes serious injury to the sight; minor

accidents from burning are common. "Severe burns and the loss of sight are regular risks of the trade in glass-bottle making," says Mrs. Florence Kelley.[30] Even more serious than the accidents are those physical disorders induced by the conditions of employment. Boys who work at night do not as a rule get sufficient or satisfactory rest by day. Very often they cannot sleep because of the noises made by younger children in and around the house; more often, perhaps, they prefer to play rather than to sleep. Indeed, most boys seem to prefer night work, for the reason that it gives them the chance to play during the daytime. Even where the mothers are careful and solicitous, they find it practically impossible to control boys who are wage-earners and feel themselves to be independent. This lack of proper rest, added to the heat and strain of their work, produces nervous dyspepsia. From working in draughty sheds where they are often, as one boy said to me in Zanesville, O., "burning on the side against the furnace and pretty near freezing on the other," they are frequently subject to rheumatism. Going from the heated factories to their homes, often a mile or so distant, perspiring and improperly clad, with their vitality at its lowest ebb, they fall ready victims to pneumonia and to its heir, the Great White Plague. In almost every instance when I have asked local physicians for their experi-

ence, they have named these as the commonest physical results. Of the fearful moral consequences there can be no question. The glass-blowers themselves realize this and, even more than the physical deterioration, it prevents them from taking their own children into the glass houses. One practically never finds the son of a glass-blower employed as a "snapper-up," or "carrying-in boy," unless the father is dead or incapacitated by reason of sickness. "I'd sooner see my boy dead than working here. You might as well give a boy to the devil at once as send him to a glass factory," said one blower to me in Glassborough, N.J.; and that is the spirit in which most of the men regard the matter.

So great is the demand for boys that it is possible at almost any time for a boy to get employment for a single night. Indeed, "one shifters" are so common in some districts that the employers have found it necessary to institute a system of bonuses for those boys who work every night in a week. Out of this readiness to employ boys for a single night has grown a terrible evil, — boys attending school all day and then working in the factories by night. Many such cases have been reported to me, and Mrs. Van Der Vaart declares that "it is customary in Indiana for the school boys to work Thursday and Friday nights and attend school during the day." [37] Mr. Lovejoy found the same

practice in Steubenville, O., and other places.[38] Teachers in glass-manufacturing centres have repeatedly told me that among the older boys were some who, because of their employment by night in the factories, were drowsy and unable to receive any benefits from their attendance at school.

In some districts, especially in New Jersey, it has long been the custom to import boys from certain orphan asylums and "reformatories" to supply the demand of the manufacturers. These boys are placed in laborers' families, and their board paid for by the employers, who deduct it from the boys' wages. Thus a veritable system of child slavery has developed, remarkably like the old English pauper-apprentice system. "These imported boys are under no restraint by day or night," says Mrs. Kelley, "and are wholly without control during the idle hours. They are in the streets in gangs, in and out of the police courts and the jails, a burden to themselves and to the community imposed by the demand of this boy-destroying industry."[39] It is perhaps only indicative of the universal readiness of men to concern themselves with the mote in their brothers' eyes without considering the beam in their own, that I should have attended a meeting in New Jersey where the child labor of the South was bitterly condemned, but no word was said of the appalling nature of the problem in the state of New Jersey itself.

VI

According to the census of 1900, there were 25,000 boys under sixteen years of age employed in and around the mines and quarries of the United States. In the state of Pennsylvania alone, — the state which enslaves more children than any other, — there are thousands of little "breaker boys" employed, many of them not more than nine or ten years old. The law forbids the employment of children under fourteen, and the records of the mines generally show that the law is "obeyed." Yet in May, 1905, an investigation by the National Child Labor Committee showed that in one small borough of 7000 population, among the boys employed in breakers 35 were nine years old, 40 were ten, 45 were eleven, and 45 were twelve — over 150 boys illegally employed in one section of boy labor in one small town! During the anthracite coal strike of 1902, I attended the Labor Day demonstration at Pittston and witnessed the parade of another at Wilkesbarre. In each case there were hundreds of boys marching, all of them wearing their "working buttons," testifying to the fact that they were *bona fide* workers. Scores of them were less than ten years of age, others were eleven or twelve.

Work in the coal breakers is exceedingly hard and dangerous. Crouched over the chutes, the boys sit hour after hour, picking out the pieces of slate and

other refuse from the coal as it rushes past to the washers. From the cramped position they have to assume, most of them become more or less deformed and bent-backed like old men. When a boy has been working for some time and begins to get round-shouldered, his fellows say that "He's got his boy to carry round wherever he goes." The coal is hard, and accidents to the hands, such as cut, broken, or crushed fingers, are common among the boys. Sometimes there is a worse accident: a terrified shriek is heard, and a boy is mangled and torn in the machinery, or disappears in the chute to be picked out later smothered and dead.[40] Clouds of dust fill the breakers and are inhaled by the boys, laying the foundations for asthma and miners' consumption. I once stood in a breaker for half an hour and tried to do the work a twelve-year-old boy was doing day after day, for ten hours at a stretch, for sixty cents a day. The gloom of the breaker appalled me. Outside the sun shone brightly, the air was pellucid, and the birds sang in chorus with the trees and the rivers. Within the breaker there was blackness, clouds of deadly dust enfolded everything, the harsh, grinding roar of the machinery and the ceaseless rushing of coal through the chutes filled the ears. I tried to pick out the pieces of slate from the hurrying stream of coal, often missing them; my hands were bruised and cut in a few minutes; I was covered from head to



BREAKER BOYS AT WORK

foot with coal dust, and for many hours afterwards I was expectorating some of the small particles of anthracite I had swallowed.

I could not do that work and live, but there were boys of ten and twelve years of age doing it for fifty and sixty cents a day. Some of them had never been inside of a school; few of them could read a child's primer. True, some of them attended the night schools, but after working ten hours in the breaker the educational results from attending school were practically *nil.* "We goes fer a good time, an' we keeps de guys wots dere hoppin' all de time," said little Owen Jones, whose work I had been trying to do. How strange that barbaric patois sounded to me as I remembered the rich, musical language I had so often heard other little Owen Joneses speak in far-away Wales. As I stood in that breaker I thought of the reply of the small boy to Robert Owen. Visiting an English coal-mine one day, Owen asked a twelve-year-old lad if he knew God. The boy stared vacantly at his questioner: "God?" he said, "God? No, I don't. He must work in some other mine." It was hard to realize amid the danger and din and blackness of that Pennsylvania breaker that such a thing as belief in a great All-good God existed.

From the breakers the boys graduate to the mine depths, where they become door tenders, switch-boys, or mule-drivers. Here, far below the surface,

work is still more dangerous. At fourteen or fifteen the boys assume the same risks as the men, and are surrounded by the same perils. Nor is it in Pennsylvania only that these conditions exist. In the bituminous mines of West Virginia, boys of nine or ten are frequently employed. I met one little fellow ten years old in Mt. Carbon, W. Va., last year, who was employed as a "trap boy." Think of what it means to be a trap boy at ten years of age. It means to sit alone in a dark mine passage hour after hour, with no human soul near; to see no living creature except the mules as they pass with their loads, or a rat or two seeking to share one's meal; to stand in water or mud that covers the ankles, chilled to the marrow by the cold draughts that rush in when you open the trap-door for the mules to pass through; to work for fourteen hours — waiting — opening and shutting a door — then waiting again — for sixty cents; to reach the surface when all is wrapped in the mantle of night, and to fall to the earth exhausted and have to be carried away to the nearest "shack" to be revived before it is possible to walk to the farther shack called "home."

Boys twelve years of age may be *legally* employed in the mines of West Virginia, by day or by night, and for as many hours as the employers care to make them toil or their bodies will stand the strain. Where the disregard of child life is such that this may be

done openly and with legal sanction, it is easy to believe what miners have again and again told me — that there are hundreds of little boys of nine and ten years of age employed in the coal-mines of this state.

VII

It is not my purpose to deal specifically with all the various forms of child labor. That would require a much larger volume than this to be devoted exclusively to the subject. Children are employed at a tender age in hundreds of occupations. In addition to those already enumerated, there were in 1900, according to the census, nearly 12,000 workers under sixteen years of age employed in the manufacture of tobacco and cigars, and it is certain that the number actually employed in that most unhealthful occupation was much greater. In New Jersey and Pennsylvania, I have seen hundreds of children, boys and girls, between the ages of ten and twelve years, at work in the factories belonging to the "Cigar Trust." Some of these factories are known as "kindergartens" on account of the large number of small children employed in them.[41] It is by no means a rare occurrence for children in these factories to faint or to fall asleep over their work, and I have heard a foreman in one of them say that it was "enough for one man to do just to keep the kids awake." In the domestic manufacture of cheap cigars, many very young

children are employed. Often the "factories" are poorly lighted, ill-ventilated tenements in which work, whether for children or adults, ought to be absolutely prohibited. Children work often as many as fourteen or even sixteen hours in these little "home factories," and in cities like Pittsburg, Pa., it is not unusual for them, after attending school all day, to work from 4 P.M. to 12.30 A.M., making "tobies" or "stogies," for which they receive from eight to ten cents per hundred.

In the wood-working industries, more than 10,000 children were reported to be employed in the census year, almost half of them in saw-mills, where accidents are of almost daily occurrence, and where clouds of fine sawdust fill the lungs of the workers. Of the remaining 50 per cent, it is probable that more than half were working at or near dangerous machines, such as steam planers and lathes. Over 7000 children, mostly girls, were employed in laundries; 2000 in bakeries; 138,000 as servants and waiters in restaurants and hotels; 42,000 boys as messengers; and 20,000 boys and girls in stores. In all these instances there is every reason to suppose that the actual number employed was much larger than the official figures show.

In the canning and preservation of fish, fruit, and vegetables mere babies are employed during the busy season. In more than one canning factory in New

York State, I have seen children of six and seven years of age working at two o'clock in the morning. In Oneida, Mr. William English Walling, formerly a factory inspector of Illinois, found one child four years old, who earned nineteen cents in an afternoon stringing beans, and other children from seven to ten years of age.[42] There are over 500 canning factories in New York State, but the census of 1900 gives the number of children employed under sixteen years of age as 219. This is merely another illustration of the deceptiveness of the statistics which are gathered at so much expense. The agent of the New York Child Labor Committee was told by the foreman of one factory that there were 300 children under fourteen years of age in that one factory! In Syracuse it was a matter of complaint, in the season of 1904, on the part of the children, that "The factories will not take you *unless you are eight years old.*" [43]

In Maryland there are absolutely no restrictions placed upon the employment of children in canneries. They may be employed at any age, by day or night, for as many hours as the employers choose, or the children can stand and keep awake. In Oxford, Md., I saw a tiny girl, seven years old, who had worked for twelve hours in an oyster-canning factory, and I was told that such cases were common. There were 290 canning establishments in the state of Maryland in 1900, all of them employing young children

absolutely without legal restriction. And I fear that it must be added with little or no moral restriction either. Where regard for child life does not express itself in humane laws for its preservation, it may generally be presumed to be non-existent.

In Maine the age limit for employment is twelve years. Children of that age may be employed by day or night, provided that girls under eighteen and boys under sixteen are not permitted to work more than ten hours in the twenty-four or sixty hours in a week. In 1900 there were 117 establishments engaged in the preservation and canning of fish. Small herrings are canned and placed upon the market as "sardines." [44] This industry is principally confined to the Atlantic coast towns, — Lubec and Eastport, in Washington County, being the main centres. I cannot speak of this industry from personal investigation, but information received from competent and trustworthy sources gives me the impression that child slavery nowhere assumes a worse form than in the "sardine" canneries of Maine. Says one of my correspondents in a private letter: "In the rush season, fathers, mothers, older children, and babies work from early morn till night — from dawn till dark, in fact. You will scarcely believe me, perhaps, when I say 'and babies,' but it is literally true. I've seen them in the present season, no more than four or five years old, working hard and beaten when they lagged. As you may suppose, being

out here, far away from the centre of the state, we are not much troubled by factory inspection. I have read about the conditions in the Southern mills, but nothing I have read equals for sheer brutality what I see right here in Washington County."

In the sweatshops and, more particularly, the poorly paid home industries, the kindergartens are robbed to provide baby slaves. I am perfectly well aware that many persons will smile incredulously at the thought of infants from three to five years old working. "What can such little babies do?" they ask. Well, take the case of little Anetta Fachini, for example. The work she was doing when I saw her, wrapping paper around pieces of wire, was very similar to the play of better-favored children. As play, to be put aside whenever her childish fancy wandered to something else, it would have been a very good thing for little Anetta to do. She was compelled, however, to do it from early morning till late at night and even denied the right to sleep. For her, therefore, what might be play for some other child became the most awful bondage and cruelty. What can four-year-old babies do? Go into the nursery and watch the rich man's four-year-old child, seated upon the rug, sorting many-colored beads and fascinated by the occupation for half an hour or so. That is play — good and wholesome for the child. In the public kindergarten, other four-year-old children are

doing the same thing with zest and laughing delight. But go into the dim tenement yonder; another four-year-old child is sorting beads, but not in play. Her eyes do not sparkle with childish glee; she does not shout with delight at finding a prize among the beads. With tragic seriousness she picks out the beads and lays them before her mother, who is a slipper-beader — that is, she sews the beaded designs upon ladies' fancy slippers. She works from morn till night, and all the while the child is seated by her side, straining her little eyes in the dim light, sorting the beads or stringing them on pieces of thread.

In the "Help Wanted" columns of the morning papers, advertisements frequently appear such as the following, taken from one of the leading New York dailies: —

WANTED. — Beaders on slippers; good pay; steady home work. M. B——, West —— Street.

In the tenement districts women may be seen staggering along with sack loads of slippers to be trimmed with beadwork, and children of four years of age and upward are pressed into service to provide cheap, dainty slippers for dainty ladies. What can four-year-old babies do? A hundred things, when they are driven to it. "They are pulling basting threads so that you and I may wear cheap garments; they are arranging the petals of artificial flowers; they are sorting beads; they are pasting boxes. They do



HOME "FINISHERS": A CONSUMPTIVE MOTHER AND HER TWO CHILDREN

Both of the children work and sleep with the mother.

more than that. I know of a room where a dozen or more little children are seated on the floor, surrounded by barrels, and in those barrels is found human hair, matted, tangled, and blood-stained — you can imagine the condition, for it is not my hair or yours that is cut off in the hour of death." [45]

There are more than 23,000 licensed "home factories" in New York City alone, 23,000 groups of workers in the tenements licensed to manufacture goods. How difficult it is to protect children employed in these tenement factories can best be judged by the following incident: Two small Italian children, a boy of five and his sister aged four, left a West-side kindergarten and were promptly followed up by their kindergartner, who found that the children were working and could not, in the opinion of their mother, be spared to attend the kindergarten. They were both helping to make artificial flowers. The truant officer was first applied to and asked whether the compulsory education law could not be used to free them, part of the time at least, from their unnatural toil. But attendance at school is not compulsory before the eighth year, so that was a useless appeal. Then the factory inspector was applied to, and he showed that the work of the children was entirely legal; they received no wages and were, therefore, not "employed" in the technical sense of that term. They were working in their own family. The

room was not dirty or excessively overcrowded. No law was broken, and there was no legal means whereby the enslavement of those little children might be prevented.[46]

This kind of child labor, be it remembered, is very different from that wholesome employment of children in the domestic industry which preceded the advent of the system of machine production. Then there was hope in the work and joy in the leisure which followed the work. Then competition was based on human qualities; man against man, hand against hand, eye against eye, brain against brain. To-day the competition is between man and the machine, the child and the man, — and even the child and the machine. Children are employed in the textile mills because their labor is cheaper than that of adults; boys are employed in the glass factories at night because their labor is cheaper to buy than machinery; children in the tenements paste the fancy boxes in which we get our candies and chocolate bonbons for the same reason. Such child labor has no other objective than the increase of employers' profits; it has nothing to do with training the child for the work of life. On the contrary, it saps the constitution of the child, robs it of hope, and unfits it for life's struggle. Such child labor is not educative or wholesome, but blighting to body, mind, and spirit.

VIII

There has been no extensive, systematic investigation in this country of the physical condition of working children. In 1893–1894 volunteer physicians examined and made measurements of some 200 children, taken from the factories and workshops of Chicago.[47] These records show a startling proportion of undersized, rachitic, and consumptive children, but they are too limited to be of more than suggestive value. So far as they go, however, they bear out the results obtained in more extensive investigations in European countries. It is the consensus of opinion among those having the best opportunities for careful observation that physical deterioration quickly follows a child's employment in a factory or workshop.

It is a sorry but indisputable fact that where children are employed, the most unhealthful work is generally given them.[48] In the spinning and carding rooms of cotton and woollen mills, where large numbers of children are employed, clouds of lint-dust fill the lungs and menace the health. The children have often a distressing cough, caused by the irritation of the throat, and many are hoarse from the same cause. In bottle factories and other branches of glass manufacture, the atmosphere is constantly charged with microscopic particles of glass. In the

wood-working industries, such as the manufacture of cheap furniture and wooden boxes, and packing cases, the air is laden with fine sawdust. Children employed in soap and soap-powder factories work, many of them, in clouds of alkaline dust which inflames the eyelids and nostrils. Boys employed in filling boxes of soap-powder work all day long with handkerchiefs tied over their mouths. In the coal-mines the breaker boys breathe air that is heavy and thick with particles of coal, and their lungs become black in consequence. In the manufacture of felt hats, little girls are often employed at the machines which tear the fur from the skins of rabbits and other animals. Recently, I stood and watched a young girl working at such a machine; she wore a newspaper pinned over her head and a handkerchief tied over her mouth. She was white with dust from head to feet, and when she stooped to pick anything from the floor the dust would fall from her paper head-covering in little heaps. About seven feet from the mouth of the machine was a window through which poured thick volumes of dust as it was belched out from the machine. I placed a sheet of paper on the inner sill of the window and in twenty minutes it was covered with a layer of fine dust, half an inch deep. Yet that girl works midway between the window and the machine, in the very centre of the volume of dust, sixty hours a week. These are a few of

the occupations in which the dangers arise from the forced inhalation of dust.

In some occupations, such as silk-winding, flax-spinning, and various processes in the manufacture of felt hats, it is necessary, or believed to be necessary, to keep the atmosphere quite moist. The result of working in a close, heated factory, where the air is artificially moistened, in summer time, can be better imagined than described. So long as enough girls can be kept working, and only a few of them faint, the mills are kept going; but when faintings are so many and so frequent that it does not pay to keep going, the mills are closed. The children who work in the dye rooms and print-shops of textile factories, and the color rooms of factories where the materials for making artificial flowers are manufactured, are subject to contact with poisonous dyes, and the results are often terrible. Very frequently they are dyed in parts of their bodies as literally as the fabrics are dyed. One little fellow, who was employed in a Pennsylvania carpet factory, opened his shirt one day and showed me his chest and stomach dyed a deep, rich crimson. I mentioned the incident to a local physician, and was told that such cases were common. "They are simply saturated with the dye," he said. "The results are extremely severe, though very often slow and, for a long time, almost imperceptible. If they should cut or scratch themselves

where they are so thoroughly dyed, it might mean death." In Yonkers, N.Y., are some of the largest carpet factories in the United States, and many children are employed in them. Some of the smallest children are employed in the "drum room," or print-shop, where the yarns are "printed" or dyed. Small boys, mostly Slavs and Hungarians, push the trucks containing boxes of liquid dye from place to place, and get it all over their clothing. They can be seen coming out of the mills at night literally soaked to the skin with dye of various colors. In the winter time, after a fall of snow, it is possible to track them to their homes, not only by their colored footprints, but by the drippings from their clothing. The snow becomes dotted with red, blue, and green, as though some one had sprinkled the colors for the sake of the variegated effect.

Children employed as varnishers in cheap furniture factories inhale poisonous fumes all day long and suffer from a variety of intestinal troubles in consequence. The gilding of picture frames produces a stiffening of the fingers. The children who are employed in the manufacture of wall papers and poisonous paints suffer from slow poisoning. The naphtha fumes in the manufacture of rubber goods produce paralysis and premature decay. Children employed in morocco leather works are often nauseated and fall easy victims to consumption. The

little boys who make matches, and the little girls who pack them in boxes, suffer from phosphorous necrosis, or "phossy-jaw," a gangrene of the lower jaw due to phosphor poisoning. Boys employed in type foundries and stereotyping establishments are employed on the most dangerous part of the work, namely, rubbing the type and the plates, and lead poisoning is excessively prevalent among them as a result. Little girls who work in the hosiery mills and carry heavy baskets from one floor to another, and their sisters who run machines by foot-power, suffer all through their after life as a result of their employment. Girls who work in factories where caramels and other kinds of candies are made are constantly passing from the refrigerating department, where the temperature is perhaps 20 degrees Fahr., to other departments with temperatures as high as 80 or 90 degrees. As a result, they suffer from bronchial troubles.

These are only a few of the many occupations of children that are inherently unhealthful and should be prohibited entirely for children and all young persons under eighteen years of age. In a few instances it might be sufficient to fix the minimum age for employment at sixteen, if certain improvements in the conditions of employment were insisted upon. Other dangers to health, such as the quick transition from the heat of the factory to the cold outside air, have

already been noted. They are highly important causes of disease, though not inherent in the occupation itself in most cases. A careful study of the child-labor problem from this largely neglected point of view would be most valuable. When to the many dangers to health are added the dangers to life and limb from accidents, far more numerous among child workers than adults,[49] the price we pay for the altogether unnecessary and uneconomic service of children would, in the Boer patriot's phrase, "stagger humanity," if it could be comprehended.

No combination of figures can give any idea of that price. Statistics cannot express the withering of child lips in the poisoned air of factories; the tired, strained look of child eyes that never dance to the glad music of souls tuned to Nature's symphonies; the binding to wheels of industry the little bodies and souls that should be free, as the stars are free to shine and the flowers are free to drink the evening dews. Statistics may be perfected to the extent of giving the number of child workers with accuracy, the number maimed by dangerous machines, and the number who die year by year, but they can never give the spiritual loss, if I may use that word in its secular, scientific sense. Who shall tally the deaths of childhood's hopes, ambitions, and dreams? How shall figures show the silent atrophy of potential genius, the brutalizing of potential love, the corruption of potential

purity? In what arithmetical terms shall we state the loss of shame, and the development of that less than brute view of life, which enables us to watch with unconcern the toil of infants side by side with the idleness of men?

IX

The moral ills resulting from child labor are numerous and far-reaching. When children become wage-earners and are thrown into constant association with adult workers, they develop prematurely an adult consciousness and view of life. About the first consequence of their employment is that they cease almost at once to be children. They lose their respect for parental authority, in many cases, and become arrogant, wayward, and defiant. There is always a tendency in their homes to regard them as men and women as soon as they become wage-earners. Discipline is at once relaxed, at the very time when it is most necessary. When children who have just entered upon that most critical period of life, adolescence, are associated with adults in factories, are driven to their tasks with curses, and hear continually the unrestrained conversation, often coarse and foul, of the adults, the psychological effect cannot be other than bad. The mothers and fathers who read this book need only to know that children, little boys and girls, in mills and factories where men and women are employed, must frequently see women at work in

whom the signs of a developing life within are evident, and hear them made the butt of the coarsest taunts and jests, to realize how great the moral peril to the adolescent boy or girl must be.

No writer dare write, and no publisher dare publish, a truthful description of the moral atmosphere of hundreds of places where children are employed, — a description truthful in the sense of telling the whole truth. No publisher would dare print the language current in an average factory. Our most "realistic" writers must exercise stern artistic reticence, and tone down or evade the truth. No normal boy or girl would think of repeating to father or mother the language heard in the mill — language which the children begin before long to use occasionally, to *think* oftener still. I have known a girl of thirteen or fourteen, just an average American girl, whose parents, intelligent and honest folk, had given her a moral training above rather than below the average, mock a pregnant woman worker and unblushingly attempt to caricature her condition by stuffing rags beneath her apron. I do not make any charge against the tens of thousands of women who have worked and are working in factories. Heaven forbid that I should seek to brand as impure these women of my own class! But I do say that for the plastic and impressionable mind of a child the moral atmosphere of the average factory is exceedingly bad, and I know

that none will more readily agree with me than the men and women who work, or who have worked, in mills and factories.

I know a woman, and she is one of many, who has worked in textile factories for more than thirty years. She began to work as a child before she was ten years old, and is now past forty. She has never married, though many men have sought her in marriage. She is not an abnormal woman, indifferent to marriage, but just a normal, healthy, intelligent woman who has yearned hundreds of times for a man's affection and companionship. To her more intimate friends she confesses that she chose to remain lonely and unwed, chose to stifle her longings for affection, rather than to marry and bring children into the world and live to see them enter the mills for employment before they became men and women. When I say that the moral atmosphere of factory life is contaminated and bad, and that the employment of children in mills and factories subjects them to grave moral perils, I am confident that I shall be supported, not, perhaps, by the owners of the mills and factories, but by the vast majority of intelligent men and women employed in them.

In a report upon the physical conditions of child workers in Pennsylvania, the Rev. Peter Roberts has discussed at some length the moral dangers of factory employment for children. He quotes an Allentown

physician as saying, "No vice was unknown to many of the girls of fifteen working in the factories of the city;" and another physician in the same city said, "There are more unhappy homes, ruined lives, blasted hopes, and diseased bodies in Allentown than any other city of its size, because of the factories there." Another physician, in Lancaster, is quoted as saying that he had "treated boys of ten years old and upwards for venereal affections which they had contracted." [50] In upwards of a score of factory towns I have had very similar testimony given to me by physicians and others. The proprietor of a large drug store in a New England factory town told me that he had never known a place where the demand for cheap remedies for venereal diseases was so great, and *that many of those who bought them were boys under fifteen.*

Nor is it only in factories that these grosser forms of immorality flourish. They are even more prevalent among the children of the street trades, newsboys, bootblacks, messengers, and the like. The proportion of newsboys who suffer from venereal diseases is alarmingly great. The Superintendent of the John Worthy School of Chicago, Mr. Sloan, asserts that "One-third of all the newsboys who come to the John Worthy School have venereal disease, and that 10 per cent of the remaining newsboys at present in the Bridewell are, according to the physi-

cians' diagnosis, suffering from similar diseases." [51] The newsboys who come to the school are, according to Mr. Sloan, on an average one-third below the ordinary standard of physical development, a condition which will be readily understood by those who know the ways of the newsboys of our great cities — their irregular habits, scant feeding, sexual excesses, secret vices, sleeping in hallways, basements, stables, and quiet corners. With such a low physical standard the ravages of venereal diseases are tremendously increased.

The messenger boys and the American District Telegraph boys are frequently found in the worst resorts of the "red-light" districts of our cities. In New York there are hundreds of such boys, ranging in age from twelve to fifteen, who know many of the prostitutes of the Tenderloin by name. Sad to relate, boys like to be employed in the "red-light" districts. They like it, not because they are bad or depraved, but for the very natural reason that they make more money there, receiving larger and more numerous tips. They are called upon for many services by the habitués of these haunts of the vicious and the profligate. They are sent out to place bets; to take notes to and from houses of ill-fame; or to buy liquor, cigarettes, candy, and even gloves, shoes, corsets, and other articles of wearing apparel for the "ladies." Not only are tips abundant, but there are many oppor-

tunities for graft of which the boys avail themselves. A lad is sent, for instance, for a bottle of whiskey. He is told to get a certain brand at a neighboring hotel, but he knows where he can get the same brand for 50 per cent of the hotel price, and, naturally, he goes there for it and pockets the difference in price. That is one form of messengers' graft. Another is overcharging for his services and pocketing the surplus, or keeping the change from a "ten-spot" or a "fiver," when, as often happens, the "sports" are either too reckless to bother about such trifles or too drunk to remember. From sources such as these the messenger boy in a district like the Tenderloin will often make several dollars a day.[52]

A whole series of temptations confronts the messenger boy. He smokes, drinks, gambles, and, very often, patronizes the lowest class of cheap brothels. In answering calls from houses of ill-repute messengers cannot avoid being witnesses of scenes of licentiousness more or less frequently. By presents of money, fruit, candy, cigarettes, and even liquor, the women make friends of the boys, who quickly learn all the foul slang of the brothels.[53] The conversation of a group of messengers in such a district will often reveal the most astounding intimacy with the grossest things of the underworld. That in their adolescence, the transition from boyhood to manhood, fraught as it is with its own inherent perils,

they should be thrown into such an environment and exposed to such temptations is an evil which cannot possibly be overemphasized. The penal code of New York declares the sending of minors to carry messages to or from a house of ill-fame to be a misdemeanor, but the law is a dead letter. It cannot possibly be enforced, and its repeal would probably be a good thing. While it may be urged that the mere existence of such a law has a certain moral value as a condemnation of such a dangerous employment for boys, it is exceedingly doubtful if that good is sufficient to counterbalance the harm which comes from the non-enforcement of the law.

I have dwelt mainly upon the grosser vices associated with street employment, as with employment in factories and mines, because it is a phase of the subject about which too little is known. I need scarcely say, however, that these vices are not the only ones to which serious attention should be given. Crime naturally results from such conditions. Of 600 boys committed to the New York Juvenile Asylum by the courts, 125 were newsboys who had been committed for various offences ranging from ungovernableness and disorderly conduct to grand larceny.[54] Mr. Nibecker, Superintendent of the House of Refuge at Glen Mills, near Philadelphia, was asked, "Have you, in disproportionate numbers, boys who formerly were engaged in some one particular occupation?"

He replied promptly, "Yes, district messengers." [55] It seems to be the almost unanimous opinion of probation officers and other competent authorities in our large cities that messenger boys and newsboys furnish an exceedingly large proportion of cases of juvenile delinquency. I wrote to six probation officers in as many large cities asking them to give me their opinions as to the classes of occupation which seem to have the largest number of juvenile delinquents. Their replies are summarized in the following schedule: —

OCCUPATIONS OF JUVENILE DELINQUENTS IN SIX LARGE CITIES, SHOWING THE RELATIVE NUMBER OF EACH OCCUPATION

REPORT	A	B	C	D
1	Messenger boys	Newsboys	Factory boys	Miscellaneous
2	Newsboys	Messenger boys	Factory boys	Truants
3	Newsboys	Messenger boys	Truants	Factory boys
4	Messenger boys	Factory boys	Newsboys	Miscellaneous
5	Messenger boys	Newsboys	Truants	Miscellaneous
6	Factory boys	Truants	Messenger boys	Newsboys

In six smaller cities, where the number of factory workers is much larger in proportion than in the great cities, and the number of newsboys and messengers is much smaller, the results were somewhat different. The following schedule is interesting as a summary of the replies received from these towns: —

OCCUPATIONS OF JUVENILE DELINQUENTS IN SIX TOWNS OF LESS THAN 100,000 INHABITANTS, SHOWING THE RELATIVE NUMBER OF EACH OCCUPATION*

REPORT	A	B	C	D
1	Mine boys	Truants	Messenger boys	Miscellaneous
2	Glass-house boys	Other factory boys	Miscellaneous	Truants
3	Mill boys	Messenger boys	Truants	Miscellaneous
4	Mill boys	Mine boys	Truants	Miscellaneous
5	Mill boys	Truants	Newsboys	Miscellaneous
6	Mine boys	Messenger boys	Miscellaneous	Truants

These facts, and other facts of a like nature, are only indicative of the ill effects of child labor upon the morals of the children. In some cases the moral peril lies in the nature of the work itself, while in others it lies, not in the work, but in the conditions by which it is surrounded. In the Chicago Stock Yards, for example, judging by what I saw there, I should say that in most, if not all, of the departments the work itself is degrading and brutalizing, and that no person under eighteen years of age ought to be permitted to work in them. In large laundries little girls are very commonly employed as "sorters." Their work is to sort out the soiled clothes as they come in and to classify them. While such work must be disagreeable and unwholesome for a young girl, there is nothing necessarily demoraliz-

* "Messenger boys" includes errand boys in stores.

ing about it. But when such little girls are compelled to work with men and women of the coarsest and most illiterate type, as they frequently are, and to listen to constant conversation charged with foul suggestions, it becomes a soul-destroying occupation. At its best, even when all possible efforts are made to keep the place of employment pure and above reproach — and I know that there are many such places — still the whole tendency of child labor is in the direction of a lower moral standard. The feeling of independence caused by the ability to earn wages, the relaxation of parental authority, with the result that the children roam the streets at night or frequent places of amusement of questionable character; the ruthless destruction of the bloom of youthful innocence and the forced consciousness of life properly belonging to adult years — these are inevitably associated with child labor.

X

These are some of the ills which child labor inflicts upon the children themselves, ills which do not end with their childhood days but curse and blight all their after years. The child who is forced to be a man too soon, forced too early to enter the industrial strife of the world, ceases to *be* a man too soon, ceases to be *fit* for the industrial strife. When the strength is sapped in childhood there is an absence of strength

in manhood and womanhood; Ruskin's words are profoundly true, that "to be a man too soon is to be a small man." We are to-day using up the vitality of children; soon they will be men and women, without the vitality and strength necessary to maintain themselves and their dependants. When we exploit the immature strength of little children, we prepare recruits for the miserable army of the unfit and unemployable, whose lot is a shameful and debasing poverty.

This wrong to helpless childhood carries with it, therefore, a certain and dreadful retribution. It is not possible to injure a child without injuring society. Whatever burden society lays, or permits to be laid, upon the shoulders of its children, it must ultimately bear upon its own. Society's interest in the child may be well expressed in a slight paraphrase of the words of Jesus, "Whatsoever is done to one of the least of these little ones is done unto me." It is in that spirit that the advocates of child-labor legislation would have the nation forbid the exploitation, literally the exhaustion, of children by self-interested employers. For the abuse of childhood by individual antisocial interests, society as a whole must pay the penalty. If we neglect the children of to-day, and sap their strength so that they become weaklings, we must bear the burden of their failures when they fail and fall: —

"There is a sacred Something on all ways —
Something that watches through the Universe;
One that remembers, reckons and repays,
Giving us love for love, and curse for curse."

It is a well-known fact that the competition of children with their elders entails serious consequences of a twofold nature, — first, in the displacement of adults, and, second, in the lowering of their wage standards. There are few things more tragic in the modern industrial system than the sight of children working while their fathers can find no other employment than to carry dinners to them. I know that many persons are always ready to suggest that the fathers like this unnatural arrangement, that they prefer to live upon the earnings of their little ones, and there are, no doubt, cases in which this is true. But in the majority of cases it is not true. Every one who is at all familiar with the lives of the workers must realize that when applied indiscriminately to the mass of those who find themselves in that condition of dependence upon their children's labor, this view is a gross libel. Some months ago, I stood outside of a large clothing factory in Rochester, N.Y. Upon the front of the building, as upon several others in the street, there hung a painted sign, such as I have seen there many times, bearing the inscription, "Small Girls Wanted." While I stood there two men passed by and I heard one of them say to the other:

"That's fourteen places we've seen they want kids to-day, Bill, but we've tramped round all week an' never got sight of a job." I have known many earnest, industrious men to be weeks at a time seeking employment while their children could get places without difficulty. The displacement of adult workers by their children is a stern and sad feature of the competition of the labor market, which no amount of cynicism can dispose of.

A brief study of the returns published in the bulletins and reports of the various bureaus of labor and the labor unions will show that child labor tends to lower the wages of adult workers. Where the competition of children is a factor wages are invariably lowest. Two or three years ago I was associated in a small way with an agitation carried on by the members of the Cigarmakers' Union in Pennsylvania against the "Cigar Trust." One of the principal issues in that agitation was the employment of young children. The labor unions have always opposed child labor, for the reason that they know from experience how its employment tends to displace adult labor and to reduce wages. In the case of the cigarmakers' agitation the chief grievance was the fact that children were making for $2 and $2.50 per thousand the same class of cigars as the men were paid from $7.50 to $8 per thousand for making.[56] The men worked under fairly decent, human conditions, but the condi-

tions under which the children worked were positively inhuman. That such competition as that, if extensive, must result in the gradual displacement of men and the employment of children, accompanied by the reduction of the wages of the men fortunate enough to be allowed to remain at work, is, I think, self-evident. In their turn the unemployment of adults and the lowering of wages are fruitful sources of poverty, and force the employment of many children.

These are some of the most obvious immediate economic consequences of child labor, simple facts which we can readily grasp. But there are other, subtler and less obvious, economic consequences of even greater importance, so vast that their magnitude cannot be measured nor even guessed. It is impossible to conceive how much we lose through the lessened productive capacity of those who have been prematurely exploited, and even if that were possible, we should still have to face the stupendous problem of determining how much of our expenditure for the relief of poverty, caring for the diseased and crippled, and the expensive maintenance of a large criminal class in prisons and reformatories, has been rendered necessary by that same fundamental cause. It is an awful, bewildering problem, this ultimate economic cost of child labor to society. If it were proposed to saddle the bulk of these expenditures for the relief of the necessitous and the maintenance of the dis-

eased, maimed, and criminal classes upon the industries in which their energies were used up, their bodies maimed, or their moral natures perverted and destroyed, there would be a great outcry. Yet, it would be much more reasonable and just than the present system, which permits the physical, mental, and moral ruin to be carried on in the selfish and sordid interests of a class, and the imposition of the resulting burden of misery and failure upon the shoulders of society as a whole.

XI

What are the reasons for the employment of children? It is almost needless to argue that child labor is socially unnecessary, that the labor of little boys and girls is not required in order that wealth sufficient for the needs of society may be produced. If such a claim were made, it would be an all-sufficing reply to point to the great army of unemployed men in our midst, and to say that the last man must be employed before the employment of the first child can be justified. When there is not an unemployed man, when there is not a man employed in useless, unproductive, and wasteful labor, if there is then a shortage of the things necessary for social maintenance, child labor may be necessary and justifiable. Under any other conditions than these it is unjustifiable and brutally wrong. In the primitive struggle with the hostile forces of nature, such struggles as pioneers have had

in all lands before the deserts could be made to yield harvests of fruit and grain, the labor of wives and children has been necessary to supplement that of husbands and fathers. But what would be thought of the men, under such conditions, if they forced their wives and children to work while they idled, ate, and slept? Yet that is, essentially, the practice of modern industrial society. Here is a great country with natural resources unparalleled in human experience for their richness and variety; here labor is so productive, and inventive genius so highly developed, that wealth overflows our granaries and warehouses, and forces us to seek foreign markets for its disposal. The children employed in our factories are not employed because it would otherwise be impossible to produce the necessities of life for the nation. The little five-year-old girl seen by Miss Addams working at night in a Southern cotton mill was not so employed because it was necessary in order that the American people might have enough cotton goods to supply their needs. On the contrary, she was making sheeting for the Chinese Army![57] Not that she or those by whom she was employed had any interest in the Chinese Army, but because there was a prospective profit for the manufacturer in the making of sheeting for sale to China for the use of her soldiers. The manufacturer would just as readily have sacrificed little American girls in the manufacture of beads



A "KINDERGARTEN" TOBACCO FACTORY IN PHILADELPHIA

for Hottentots, or gilt idols for poor Hindoo ryots, if the profit were equal.

That is the root of the child-labor evil; it has no social justification and exists only for the sordid gain of profit-seekers. It is not difficult, therefore, to understand the manufacturers' interest in child labor, or their opposition to all efforts to legislate against it. Cheap production is the maxim of success in industry, and a plentiful supply of cheap labor is a powerful contributor to that end. The principal items in productive cost are the raw material and the labor necessary, the relative importance of each depending upon the nature of the industry itself. Now, it is obviously to the interest of the manufacturer, as manufacturer, to get both raw material and labor-power as cheaply as possible, whether the industry in which he is interested is governed by competitive, or monopolistic, or any intermediate conditions. If competition rules, cheapness is vitally important to him, since if he can get an advantage over his competitors in that respect he can undersell them, while if he fails to get his supplies of labor and raw material as cheaply as his competitors, he will be undersold. If, on the other hand, monopoly conditions prevail, it is still an important interest to secure them as cheaply as possible, thereby increasing his profit.

It is an axiom of commercial economy that supply follows demand, and it is certain that the constant

demand for the cheap, tractable labor of children has had much to do with the creation of the supply. At bottom the employers, or, rather, the system of production for profit, must be held responsible for child labor. There are evidences of this on every hand. We see manufacturers in New Jersey and Pennsylvania getting children from orphan asylums, regardless of their physical, mental, and moral ruin, merely because it *pays* them. When the glass-blowers of Minotola, N.J., went on strike, in 1902, the child-labor question was one of their most important issues. The exposures made of the frightful enslavement of little children attracted widespread attention. There is very little in the history of the English factory system which excels in horror the conditions which existed in that little South Jersey town at the beginning of the twentieth century.[58] When the proprietor of the factory was asked about the employment of young boys ten and eleven years of age, many of whom often fell asleep and were awakened by the men pouring water over them, and at least two of whom died from overexhaustion, he said: "If two men apply to me for work and one has one or two or three children and the other has none, I take the man with children. I need the boys." In actual practice this meant that no man could get work as a glass-blower unless he was able to bring boys with him. A regular padrone system was developed in conse-

quence of this: the glass-blowers, determined to keep their own boys out of the factories if possible, secured children from orphan asylums, or took the little boys of Italian immigrants, boarded them, and paid the parents a regular weekly sum.

In the mills of the South it is frequently made a condition of the employment of married men or women that all their children shall be bound to work in the same mills. The following is one of the rules posted in a South Carolina cotton mill: —

"All children, members of a family, above twelve years of age, shall work regularly in the mill, and shall not be excused from service therein without the consent of the superintendent for good cause." [59]

Many times I have heard fathers and mothers — in the North as well as in the South — say that they did not want their children to work, that they could have done without the children's wages and kept them at school a little longer, or apprenticed them to better employment, but that they were compelled to send them into the mills to work, or lose their own places. Even more eloquent as evidencing the keen demand of the manufacturers for child labor is the fact to which Mr. McKelway calls attention, that, in response to their demand, cotton-mill machinery is being made with adjustable legs to suit small child workers. Mr. McKelway rightly contrasts this with the experience in India when the first cotton mills were erected

there. Then, for the first time, it was found necessary to manufacture spinning frames high enough from the floor to accommodate adult workers.[60]

With such facts as these before us, it is easy to see that the urgency of the employers' demands for child labor is an important factor in the problem. Underlying all other causes is the fundamental fact that the exploitation of the children is in the interests of the employing class. It may be urged that it is necessary for children to begin work at an early age because the work they do cannot be done by men or women, but the contention is wholly unsupported by facts. There is no work done by boys in the glass factories which men could not do; no skill or training is required to enable one to do the work done by breaker boys in the coal-mines; the work done by children in the textile mills could be done equally well by adults. The fact that in some cases adults are employed to do the work which in other cases is done by children, is sufficient proof that child labor is not resorted to because it is inevitable and necessary, but on account of its cheapness.

It does not, of course, necessarily follow that low-priced labor is really cheap labor; it may prove to be just as uneconomical to employ such labor as to buy poor raw materials merely because they are low-priced. The quantitative measure is no more satisfactory as a standard of value when applied to labor

than when applied to other things. Thomas Brassey, the famous English engineer and contractor, used to declare that the cost of carrying out great works in different countries did not vary according to the wages paid, and that his experience had been that in countries where wages were highest the rate of profit was also highest. Very similar testimony has been given by many large employers of labor, and the point seems to be fairly well established. It is said, for instance, that the cost of erecting large buildings does not differ very much in the great capitals of the world, though the rate of wages differs enormously, and that in America, where wages in the building trades are much higher than anywhere else in the world, the labor cost is really less than elsewhere.[61] In view of this economic fact, it has been urged that child labor is not cheap labor, except in a false and uneconomic sense, that it is inefficient, and that it would be to the interest of the employers themselves to employ adult labor instead.

Doubtless this argument has been used in the true propagandist spirit of appealing to as many interests as possible, and proving the sweet reasonableness of the demand for the abolition of child labor, but I am inclined to doubt its value. We may, I think, trust the employers to look after their own interests. It is true that if you put an underpaid and underfed Italian laborer at a dollar a day to work, and along-

side put a decently fed American laborer at double that wage, you will probably find the labor of the latter the more profitable; just as cheap, miserably paid coolie labor is the most expensive of all. But I do not think it follows that adult labor would be cheaper than child labor to the employer. Most child labor is made possible by machinery and conditioned by it, and adult labor would be conditioned by it in the same manner. There is very little scope for individual differences to manifest themselves where the machine is the controlling power. In other industries, such as glass manufacture, where machinery plays a relatively unimportant part as yet, the labor of the boys is conditioned by the speed of the men they serve. The men, urged on by the piecework system, work at their utmost limit of speed, and the boys must keep pace with them. It is unlikely that if men were employed to do the work now done by the "snappers-up," they would be able to increase the speed of the glass-blowers, the only way in which their labor could prove cheaper. On the contrary, there is every reason to suppose that men would not consent to be driven as boys are driven. I have gathered from glass-blowers themselves that they are very often as much opposed to the introduction of adult helpers as are their employers, for the reason that they believe adults would not serve them with the same speed as boys. For these reasons, and many others

into which it is impossible to enter here, I am convinced that little good will result from a propaganda aiming to show the employers that their economic interests would be best served by the abolition of child labor.

In a similar way it has been urged, with ample evidence of its truth, that the employment of children retards the introduction of mechanical devices and their fullest development.[62] This is perfectly true, not only of child labor, but of almost all forms of labor that are unhealthful or degrading. There is absolutely no need of human street sweepers, exposed in all weathers and constantly inhaling foul, disease-laden dust, any more than there is need of little boys working in the glass factories, carrying red-hot bottles to the ovens. In each case machinery has been invented to do the work, and it is used to a small extent. If these occupations, and scores of others, were absolutely prohibited, and the prohibitory law rigidly enforced, streets would still be swept, but by mechanical sweepers, and bottles would still be taken to the annealing ovens, but by mechanical means. The world will probably, let us hope, never become the paradise dreamed of by the German dreamer, Etzler, who believed that all the work of the world would be done by machinery in the future, and human labor become altogether unnecessary.[63] But there is no doubt that much of the work which to-day

degrades body, brain, and soul could be done just as well by mechanical agents. Not, however, through sermonizing or appealing to the employers will these mechanical devices be generally adopted to take the place of the life-destroying labor of boys and girls; but by making it increasingly difficult, and finally impossible, for them to employ child labor at all.

Not long ago I was in a glass factory where the "carrying-in boys" had been displaced by automatic machinery. As I watched the machine doing the work I had been accustomed to seeing little boys perform, I asked the manager of the factory why it had been introduced. His answer was simple and direct, "Why, because it had become too difficult to get boys." A few days later I went into another factory where boys were, as usual, employed in doing the work. I asked the owner of the factory why he did not use machinery instead of employing boys. "Because it is not practicable," he replied. "We must have boys and can't do without them." When I told him that I had seen the work done by machinery with perfect satisfaction, he laughed. "Yes, that is true, but I still say that it is not a practicable proposal," he rejoined. "I mean that it is not a practical business proposition. I am not interested in machinery, as machinery, and if I can get all the boys I want, at wages making their labor no more expensive than the cost of running machinery, why should I



A GLASS FACTORY AT NIGHT

tie up two or three thousand dollars of my capital to install machines? So long as I can get boys enough, I don't want to bother with machines." Then I asked: "What would you do if you could not get boys — if their employment was forbidden, and the law strictly enforced?" His reply was suggestive. "Why, then machinery would be the only thing; then it would be a practical business proposition," he said.

I have given this manufacturer's opinion, as nearly as possible in his own words, because it is an admirably clear statement of what I believe to be the natural attitude of the employing class upon a grave question. All that stands in the way of a general use of machinery to do the work now performed at such an enormous cost in human life and happiness, is the temporary inconvenience of the employers from having to tie up some of their capital. Just as the woollen manufacturers in England, as soon as they were debarred from employing children, adopted the piecing machine,[64] so the employers of America to-day would have no difficulty about securing machinery, much of it already invented, if the employment of children should be forbidden. But, generally speaking, they will not of themselves make the change.

XII

It is less easy to understand the problem of child labor in its relation to parental responsibility. It is

continually asked: "Why do parents send their little ones to work at such an early age? Is it possible that there are so many parents who are so indifferent to the welfare of their children that they send them to work, and surround them with perils and evil influences, or are there other, deeper reasons? Are the parents helpless to save their little ones?" These are questions which have never yet been satisfactorily answered; they deal with a phase of the problem which has never been fully investigated, notwithstanding that it is of vital importance.

As already noted, when the manufacturers of England sought first to get child workers for the cotton and woollen mills, they found the parents arrayed against them, defending their children. For a long time no self-respecting father or mother would allow a child to go to the factories to work, and it remained for many years a brand of social disgrace to have one's children so employed. Not until their pride was conquered by poverty, not until they were subjugated by hunger and compelled to surrender and accept the inevitable, did the parents send their children into the factories. It was poverty, bitter poverty, which led the first "free" child into the mills to economic servitude, and I am disposed to think that poverty is still the main reason why parents send their children to body-and-soul-destroying toil.

Many of those whose work for the enactment of

legislation to protect the children from the ills of premature labor entitles them to lasting honor and gratitude, have shown an inclination to minimize the extent to which poverty is responsible for child labor. The opponents of child-labor legislation have so strongly insisted upon the hardships which would follow if parents were deprived of their children's earnings, and have so eloquently pleaded the cause of the "poor widowed mothers," as almost to make the employment of children appear as a philanthropic enterprise. Very often, it seems to me, the advocates of child-labor legislation, in their eagerness to refute their critics, have resorted to arguments which rest upon exceedingly slight foundations of fact, and, in this case especially, laid insufficient stress upon the logical answer. The more closely the problem is scrutinized and investigated, the larger the influence of poverty will appear, I think. At the same time, it is well to remember that poverty is not the only cause by any means. There are many other causes, some closely associated with poverty, others only remotely or not at all. Ignorance, cupidity, indifference, feverish ambition to "get on," — these are a few of the many other causes which might be named.

It is declared, then, that actual inquiry has shown that the claim that the earnings of the children are necessary to the support of the family, and that widows and others would suffer serious poverty if their

children under fifteen were not permitted to work, is "rarely if ever justified." Mrs. Frederick Nathan, of the Consumers' League of the City of New York, whose splendid devotion to the cause of social righteousness lends weight to her words, expresses this view with admirable clearness. She says: "Whenever preventive measures for child labor are enacted or enforced, there is always a wail heard to the effect that the child's labor is absolutely requisite for the living expenses of the family. Yet, upon investigation, this statement is rarely corroborated. In Illinois, there was recently enacted a law prohibiting children under sixteen from working more than eight hours a day, or after 7 P.M. Thousands of diminutive toilers were discharged. Then a cry of hardship went up in behalf of hundreds of families. Philanthropic women undertook an investigation, supposing they would find a number of cases in which the wages of the working child were absolutely necessary to the family income. To their amazement they found only three families in Chicago, and five in the remainder of the state, where this was true. In every other case it was discovered that either the parent or older children could support the family, or some relative was willing to assist until the child reached the legal age." [65]

Where there are so many coöperating causes, it would be easy to overestimate the importance of any

one, and correspondingly easy to underestimate it. How the investigations in Illinois were conducted, what standards were adopted by the investigators, I do not know, and cannot, therefore, in the absence of specified data, express an opinion upon the validity of the conclusions drawn. Frankly, however, I distrust them. Not long since I heard of a case in which a "philanthropic lady investigator" decided that the wages of a child of thirteen were not necessary to the maintenance of the family, because she "had a father in regular employment." It did not, apparently, occur to her that $9 a week was too little to support decently a family of six persons.

Whatever the nature of the Illinois investigation, I am certain that in my own experience the proportion of cases in which there is actual dependence upon what the children earn is very much larger. It must not be forgotten in discussing this question that although a child may earn only $1.50 a week, that sum may mean a great deal to the family. It may mean the difference between living in a comparatively good house on a decent street and going to a foul tenement in a bad neighborhood. It may mean the difference between coal and no coal in winter, or ice and no ice in summer. As a poor woman said to me quite recently, "Joe only earns thirty cents a day, but that thirty cents means supper for all five in the family." The investigations of

Mr. Nichols in the coal-mining and textile-manufacturing towns,[66] of Mr. Kellogg Durland,[67] and, particularly, the inquiries made in New Jersey concerning the immediate effects of the Child Labor Law of 1904,[68] all tend to show that the dependence of families upon children's earnings is much greater than the Illinois figures would indicate. I venture the opinion that there is not a Settlement worker in America who has studied this problem whose experience would confirm the optimism of the Illinois investigators. I am certain that within a radius of three blocks from the little Settlement in which this is written, and with which I am at present most familiar, there are more families known to be absolutely dependent upon the earnings of young children than were found in the whole State of Illinois, according to the report quoted. I know of at least twice as many such families as were found in Illinois living in this little city with its population of about sixty thousand as against the nearly 5,000,000 in Illinois. Settlement workers in various parts of the country have, without exception, declared the Illinois report to be absolutely at variance with their experience.

In the hope that I might be able to gather sufficient accurate data to warrant some fairly definite conclusions upon this point, I spent several weeks making careful personal investigations into the matter in four states, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania,

and Massachusetts. I made inquiries into 213 cases, first getting the children's stories and then carefully investigating them. The results are clearly set forth in the accompanying schedule, but explanation of a few points may be helpful to the reader.

In choosing a wage standard to represent the primary poverty line, I somewhat arbitrarily fixed upon $10 per week. In either of the four states named, such a wage must mean poverty and lead to the employment of children at the earliest possible moment. Intemperance appears in four cases, but that does not mean that it did not enter into other cases at all. In the four cases noted the fathers were earning from $12 to $18 per week, and while it is possible that with such wages they might be honestly and honorably poor, since even $18 is not a very princely wage, it is a fact that their expenditures upon drink constituted the real cause of the poverty which forced their children to work. On the other hand, I do not suppose that all the cases of child labor due to the primary poverty of their families are noted. In the last column several cases are given of children who were "sick when attending school," or who "could not get on at school." For reasons given in an earlier chapter, I am inclined to believe that these cases would have to be transferred to the other column if it were only possible to investigate them more fully.

TABLE SHOWING REASONS FOR THE EMPLOYMENT OF 213 CHILDREN

No. of Children	Occupations *	Reasons given which indicate Primary Poverty	Reasons given Other than Apparent Primary Poverty
Boys, 34.	Glass factory workers.†	Wages of father less than $10 per week . . . 9 Father sick or injured . . . . 5 Father dead . . 2 Father unemployed . . . . . 1 Father in prison 1	Parents saving money to buy their homes, etc. . . . . 8 Children working to keep father who is able to work but won't . . . . . 2 Not determined 6
Boys, 23. Girls, 57.	Textile mill workers.	Wages of father less than $10 per week . . . 14 Father unemployed . . . . . 6 Father dead . . 5 Father sick or injured . . . . 6 Father deserted family . . . . . 2 Father drunkard 1	Tired of school . . . . 13 Discouraged by being "put back" at school every time family moved . . . . . 6 Parents saving the money . . . . . 5 Because companions went to work . . . . 9 To get better clothes . 4 Not determined 9
Boys, 33. Girls, 22.	Cigarette, cigar, and tobacco workers.	Father's wage less than $10 per week . . . 14 Father dead . . 3 Father sick or injured . . . . 4 Father unemployed . . . . . 4 Father drunkard 3	Because friends worked 6 Tired of school . . . . 5 Parents saving money 4 To get better clothes . 3 Sick while at school . 2 Not determined 7
Boys, 18. Girls, 26.	Delivery wagon boys . . 4 Match packers . . . . 12 Candy factory girls . 10 Wire factory workers . . 7 Rubber fact'y workers 11	Wages of father less than $10 per week . . . 15 Father dead . . 2 Father sick or injured . . . . 4 Father unemployed . . . . . 2 Father deserted family 2	Couldn't get on at school. . . . . 6 To get better clothes . 4 Because friends went to work . . . . . 3 Sick while at school . 3 Not determined 3

* No inquiry was made among mine workers because, on account of the large number of boys whose fathers have been killed or permanently disabled, the data would be less representative. (See Roberts' *Anthracite Coal Communities*, p. 176.)

† Mostly foreign born or the children of foreign-born parents, Slavs and Italians. The entire absence of reference to school matters is suggestive. Most of them never entered a school.

Total No. of Children	Occupations	Summary of Causes in Primary Poverty Group	Summary of Causes Other than Primary Poverty
Boys, 108 Girls, 105		Low wages . . . . 52 Unemployment . . 13 Father's death . . 12 Father's sickness . 19 Father's desertion of family . . . . 4 Father's intemperance . . . . . 4 Father in prison . 1	School difficulties . 30 Because friends went to work . . 18 To get better clothes 11 To enable parents to save . . . . . 17 Sickness of child while at school . 5 Father's laziness . . 2 Not determined . . 25
Total, 213		Total, 105 = 49.30%	Total, 108 = 50.70%

I do not offer this table as conclusive testimony upon the point under discussion. The number of cases investigated is too small to give the results more than suggestive value. Personally, I believe that the cases given are fairly typical, and that is the opinion also of some of the leading authorities upon the subject to whom I have submitted the table. No private investigator can ever hope to investigate a sufficient number of cases to establish anything conclusively in this connection. What is needed most of all is a coöperative investigation under the direction of the leading sociological students of the country until such extensive returns are gathered as will justify more positive conclusions. In the meantime such tables as this can at best only serve to call attention to what *may* be a general fact.

The table shows more than mere poverty. First

of all there is the senseless, feverish, natural ambition of the immigrant to save money, to be rich. "Ma boy getta much mona — I get richa man," said one of the Italians included in the first line of the fourth column of the foregoing table. How often I have heard that speech! Not always in the broken music of Italian-English, but in the many-toned, curious English of Bohemian, Lithuanian, Scandinavian, Russian, Pole, and Greek — all drawn by the same powerful magnet of wealth — all sacrificing, ignorantly and blindly, the lives of themselves and their children in their fevered quest. In this, as in so many other problems of the republic, the immigration of hundreds of thousands of people of alien races, customs, and speech enters. Whether their admission is wise or unwise is a subject outside the scope of this discussion, but one thing is certain, and as vital as it is true, namely, that hospitality has its obligations and duties. If the nation is to receive these immigrants, the nation must accept the responsibility of protecting them and itself. It must protect the immigrants from the dangers which their ignorance does not permit them to see, and protect itself from having to bear in the near future an Atlantean load; an economic burden which must come to it if these "strangers within the gates" in their ignorance are allowed to barter the manhood of their sons and the womanhood of their daughters for gold.

The virtual breakdown of our school system is one of the gravest problems indicated by the table and enforced by general observation. The children who go to work in factories and mines because they are "tired of school," or "because they could not learn," are, it is to be feared, not always but too often, the victims of undernutrition. The school spends all its energies in the vain attempt to educate wasting minds in starving bodies, and then the child, already physically and mentally ruined, goes to the mine or the factory, there to linger on as half-starved plants in arid soil sometimes linger, or to fade away as a summer flower fades in a day. Poverty began the ruin of the child by denying it proper nourishment, and ignorance and greed combine to complete the ruin by sending the child in its weakness forth to labor.

The other reasons for the employment of children shown in the table cannot be discussed separately. The moral contagion of poverty and ignorance, evidenced by the number of those who work, not from necessity, but because their friends work, is not new to those who have studied this and kindred problems. The influence of a single family in lowering the moral and economic standards of a whole street, especially in our smaller towns, is notorious. The pathos of the mothers of families who are worse than widows, with their drunken, dissolute husbands, and the tragedy of little child lives crushed by brutal, selfish,

indolent fathers who place the responsibility of maintaining the family upon their young shoulders, are familiar phases of the problem of child labor.

It is a solemn responsibility which the presence of this menacing evil of child labor places upon the nation. It is not only the interests of the children themselves that are menaced; even more important and terrible is the thought that civilization itself is imperilled when children are dwarfed physically, mentally, and morally by hunger, heavy toil, and unwholesome surroundings. If one of the forts along our far-stretching coasts were attacked by an enemy, or if a single square mile of our immense territory were invaded, the nation would rise in patriotic unison, and there would be no lack either of men or money for the defence. Surely, it is not too much to hope that, before long, the nation will realize in the destruction of its future citizens by greed and ignorance a far more serious attack upon the republic than any that could be made by fleets or armed legions. To sap the strength and weaken the moral fibres of the children is to grind the seed corn, to wreck the future for to-day's fleeting gain.

A great Frenchman once said of the alphabet, "These twenty-six letters contain all the good things that ever were, or ever can be, said, — only they need to be arranged." To complete the truth of this aphorism, he should have included all the [illegible]

things as well. And so it is with the children of a nation. Capable of expressing all the good or evil the world has known or may know, it is essentially a matter of arrangement, opportunity, environment. Whether the children of to-day become physical, mental, and moral cretins, or strong men and women, fathers and mothers of virile sons and daughters, depends upon the decision of the nation. If the responsibility of this is fully recognized, and the employment of children under fifteen years of age is forbidden throughout the length and breadth of this great country; if the nation realizes that the demand for the protection of the children is the highest patriotism, and enfolds every child within its strong, protecting arms, then and not till then will it be possible to look with confidence toward the future, unashamed and unafraid.

IV

REMEDIAL MEASURES

"But pity will not right the wrong,
Nor doles return the stolen youth;
When tasks are done without a song
And bargains wrung at cost of truth,
'Tis mockery to talk of ruth."

— DAVID LOWE.

I

HAVING stated the problem of poverty, as it bears upon the child, as plainly and comprehensively as possible, I would fain leave it without further comment, feeling with Whewell that, "Rightly to propose a problem is no inconsiderable step towards its solution," and believing that once the facts are known, and their significance understood, reform cannot be long delayed. Beyond the measures briefly suggested in the preceding pages, I would gladly leave the whole subject of remedial action untouched, regarding the purpose of this book as fulfilled in the statement of the problem itself. But when I have submitted the substance of the evidence herein presented to those whose knowledge and experience entitle them to be regarded as experts, or to popular audiences in the form of lectures,

they have, with scarcely an exception, expressed the view that the statement of such a problem should be accompanied by some suggestions as to its solution; some indication of social and individual duty, lest the result be heaviness of heart and blackness of despair.

Whoever has seriously contemplated the misery and suffering which, like a poisonous cloud, encompasses modern society, must have experienced doubts and fears for the future, and, like the chastened patriarch of Uz, felt his hope "plucked up like a tree." So many of the beacons that have shone out over the rough, perilous path of Humanity's pilgrimage have turned out to be false lights, like the swinging lantern-lights of the old Cornubian wreckers, which lured trusting mariners to head their vessels to destruction upon the rocks, that we sometimes lose faith and despair of the visions of world-ecstasy, the "passionate prefigurings of a world revivified," with which the seers of the race have beckoned us onward. And such despair blights and starves the soul of progress. When men cease to yearn for, and to believe in, justice, when they no longer aspire to social perfection, when old men cease to dream dreams, and young men to see visions of a nobler world than this economic anarchy, there can be no progress. Beautiful ideals seem to mock us at times, but it is doubtful if ever a beautiful

ideal found lodgment in the heart of the humblest man without enriching the world.

If I were asked wherein the hope of the future lies, I should adopt for answer the message of a great rock. Travelling along the Yellowstone River, in the autumn of 1904, I saw an immense rock column, a veritable landmark for many miles, upon which some enthusiast had painted in large red letters, "Socialism is the Hope of the World." Doubtless some ranchman, dreaming of a future world-righteousness, had conceived the idea of making that great natural obelisk a missionary for the faith he held, just as other enthusiasts had pasted the similar legends I had seen along the trails of the North Dakota prairies. I share that faith and hope, and believe that nothing short of the socialization of the means of life will ever fully and finally solve the problems inhering in our present industrial system, resulting in strife, bitterness, and the denial of human brotherhood. But long, weary years of suffering and struggle stretch between the present and that ideal state of the future. Socialism will, it is to be devoutly hoped, save the world from red ruin and anarchy and make possible a sweeter, nobler heritage for the generations yet unborn. But the most sanguine Socialist must see that it is little short of mockery to talk of the future triumph of his ideal in connection with the problem of relieving present

misery and distress, to answer the hunger-cry of to-day with the promise of a coöperative commonwealth in far-off years. All the Socialist parties of the world, with the exception of a few minor and unimportant factions, frankly recognize this and have formulated programmes of palliative measures for the amelioration of present evils. So far as I am aware, no non-Socialist political party has ever included in its programme demands for such measures as the abolition of child labor, the feeding of school children by the municipality, and the maintenance of municipal *crèches* — demands which are included in practically all Socialist programmes. In suggesting only such remedial measures as may be taken by society or individuals within the present social state, and involving no fundamental change in the social structure, I do so, therefore, as one believing in the ultimate necessity of such change, and the right of every child born into the world to equal opportunity and equal share in all the gifts and resources of civilization.

II

In view of all the difficulties by which the problem is surrounded, the uncertain results which have attended some of the most intelligent and sincere efforts in that direction, he would be foolish indeed who ventured to dogmatize upon the reduction of

the infantile death-rate, or the best methods to be adopted toward that end. There are, however, certain well-established facts, certain verities, upon which I would insist. It is perfectly obvious, for instance, that every child should be ushered into the world with loving tenderness, and with all the skill and care possible. The slightest blunder of an incompetent, unskilled midwife may involve fatal consequences to mother or child, or such injuries as are irreparable.[1] So that the very first principle upon which everybody agrees, theoretically at least, involves the need of important legislative reform providing for the supervision of midwives, and the establishment of a system of training and education without which no midwife should be allowed to practise. That such a law would have the effect of materially lowering the rate of infant mortality, as well as that of mothers, no one who has ever given the matter serious consideration can doubt. From personal observation, and the testimony of gynecologists and obstetricians of large experience, I am satisfied that this reform alone would save many hundreds of lives each year, alike of mothers and infants. It is appalling to think of the large number of ignorant women who are practising as midwives. Many of them have no conception of the importance of their work; they are often dirty and careless, as well as ignorant of the first

principles of obstetrical science. Knowing nothing of the need or value of antiseptic precautions, they are responsible for thousands of cases of blood-poisoning every year, and because they are ignorant of the methods of restoring asphyxiated infants they kill thousands of babes in the passage from the wombs of their suffering mothers.[2]

In most states there is very little supervision of midwives; in some cases practically none at all. New York, always rather prone to take pride in its record upon such matters, has regulations which are wofully inadequate. All that is necessary to enable a woman to practise as a midwife is: (1) a certificate or diploma from some school of midwifery, native or foreign, or (2) signed statements as to her fitness and character from two physicians. No inquiry whatever is made into the *bona fides* or character of the school granting the certificate, nor are the physicians held responsible in any way for the women they recommend.[3] So long as the applicant meets either of the foregoing slight requirements, the authorities must issue her a permit to practise as a midwife. She becomes a "registered midwife," and the title creates an altogether unwarranted confidence in the minds of the people. It is not only the poor, illiterate immigrants who are thus deceived, but many very intelligent citizens are under the impression that a "registered midwife" has had

some sort of training. Immigrants coming from countries like Germany, where all midwives have to undergo a thorough training, are naturally unsuspicious of the fact that here we have nothing of the kind. It is impossible to present the evil results of the employment of untrained and incompetent midwives statistically, or even to estimate them. Some idea may be gathered from the fact that, while the physicians of the New York Lying-in Hospital, in 1904, attended over four thousand confinements, 2766 *of them in the tenement districts* among the very poor, with only *three deaths*,[4] one midwife, in a very similar tenement district, showed me a list of *sixty-two cases* she had attended with *five deaths*. And she spoke proudly of her "good record"!

In Germany for some years midwives have had to pass a regular examination. In England, under the Midwife Act of 1902, they are placed under a much stricter supervision than ever before, and are made responsible for the cleanliness and care of mother and child during the lying-in period of ten days. While it is felt that this law is inadequate, it is believed that its enforcement tends to improve conditions materially. For years the New York County Medical Association and other medical societies of standing, supported by Boards of Health and the leaders of the medical profession, have tried to get legislation enacted providing for the establishment



A FREE INFANTS' MILK DEPOT (MUNICIPAL), BRUSSELS

of a standard of education and training for midwives. In every state legislation of a uniform character should be enacted providing that no person shall practise as a midwife or accoucheur without having first undergone a thorough training and passed an examination set by the State Board of Regents or some similar authority. They should be held responsible for malpractice, incompetence, or neglect, just as physicians are held responsible. While it is true that such a reform would inflict a certain amount of hardship and suffering upon many women, on the other hand, it would raise midwifery to the dignity of a profession, and provide lucrative avocations for many other women. In any case, it is a most tragic folly to set the hardship involved against the enormous gain to society.

It is probable that such trained midwives would command a much higher rate of remuneration for their services than many of the incompetent women who now act in that capacity, and that many poor mothers would be unable to afford to employ them. Even now there are thousands of women who cannot afford attendance of any kind at their lying-in, and doctors tell of children, little girls ten years old,[5] for instance, caring for their mothers through the pain and peril of parturition and for the newly born children. The remedy for such a condition lies, not in the employment of incompetent mid-

wives licensed to destroy life because they are willing to do it "cheaply," but in the extension of free medical service, maternity hospitals, and properly trained midwives as part of our district nursing services. This subject of the extension of our public medical service is a most important one. There is a tendency in some quarters to decry everything of this nature, and to magnify unduly the extent to which such services are abused. That they are sometimes abused, if by that term is understood their use by those who could afford to pay for such services, is undoubtedly true, though it would be easy to overestimate the extent of such abuses. On the other hand, it is certain that in many of our cities we have scarcely begun to make provision for the needs of the suffering poor. It is astonishing to find a manufacturing city of more than sixty thousand inhabitants, with a tenement-house problem as distressing as that of New York City, and with the most appalling poverty, having no city physician upon whom the suffering poor can call by right. I do not know if there are many other cities in the United States so utterly indifferent to the claims of the sick poor as Yonkers, the "city of beautiful homes and great industries" upon the Hudson, but I do know that there are many cities in which there is a sad and shameful failure to provide proper medical care and attention for the needy.

III

In order that the child may be surrounded at its birth with all possible care and skill, it must be born somewhere else than upon the floor of a factory. Notwithstanding all that may be said in its favor, it is little likely that the Jevonian proposal to forbid the employment of any mother within a period of three years from the date of the birth of her youngest child will be adopted for many years to come, if ever at all. Among the foremost opponents of such a proposal would be many of the advocates and defenders of "women's rights," begging the whole question of children's rights, and ignoring the question whether it can ever be "right" for mothers to leave their babies and enter the factory, displacing men, or, what is finally the same thing, lowering their wages. It would be difficult, however, to imagine any such opposition to the proposal that the employment of women should be forbidden within a period of six weeks or two months prior to and following childbirth. Decency and humanity alike suggest that such a law should be embodied in the factory legislation of every industrial state, as is the case in most countries at the present time.

With our cosmopolitan population it is certain that the enforcement of such a law would be no easy matter.[6] Little difficulty would seem to be neces-

sarily involved in the enforcement of the period of rest *after* confinement; all that would be necessary would be to insist upon a copy of the birth certificate of the youngest child, accompanied by the sworn statement of the mother. If the whole onus of responsibility were placed upon the employer, and penalties were imposed in a few cases, there is no reason to suppose that the law in this respect would be less effective than other laws relating to employment. That it would not be perfectly successful is no more an argument against its enactment than the partial failure of child-labor laws, for example, is an argument for their repeal. But the period of exemption prior to childbirth is a much more delicate and difficult matter. It has not, I believe, been found possible in European countries to enforce the law in this direction with as much success as in the other, but the results have been sufficiently successful, nevertheless, to warrant continued effort. In actual practice such a law would have a tendency, doubtless, to discourage the employment of married women in factories, since employers as a rule would not care to take the trouble, or to assume the risks, thus involved in their employment.

But, as already noted, if working mothers are to be forced into prolonged periods of idleness, in the interests of their offspring and the future of society, some means must be provided whereby they may

be maintained and secured against want. The philanthropic experiments noted in an earlier chapter owed all their success to such provisions. While it would perhaps be too Utopian to advocate as a measure for immediate adoption state pensions for childhood and youth as well as old age, as Mr. C. Hanford Henderson does in his wonderfully suggestive and stimulating book, *Education and the Larger Life,* it is not, it seems to me, too much to demand that the state shall (1) allow no mother to imperil her own life and that of her offspring by working too close to the period of parturition, nor (2) allow any mother to suffer want because she is prevented from, or of her own free will and intelligence avoids, such work. If the right of the child to be well born, to be ushered into the world with loving care and all the skill possible, is to be anything but a mere cant phrase, the safeguards thus briefly sketched cannot, it seems to me, be lightly denied. Recently I visited the stables of a friend interested in the breeding of horses. I saw that he had taken great care and pains to secure a well-trained veterinary surgeon, that the brood mares were patiently and lovingly cared for and tended, both before and after foaling. No humane and intelligent breeder of animals would deny them the protection and care here suggested for human beings. Until the state is willing to care for its children, at least as well

as enlightened individuals care for their horses, or their dogs, it is mockery to speak of it as being "civilized"!

IV

The foregoing proposals relate only to the conditions surrounding the child at birth, but it is equally the duty of society to safeguard the whole period of childhood. In its own interest, no less than in the interest of the child, the state should protect every child from all that menaces its life and well-being. Before the British Interdepartmental Committee many witnesses, some of them factory surgeons of long experience, testified to the harm resulting from the employment of mothers and the leaving of infants in the care of children or old persons utterly incompetent to care for them. It was proposed that the employment of married women in factories should be forbidden, except in cases where there are children "absolutely dependent on their wages." In all such cases "the municipality must make provision for the care of the child while the mother is at work."[7] As a minimum, this is a good and practicable proposal, though it falls far short of the ideal. Much more commendable for its humane good sense is the method adopted in some of the Socialist municipalities of France. In the case of widows and others with children absolutely dependent upon their earnings, these munici-



A GROUP OF WORKING MOTHERS

Photograph taken in the yard of a Day Nursery, where the babies are left during their mothers' absence at work.

palities pay the mothers a weekly or monthly pension, thus enabling them to stay at home with their children.[8] With characteristic good sense and courage, Mr. Homer Folks has proposed a similar system of pensions to widows and others dependent upon the wages of children, on the principle that the poverty of its parents ought not to be allowed to despoil a child's life and rob it of opportunities of healthful physical and mental development.[9] That is a perfectly sound principle, it seems to me, which applies with equal force to the working mother; for it is surely just as important to insist that poverty shall not be allowed to rob the child of its mother's care.

Wherever possible, then, I believe that the effort of society should be to keep the mother in the home with her children, and where pensions are necessary in order that this result may be attained, they should be given, not as a charity, but as a right. It would be a very good investment for society, much more profitable than many things upon which immense sums are lavished year by year. In the meantime, much good might be accomplished by the establishment of municipal *crèches* or day nurseries in all our industrial centres, so that babies and young children could be properly cared for during the absence of their mothers at work. Something is already being done in this direction by private phi-

lanthropy in many cities, but it is exceedingly little when compared with the magnitude of the need. In saying that these institutions should be provided by the municipality, or by the state, I do not mean that any attempt should be made to prohibit private philanthropic effort in this direction, nor that such effort should be in any way lessened; but that the municipality or the state should accept final responsibility in the matter, and provide them wherever the failure of philanthropy makes such a course necessary. In all our great cities, as well as in many of the smaller manufacturing towns, there should be such a *crèche* or nursery in the neighborhood of almost every primary school, until it is found possible to enable the mothers to remain with their little ones instead of going to work. With trained nurses in charge of such institutions, it would be easy to control the dietary of the infants and to see that they were not given pickles, candy, or other unwholesome things. Yet such a system, no matter how perfected, can only be regarded as a makeshift, a rather uneconomical substitute for the humane system of keeping the mother with her child.

The heavy death-rate in most foundling hospitals, despite all scientific care and the most elaborate equipment, have been accounted for by the lack of maternal interest and affection. In the splendidly appointed Infants' Hospital on Randall's Island

New York City, little lonely, mother-sick foundlings pined away at an alarming rate and died like flies until the Joint Committee of the Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor, and the State Charity Aid Association, investigated the matter. The Joint Committee wisely decided that every one of the bits of human driftwood was entitled to one pair of mother's arms, and that no institutional ingenuity could ever take the place of the maternal instinct. They instituted a system of placing-out the children with foster mothers, and the results have been highly gratifying.[10] That is the human way, answering to the universal child-instinct for a mother's love and presence. The same objection applies to *crèches* as to foundling hospitals; the difference is only one of degree. These institutions are far better for the children than the neglect or the ignorant handling of "little mothers" from which they now suffer, but they can never compare in efficiency with the personal attention of the mother. There are few mothers, be they ever so ignorant, who would not attend their own children with greater efficiency than any institution nurses could do. In the ultimate result I am convinced that the pensioning of mothers to care for their children adopted by the French municipalities where the Socialists have obtained control is much more economical and effective.

V

The importance of impure milk as a contributing cause of infant mortality is now pretty generally recognized. The splendid work of Mr. Nathan Straus has done much more, perhaps, than anything else, to emphasize this fact. In view of some rather caustic criticisms of charity in the preceding pages, it may be well if I embrace this opportunity to explain my position somewhat more fully. No one, I think, recognizes more fully than I do the important experimental work which has been done by philanthropic enterprise. Such work, of which that of Mr. Straus is a conspicuous example, has blazed the path for much municipal and state enterprise. It would be impossible to overestimate the value of the work done by social settlements and such bodies. For the charity which denies justice and seeks to fill its place, I have no sympathy, but for the charity which adopts as its motto the fine phrase adopted by the ablest journal of philanthropy in America,* — "Charity to-day may be Justice to-morrow," — I have nothing but praise.

I have long held the opinion that the milk supply of every city should be made a matter of municipal responsibility. Some ten years ago, while residing in England, where the subject was then be-

* *Charities.*



A "CLEAN MILK" DISTRIBUTING CENTRE IN A BAKER'S SHOP, ROCHESTER, N.Y.

ginning to be discussed and agitated, I devoted a good deal of time to the propaganda of the movement for the municipalization of the milk supply. In view of the splendid achievement of the *gouttes de lait* in France, it was natural that we should have attached much importance to the sterilization of the milk, and I remember with what enthusiasm some of us hailed the introduction of the system into St. Helen's, Lancashire, the first English city to adopt it. I am convinced now that sterilization is unnecessary and a grave mistake. Undoubtedly it is well that dirty or impure milk should be sterilized, but it would be still better to have clean, pure milk which needed no sterilization. The testimony of Dr. Ralph M. Vincent before the British Interdepartmental Committee [11] and, more emphatically still, the splendid results of the Rochester experiment under the leadership of Dr. Goler [12] show that this can be attained. Every municipality in America could adopt, and should adopt, the plan. "Now that the way has been shown, upon 'city fathers' indifferent to the childhood of their cities, upon health officers and departments warped into unbudgable routine, upon near-sighted charity workers and unknowing givers who care for the suffering, but do not get at causes, will rest the responsibility for the continuance of a part of that fearful tally of dead babies which each summer's week jots down

on a town's death-roll — your town and ours." In these direct, unequivocal words *Charities* sums up the whole question of responsibility.

The purely experimental work of such philanthropic efforts as that of Mr. Straus has been done. The practicability and value of municipal control of the milk supply has been abundantly proven, and there is no longer need of private charitable effort and experiment. There lurks a danger in leaving this important public service to philanthropy, a danger well-nigh as great as in leaving it to private commercial enterprise. The dangers arising from the amateurish meddling of "near-sighted charity workers and unknowing givers" is much greater than is generally recognized. Many of these charitable societies drag out a precarious existence, their usefulness and success depending upon the measure of success attending the efforts of the "begging committees." Generally speaking, they are less economical, and, what is more important, less effective, than municipal enterprises, besides being based upon a fatally unsound and demoralizing principle. I know of one large city in which a number of public-spirited citizens have for some years interested themselves in the supply of sterilized milk for infants. Notwithstanding that they receive each year in subscriptions a much larger amount of money, in proportion to the milk supplied, than Rochester's deficit,

they charge the parents more than twice as much as the latter city for the milk.

Nor is this all; there are other, weightier objections than this. There are no regular depots for the distribution of the milk, under the direct supervision of the Committee, but it is handled by drug-store keepers and others. No sort of control is exercised over the sale. Any child can go into the store and buy a bottle of milk. This is what happens: small children, sometimes not more than four or five years old, are sent by their parents to buy the milk. These little children are, naturally, ignorant of the importance which the medical advisers of the charity attach to the subject of modifications of the milk to suit the age of the child to whom it is to be given, with the result that babies less than three months old are given milk intended for babies eighteen months old, while the latter are half starved upon the modified milk intended for the former. Another evil, not, I am told, peculiar to this particular charitable society, is the selling of milk irregularly and in single bottles. When the mothers have the money, or when they are not too busy to go for the Pasteurized milk, they buy a single bottle, but at other times they send out to the grocery store for cheaper milk, or else feed the babies upon ordinary table foods. Of course, there should be a system of registration adopted; every child's name should be enrolled, together with

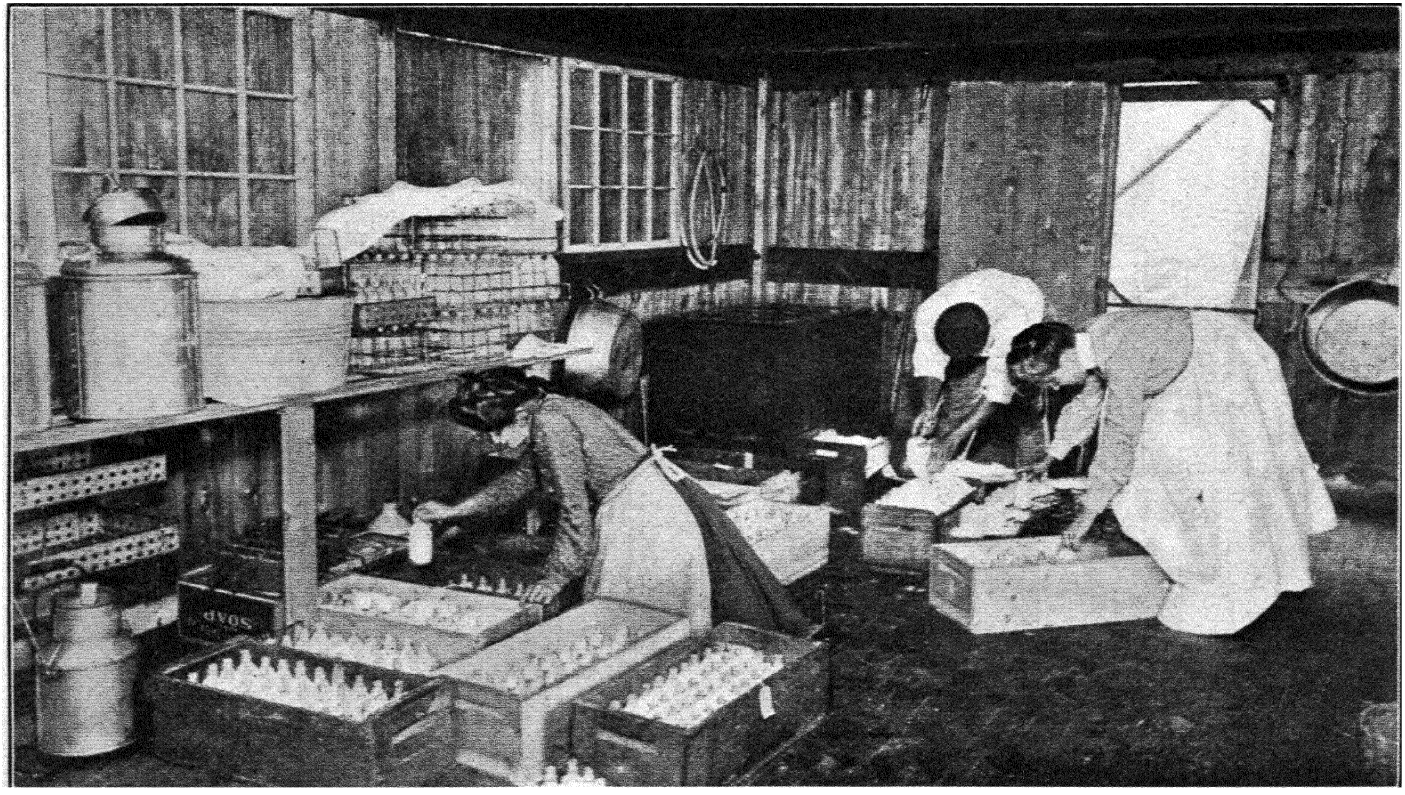
the date of its birth, and no less than a full day's supply should be sold. That is the custom where the matter has been taken up by the municipal authorities. The result is that the children can be weighed and examined more or less regularly; facilities are offered for the periodical visiting of the homes of the infants and their inspection; mothers can be taught how to care for their little ones; and, instead of leaving it to chance, or depending upon the word of an ignorant mother, or a child, the attendants in charge are able to regulate the supply so that at the proper time each child gets milk of the proper strength and richness. How far the abuses I have named are prevalent in philanthropic experiments of this kind, I do not know, but I am convinced that there should be no room for such well-intentioned but disastrous muddling. The whole milk supply of every city should be the subject of municipal management and control, and special arrangements should be made for dealing with the milk intended for infant consumption. Personally, I should like to see the principles of the Rochester system extended to cover the entire milk supply of the city, and, in some one of our great cities, the further experiment of a municipal farm dairy for the supply of all milk necessary for hospitals and similar institutions upon the most hygienic principles possible. This has been done to some extent in Europe with success.

VI

It is a delightful and scientifically correct principle which those Utopia builders have embodied in their schemes of world-making who have advocated the restriction of matrimony to those women who have undergone a thorough course of education and training in eugenics and household economy. Most persons will agree that such a system of education for maternal and wifely duties would be a great boon, if practicable. But so long as hearts are swayed by passion, and the subtle currents of human love remain uncontrolled by law, such proposals must remain dreams. Even the modest suggestion of Mrs. Parsons that a "matrimonial white list" be created by establishing continuation schools for training young women in the domestic arts and the principles of child-rearing and giving them certificates or diplomas, as well as certificates of health,[13] is so far in advance of anything yet attempted that it sounds almost Utopian. Still, there is nothing fanciful or impossible in the proposal itself.

The preservation of child life must depend largely upon the dissipation of maternal ignorance. Until mothers are enlightened, the infantile death-rate must remain needlessly and unnaturally heavy. And so long as industrial occupations absorb our young girls in the very years which should be spent at home

in practical training for the responsibilities of wifehood and motherhood, there must continue to be a very large number of marriages productive of poverty, misery, and disease, because of the ignorance and inefficiency of the wives. So the fight against maternal ignorance, the ignorance which breeds disease and poverty, appears as an almost Sisyphean task. So long as such industrial conditions prevail, ignorance will continue to sap the foundations of family life and mock our efforts at reform. In such important matters of domestic economy as knowledge of food values and how to spend the family income to the best advantage, what but failure can be expected when a young woman worker graduates from mill labor to wifehood? Even where such a young woman, or girl growing into womanhood, feels the need of training in these important matters of domestic economy, she is prevented by the fact that the family cooking and buying are necessarily done during the hours she is at work. By the time she returns home after her day's labor, little or nothing remains to be done except washing the dishes. Even were it otherwise, she would in most cases be too tired to help. After confinement in a shop or factory for ten or twelve hours, at monotonous tasks entirely devoid of interest or attractiveness, it is natural and right that she should seek recreation and pleasure. Further confinement, either in the home or a school, is extremely liable to prove injurious.



PACKING BOTTLES OF "CLEAN MILK" IN ICE BEFORE SENDING THEM TO THE CITY, ROCHESTER, N.Y.

For these reasons, and others obvious to the reader, I am not very sanguine that much can ever be accomplished by evening classes for working girls. The British Interdepartmental Committee suggests that "continuation classes for domestic instruction" should be formed, and attendance at them, twice each week during certain months of the year, made obligatory, only those employed in domestic service being exempted from compulsory attendance. Realizing that it would be an injury to the girls to impose this attendance and study upon them in addition to their already too long hours of employment, the committee very properly suggests that some modification of the hours of work would have to be introduced, so that in fact the hours of instruction would have to be taken out of their ordinary working time.[14] With such a provision as this, a system of compulsory instruction in domestic science might very well be adopted. It is probable, however, that the principal effect would be a considerable diminishing of the employment of girls and young women within the ages prescribed for compulsory attendance at the continuation classes.

The suggested curriculum for such classes is interesting. "The courses of instruction at such classes should cover every branch of domestic hygiene, including the preparation of food, the practice of household cleanliness, the tendance and feeding of young children, the proper requirements of a family as to

clothing — everything, in short, that would equip a young girl for the duties of a housewife." [15] The further suggestion is made that the members of these continuation classes should visit from time to time the municipal *crèches* — the establishment of which is strongly recommended — and receive there practical instruction in the management of infants. This is such a comprehensive and courageous proposal that one would like to see it given a fair trial.

VII

The efficient work done by the school nurses in New York City, and elsewhere, though sadly restricted in its scope, suggests far wider possibilities. If nurses were appointed in far greater numbers, at least one to each large school, their functions might be enlarged. If, as has been suggested, they were to receive special social training, possibly at the expense of part of their present medical training, they might attend to the needs of those below school age as well as of those enrolled at school. Above all, they might be made a potent means of educating the mothers. It has been found that visiting nurses attached to the schools receive cordial welcome as a rule, are not viewed with suspicion as other officials or philanthropic visitors are, and have a correspondingly greater influence. The weak point in such a proposal lies in the fact that the school nurse would not, if her work was

based upon the school registration, reach those families not represented in the schools. Thus the most important cases of all, educationally, young mothers with their first babies, would not be reached.

Elsewhere I have referred to the efforts made in some cities to educate mothers by the distribution of leaflets and pamphlets upon the subject of infant feeding and general care. Some of these leaflets and pamphlets which I have seen are models of concise lucidity, and their wide distribution among mothers intelligent enough to profit by them would be of great value. One of the first difficulties presented when this plan is attempted upon a large scale is the efficient distribution of the literature. To accomplish anything at all, the literature must be printed in the various languages represented in the city's industrial population, and it is no easy matter to see that each mother gets literature in her own language. Quite recently, I heard of a tenement in which there were families representing no less than fourteen nationalities, and in which lived Mrs. O'Hara, a German, speaking little English! Added to this difficulty is the expense of distribution. If sent by mail, — and in large cities no other method seems possible, — the cost is enormous. To send a single circular to the registered voters of New York City, for instance, requires an expenditure of upwards of $60,000 for postage alone.[16] There would seem to be no good reason

why the Federal Government should not authorize the Health Boards to send all such educational matter through the mails free of cost. Why should the Health Department of a city not have the privilege of a local frank? Nothing could well be more foolish than the system under which the city, while performing a national service, must pay the national post-office for doing its share of the work.

Many of the mothers, especially of our immigrant population, are quite unable to read, and literature is wasted upon them. It will be seen, therefore, that the propaganda of health by literature is subject to several important restrictions. While admirably adapted to simple, homogeneous communities in which there is a small percentage of illiteracy, it fails to meet the needs of our great cosmopolitan cities. If it were possible to have all births reported at once to the Health Department by telephone, in order that each case might be visited by special maternity nurses, it would be comparatively easy to give special, personal attention to those cases in which literature would be worthless. This plan has been adopted in Australia with conspicuous success. The State Children's Department appoints women inspectors to visit the children of the poor. These nurse inspectors have to report, not only upon the condition of the homes, but of the children. The mothers are furnished with printed instructions as to the kind of food to be given,



A MAKESHIFT: HAMMOCKS SWUNG BETWEEN THE COTS IN AN OVERCROWDED DAY NURSERY

the proper quantities, methods of preparation, and times of feeding. If the child does not thrive satisfactorily, the nurse inspector calls in one of the physicians of the department. If milk cannot be properly assimilated, something else is tried. In short, all that skill and care can do to protect the lives of the infants is done, with the result that the infantile death-rate has been reduced from 15 per cent to 8 per cent.[17]

VIII

I would not leave this subject without insisting upon the urgent need of State or Federal supervision of the manufacture and sale of patent infant foods. The mortality from this one cause alone is enormous. There has been no satisfactory or comprehensive inquiry into this important matter in this country, and it is therefore impossible to get reliable figures. In Germany, where the law requires that the death certificate of an infant under one year of age must state what the mode of feeding has been as well as the cause of death, — a wise provision which might with advantage be adopted in this country, — it is possible to ascertain approximately the extent of the evil. The records show that of children fed on artificial food 51 per cent die during the first year, while only 8 per cent of the children exclusively nursed by their mothers die during the same period.[18] No one familiar with the work of our infants' hospitals can fail to

be impressed by the large number of cases of illness and death in which artificial feeding appears as a primary or contributing cause. I have gone over the record books of many such hospitals in different parts of the country, with the almost invariable result that artificial foods appeared to be the source of trouble in many cases. Most of the patent foods, one might almost go farther and say all of them,[19] are unhealthful because of the starch they contain, which the little infant stomachs cannot digest. Many of the cheaper kinds of patent infant foods upon the market are, as previously stated, little better than poisons. The testimony of the greatest authorities upon the subject of infant feeding, backed by the grim eloquence of hospital records and the death-rates, points irresistibly to the need of some strict supervision of the production and sale of artificial foods for children. Whether this should be done by the establishment of certain standard formulæ, or by compelling the makers to submit certified samples for official analysis, is a question which only a body of experts should decide.

The question of reducing the rate of infant mortality is, it will be seen from the foregoing, most complicated. It is not without reluctance and misgiving that I have ventured upon this detailed discussion of measures to that end, and in doing so I have kept from speculation and theory, confining myself almost entirely to those measures which have been tested

by experience and found beneficial. If Berlin has been able to reduce its infantile death-rate from 200 per thousand to 80 per thousand, Australia to reduce its rate from 15 per cent to 8 per cent; if Rochester can reduce its summer death-rate of infants by 50 per cent, it is surely evident that, given the determination to do so, we can at least hope to save one-half of the babies who, under present conditions, are perishing each year. In other words, it is possible to save almost 100,000 babies annually from perishing in the first year of life. No greater, worthier task than this ever challenged the attention of a great nation.

IX

When all the evidence is piled up, we are irresistibly driven to the conclusion that no attempt to educate hungry, ill-fed children can be successful or ought to be attempted. Danton's fine phrase rings eternally true, "*After bread,* education is the first need of a people." That education is a social necessity is no longer seriously questioned. But the other idea of Danton's saying, that education must come after bread, — that it is alike foolish and cruel to attempt to educate a hungry child, — is often lost sight of. In the early days of the public agitation for free and compulsory education, it was not infrequently urged that before the state should undertake to compel a child to attend its schools and receive its instruction,

it ought to provide for the adequate feeding of the child. That argument, happily, did not prevent the establishment and development of public education, but now that the latter system has been firmly rooted in the soil of our social system, there is an increasing belief in the inherent wisdom and justice of the claim that the state has no right to attempt to educate an unfed or underfed child.[20]

There is something attractive about such elemental simplicity as that of the Czar who drew a straight line across the map from St. Petersburg to Moscow, when his counsellors asked him what course he wished a railroad between the two cities to follow, and said, "Let it be straight, like that." I suppose that every worker for social improvement has felt oppressed at times by the complexity of our social problems, and wished that they could be solved in some such simple and direct manner. But social progress is not made along straight lines in general. What seems to the agitator axiomatic, simple, and easy, appears to the constructive statesman doubtful, complex, and difficult. There is at least one European municipality, however, which has solved this problem of the feeding of school children in a delightfully direct and simple way. The city of Vercelli, Italy, has made feeding as compulsory as education!* Every child, rich or poor, is compelled to attend the school dinners

* See Appendices A and B.

provided by the municipality, just as it is compelled to attend the school lessons. Not only food, but medical care and attention, are provided for every child, as a right, on the principle that it is absurd and wrong to attempt to develop the mind of a child while neglecting its body. It is a mocking judgment of our civilization that such a natural, intelligent solution of a pressing problem should be impossible for our greatest and richest cities, though attained by a little Italian city like Vercelli.

I do not suppose that it will be found possible to apply such a principle generally until many years have passed and our social system has been modified considerably. In the meantime, some less thorough and comprehensive system, like that of the French *Cantines Scolaires*, for instance, will probably be adopted. It is not, however, my intention here to advocate any particular scheme. I can only reiterate that the feeding of school children is an imperative, urgent, and vital necessity, and emphasize certain principles. Elsewhere I have given a résumé of the methods adopted in several other countries,* and I need not, therefore, go over that ground. Whatever is done should be free from the taint of charity. There must be no resorting to the pernicious principle, sometimes advocated by our so-called "practical reformers," of subsidizing charitable societies to un-

* Appendix A.

dertake the work. There must be no discrimination against the child whose parents have failed to do their duty. The child of the inebriate, the idler, or the criminal must not be made to suffer for his parent's sin. The state has no right to join with the sins of the fathers in a conspiracy to damn the children's lives, and only a perverted sense of the relation of the child to the state could have made it possible for such a proposal to be made. Upon the principle that every child born into the world has a right to a full and free supply of the necessities of life during the whole period of its helplessness and training for the work of the world, so far as the resources of the world make that possible, the state should proceed until in all schools where children attend compulsorily, free, wholesome, and nutritious meals are provided for all children as a common right.

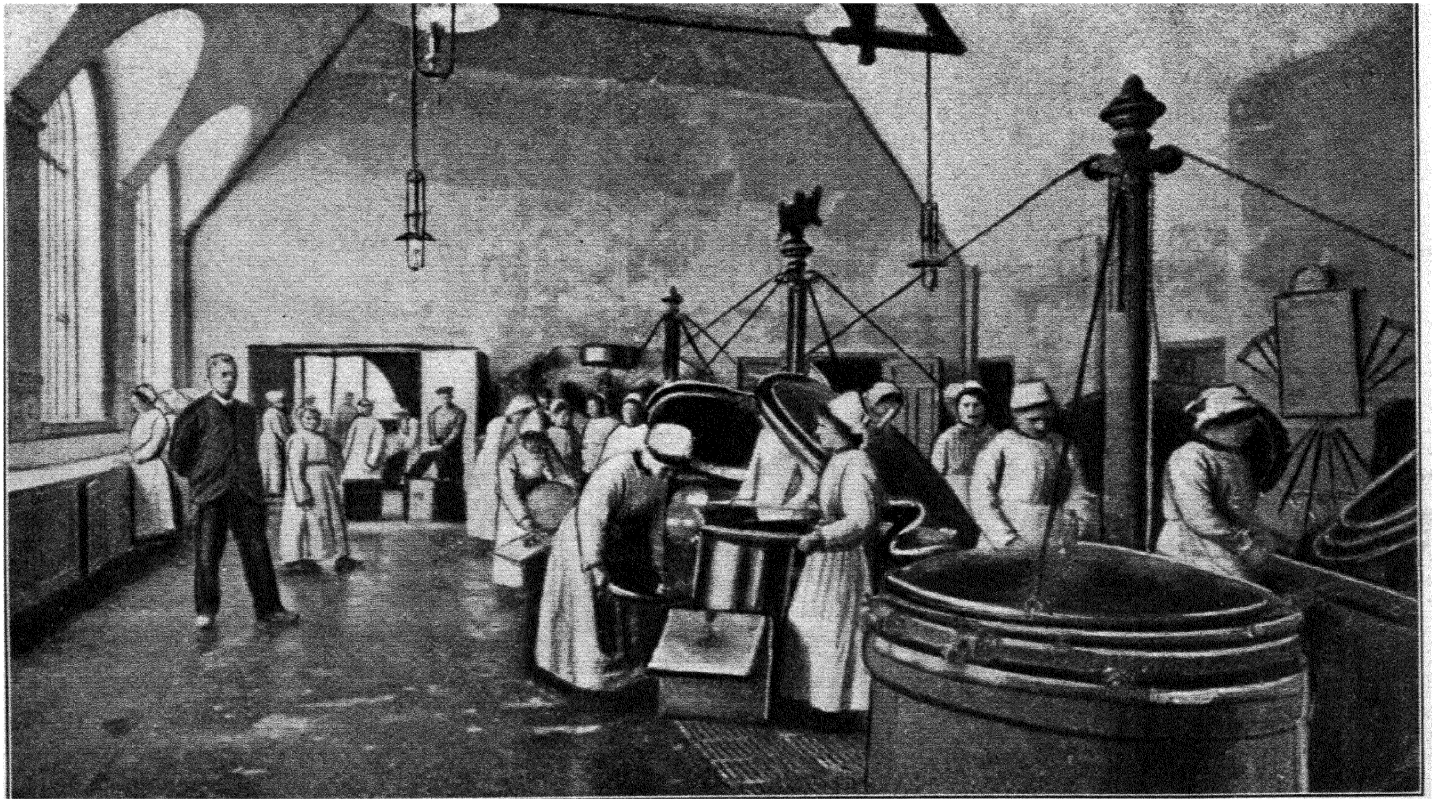
Of course, the cry will be raised that such a system would result in wholesale pauperization. I am not afraid of that cry — it has become too familiar. When I first went to school in the West of England, I used to carry my school fees — six cents a week — each Monday morning. Under that system it was necessary for the school authorities to employ officers to see that the fees were paid, and frequently defaulting parents were summoned. The children of poor parents were exempted from paying the school fees, but they had to present big cards to be marked by the

teacher, and were thus made conspicuous. I remember very well that when it was proposed to make the schools free to all, the same bogey of pauperization was raised.[21] The school fees were abolished, however, and the objection was heard no more. In the early days of the Free Libraries movement, a similar outcry was heard, but one never hears it nowadays, nor does anybody consider that he is pauperized when he takes home a book from the city library to read. And so one might go on, through a long list of things which were opposed upon the same grounds by many earnest people, but are now commonly enjoyed. If, moreover, the alternative to pauperization is slow starvation and suffering, I unhesitatingly prefer pauperization.

X

Next to the feeding of school children in importance is the need of a much more efficient and thorough system of medical inspections in all our schools. In most of our cities something is already done in this direction, but it is very little. As a rule, the medical inspections now made are most perfunctory and superficial. With a few honorable exceptions, the practice is to look only for cases of contagious and infectious disease or verminous heads. The excessive prevalence of "granular lids," or trachoma, which is an acquired disease,[22] has led to a good deal of attention being given of late to the whole subject of defec-

tive vision. But practically no effort at all has been made to combine remedial treatment with inspection. Children suffering from infectious diseases are simply excluded from the schools, and those found to be suffering from defective vision are given notes asking their parents to provide them with suitable glasses. In a very large proportion of cases, probably a majority, the requests are ignored. I have had children pointed out to me who were suffering from such serious defects of vision as materially to handicap them in their school work, whose parents had taken no notice whatever of repeated notices and warnings from the school doctors. Many parents are too poor to buy glasses, many more are too ignorant to understand the importance of complying with the request. I know many parents of this type. On the other hand, I know many cases in which it would be just as reasonable to ask the parents to make glasses for their children as to buy them. For instance, I know of one public school in which the teachers have repeatedly reported upon the number of children with defective vision, but without appreciable effect. I spoke to the priest to whose church a majority of the children's parents belong about it, and he replied: "What can they do? They cannot afford to buy glasses. Of the 300 families belonging to my church, I am in a position to say that there are not more than 10 in which the father earns more than $9 a



INTERIOR OF THE COMMUNAL SCHOOL KITCHEN, CHRISTIANIA, NORWAY

week. Many of them earn only six or seven. They have all they can do to get food; glasses are impossible." Now, while it is true that in many of these families there will be supplementary wages from the children or the mothers, it is perfectly obvious that there must be many unable to procure glasses for their children.

Little or no attention has been given as yet to the ears, teeth, nervous and respiratory systems, and the general health of our school children. The inspections conducted by Dr. Cronin and his assistants in New York City are by far the most important yet made in the United States, and show the importance of this largely neglected subject. When I have stood in some of our American public schools and observed the way in which the medical inspections were made, — as many as 2000 children being "inspected" in ten or twelve minutes, — I have with shame contrasted the farcical proceeding with the thorough, systematic work done in several European countries. In this, as in so many other matters, the United States and England are far behind countries like Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Norway, and Switzerland.[23]

In Brussels every child in the public elementary schools is medically examined once every ten days. "Its eyes, teeth, ears, and general physical condition are overhauled. If it looks weak and puny, they give it cod-liver oil or some suitable tonic. At mid-

day it gets a square meal . . . and the greatest care is taken to see that no child goes ill shod, ill clad, or ill fed." [24] In Norway there is a very similar system. Sickly children are put upon a special dietary and given special individual medical care. There are sanatoria and convalescent homes in connection with the schools.[25] In Switzerland again poor children are fed and frequently clothed or shod at the public expense. Day homes are provided for the very young children. Every child is medically examined before being admitted to the schools, and periodically thereafter. Sick children are sent to the school sanatoria and convalescent homes for treatment. "Holiday Colonies" are provided, to which hundreds of children are sent each year for a period of twenty-five days each. The cost of this is partly borne by the city, out of the "Alcoholzehntel"; partly by private contributions to the "school fund," and partly by the payments received from parents. The "Alcoholzehntel" is perhaps worthy of explanation. It originates in this manner, — the manufacture of spirits is a federal monopoly, and yields a handsome profit. This is divided among the various cantons, which are bound to spend one-tenth of the sum so received to combat the effects of alcohol.[26]

Very similar to the Swiss Holiday Colonies are the *Colonies Scolaires* of France. These "School Colonies" take two forms. In one case the arrondissement

hires or borrows a boarding-school in the country for the summer months, to which it sends several hundred children. In the other case, it acquires a former château in the country, to which it despatches relays of children during the year. The ordinary stay for each child is three weeks, and the effect upon the physique of the children is remarkable.[27] Berlin and, I believe, several other German cities, not only provide for the regular, thorough medical examination of every child, but weak, sickly children, especially those who are predisposed to tuberculosis, are sent to school homes in the country, not far from the city, where, amid the most healthful surroundings, they are given special medical and tutorial care until they are entirely well and strong.[28]

In view of such facts as these, which might be multiplied almost indefinitely, it will be seen that there is nothing impracticable or Utopian in the proposal that there should be a regular medical examination of every child, both before its admission to the school, and at stated, frequent periods during the whole of its school life. In fact, there should be two inspections, one medical, the other dental.[29] Every school should have a well-equipped dispensary connected with it, and a dental laboratory, so that the children could get prompt treatment. Provision should also be made to remove physically weak and sick children from the crowded city schools to more favorable sur-

roundings with a view to preventing their degeneration, and restoring them to health and vigor. While the responsibility for these things should rest upon and be accepted by the municipality, with, possibly, some subvention from the state, there seems to be no good reason why some of our puzzled millionnaires, who find the wise bestowal of their wealth an increasingly difficult problem, should not contribute to the city treasuries for that special purpose.

XI

When we come to deal with the child-labor problem, or, rather, with the problem of its repression by legislative enactment, we are at once confronted with a great difficulty that arises out of our political system rather than out of industrial conditions. The child-labor problem is a national one, but when we face the question of its solution, we are handicapped by the division of the country into forty odd states, a division which makes it almost impossible to deal with any of our great social and industrial problems nationally upon uniform principles. The same difficulty exists, of course, in connection with all our social and industrial problems. We have legislation in the various states of a conflicting character, adding to the complexity of the problem the legislators meant to solve. But because this is conspicuously so in the case of child-labor legislation, — every ad-



WEIGHING BABIES AT THE MUNICIPAL INFANTS' MILK DEPOTS (*GOTA DE LECHE*), MADRID

vance made in the Northern states serving as a premium upon reaction and delay in the Southern states, — I have chosen to deal with it in this connection.

Up to the present time, the advocates of child-labor legislation have, apparently, shrunk from making any definite proposals upon this important question, while fully recognizing its tremendous importance. Sooner or later, if ever our greatest social problems are to be intelligently dealt with, the question of state rights will have to be fought out and the paramountcy of the nation in all such matters established, and I can imagine no better issue for raising that question than the legislative protection of children. Here, again, we must turn for guidance and suggestion to the Old World. In Germany they have had to face a similar problem, the difference being one of degree only, and they have found a solution which might well be adopted in the United States. Child labor in Germany is regulated partly by the ordinances of the federal council and partly by the legislation of the different states of the Empire. The federal enactments establish a minimum standard for the whole Empire, and it is specifically provided that each state may enact more stringent measures as it may desire.[30] It is difficult to see why this principle could not be applied to the problem here in the United States, giving us a uniform minimum standard of legislation

throughout the whole country. Such a law should prohibit the employment of any child under fifteen years of age at any employment whatsoever, and the employment of any child or young person under eighteen years of age in all "dangerous occupations" specified by a federal commission. It would be well, also, to insist upon a certain educational test up to eighteen years, the test to be made in all cases by the school authorities.[31]

Coming to details for legislation within the states, it is perfectly obvious that legislation necessary for, and suited to, big cities would be useless and unsuited to the small towns and rural communities. In the case of messengers and newsboys, for example, in a town of 10,000 inhabitants, conditions are entirely different from those existing in a city of 50,000 or 100,000. What would be a perfectly harmless and unobjectionable occupation in the former city becomes in the latter a serious menace to health and morals. In the smaller community, the boy is under the supervision of his parents, his employers, and many of the citizens who know him personally. His paper business is not of the kind which takes him out upon the streets as early as four or five o'clock in the morning and as late as midnight, or after. The New York legislature, in April, 1903, amended the law relating to children employed in the streets and public places in cities of the first class, of which there are

two — New York and Buffalo. The amendment provided "that no male child under ten and no girl under sixteen shall, in any city of the first class, sell or expose for sale newspapers in any street or public place. No male child actually or apparently under fourteen years of age shall sell or expose for sale unless provided with a permit and a badge. No child to whom such a permit and badge are issued shall sell papers after ten o'clock at night." Such a law as that might, I think, be applied to the smallest town in the country without injustice to any one, but it is almost ridiculously inadequate to a great city. The city ordinance of Boston is a good deal better, though it is also inadequate to the needs of a great city. The ordinance provides that no child shall work as a bootblack or newsboy unless he is over ten years of age, nor sell any other article unless he is over twelve years of age. No minor under fourteen years of age is allowed to sell or expose for sale, in any street or public place, any books, newspapers, pamphlets, fuel, fruit, or provisions, unless he has a minor's license. These minors' licenses are only granted upon the recommendation of the principal of the school, or school district to which the child belongs. Of this law, again, I should say that it might very well be adopted as applying to all towns and villages in the United States up to a certain size, but that, in view of the terrible menace to the health and morals accompanying these

occupations in our great cities, they should be absolutely forbidden for children or young persons under eighteen years of age. It should be borne in mind that the usual objection urged against child-labor legislation — that it would inflict hardship upon the parents — scarcely applies at all to these boys of the streets in our large cities. Most of them, it has been shown over and over again, are not at all subject to parental control, and contribute little or nothing at all to the support of their families.[32]

It seems to me important also that, in the larger cities at least, and perhaps generally, the present system of allowing boys and girls to work during the vacation period should be abolished. The system not only robs the child of the rest the vacation was intended to give it, but it is a fruitful source of child labor. Many of those who go to work during the vacation periods never return to school again. The parents become dependent upon the extra earnings of the children in a surprisingly short time, and the children themselves are naturally unwilling to lose their newly acquired freedom and the extra pocket money which their labor entitles them to. The ideal system would be to establish summer school camps, something like the school colonies of Europe, in the country, where recreation amid healthful surroundings could be combined with a certain amount of instruction.



FIVE O'CLOCK TEA IN THE COUNTRY

"Fresh Air Fund" children from tenement homes.

XII

In this brief sketch of suggested remedial measures, I have confined myself entirely to those measures which have been successfully tried elsewhere. I have simply tried to correlate the constructive work in child saving which has thus far been accomplished into something like a definite and comprehensive policy. Discussion by earnest men and women who have given the matters dealt with careful and patient study will, doubtless, show the need of many changes, both in the direction of modification and of extension. The important thing at the present time is to secure an intelligent discussion of the whole problem of the duty of society to the child, and I venture to hope that the foregoing may help in that direction. While I have insisted mainly upon the legislative aspect of the problem, I am not insensible of the importance of individual responsibility and effort. Much of the child labor of to-day, for example, is due to the carelessness and indifference of purchasers' forever demanding "cheap" goods; and a recognition on their part of all the monstrous wrong and tragedy hidden in that word "cheap" would do much to diminish the evil.

We need in our modern life something of that spirit which prompted David to pour out upon the ground the precious cooling draught his brave followers, at

the risk of their lives, brought him from the well by Bethlehem's gate. The water had been obtained at too great a cost, the risking of human lives, and David could not drink it.[33] We need that spirit to be applied to our social relations. Those things which are cheap only by reason of the sacrifice, or risk of sacrifice, of human life and happiness are too costly for human use. While it is to a large extent true that there is no problem which depends more completely upon collective action, through the channels of government, it is also true that there is abundant room for well-directed private effort. The co-operation of all the constructive forces in society, private and public, is necessary if the children are to be saved from the evils by which they are surrounded, and the future well-being of the race made possible and certain. Here is the real reconstruction of society — the building of healthy bodies and brains to insure a citizenship free from physical and moral decay, worthy of liberty and aspiring to brotherhood.

V

BLOSSOMS AND BABIES

THERE is an affinity between children and flowers. To me the sight of a blossom often suggests a baby, and the sight of a baby often suggests a favorite flower.

Many a mother singing lullabies to the baby at her breast calls it her "blossom."

And children, healthy children, are fond of flowers.

I once saw a boy of ten who didn't know what a flower was. He knew what each card in a pack was, and he wasn't afraid of a policeman. But he was afraid of a grassy and daisy-spangled field. London had destroyed for him all sense of kinship with Nature.

But most children, even city children, love flowers. The country child loves familiarly as it loves its own mother, but the city child loves and worships. Yesterday I saw a group of little girls with their noses pressed flat against a florist's window. "My, ain't they sweet!" they cried in chorus.

If only the flowers could know!

Some sympathetic and leisured ladies have formed themselves into a guild to give such children as I saw at the florist's window growing flowers to tend and love. I do not know the ladies. We live in the same city, but in a different world.

And yet we have some things in common, these good ladies and I. Perhaps many things, but chief of all a love for children and flowers. In our different worlds, so little alike, this love flourishes with equal freedom. My wife loves blossoms and babies, too, but she is not a member of the guild. Its meetings are not held in our world.

The guild got together 10,000 little children from the tenements of this great city of New York. To each child a potted plant was given, in the hope that its presence would brighten the home, and its care "refine" and "spiritualize" the child.

Good, generous ladies of the guild!

And from each child was exacted the promise that upon a given date at the end of a full year, the plant should be brought back and placed upon exhibition. Ribbons were promised as prizes to those children whose plants should be in the most flourishing condition.

The year passed. The day of the exhibition arrived. Richly gowned women, calling themselves "patronesses," were there. They went in luxuriously equipped automobiles to smile and be conde-

scending toward children who went in rags and were hungry.

But not all the children to whom the year before they had given flowers were there. Some of them had drooped during the summer and died like flowers in parched ground.

And many of the plants were withered and dead, too.

What an exhibition, to be sure! Geraniums without fragrance. Geraniums which a year ago bore deep, rich, green leaves and bright scarlet blossoms, were now straggling and wretched, with pale-green — almost white — stems, with poor, sickly-looking little leaves and with no flowers. And many a pot containing only a withered and rotted stick, with maybe a little note, "Please, ma'am, it died because our rooms is dark."

Some of the richly gowned women wept as they looked at the long rows of pitiful flowers, and at the long rows of withered and dead flowers.

Wept? I wonder why.

I wonder if they wept because they began to appreciate faintly how poverty withers and oppresses all life; or only because the sight of so many dead flowers, and flowers worse than dead, overwhelmed them? Or had they heard the flowers tell their sad little histories?

For every one of the flowers had a story to tell to understanding hearts.

Yes, madam, that tall, withered geranium stick, which made you weep as you remembered how beautiful its scarlet blossoms had looked the year before, when you gave it to little crippled Polly with the flaxen hair, could unfold a story, if you could but understand it. But it is a story of the tenement, not of your world. And you cannot understand.

But little Polly (who doesn't understand either) can tell you enough to give you cause for tears. Real tears. Human tears.

I could tell you, for I know the tenement. It is in my world. But let Polly tell.

"When youse gived us th' prutty flow'r, leddy, I put 'er in our winder so's all th' kids 'ud see from th' street. An' mamma wus so proud! An' me little baby bruver jes' went wild, leddy. An' when mamma wus washin', he'd stay so good and call out, so pert-like, 'Putty! putty!' An' mamma said 'twus a blessin', 'cause she wus able to do th' washin' when baby wus playin'.

"But when winter comed, leddy, yer flow'r an' th' leaves wus all dead like, an' comed off. An' me mamma said 'twus th' cold. An' when I put 'er by th' airshaft she said 'twus too dark. An' so yer flow'r jes' died like, an' mamma wus so cut up washin' days, for me bruver wus teethin' an' there warn't no flow'r.

"But mamma said yer flow'r 'ud come up in th' summer. So I jes' kep' waterin', an' when th' fine days comed I put 'er in our winder again. An' it growed a bit, leddy, an' mamma an' me wus so glad! But 'twus allus growin' a bit an' then dyin' like, 'cause, mamma said, we didn't git no sun in our rooms. An' I used to cry in th' nights 'bout that flow'r, leddy!

"An' when summer comed an' folks wus sleepin' 'pon their fire-'scapes, I put yer flow'r outside an' watered 'er ev'ry day. But when me little bruver wus sick, an' th' doctor said he mus' go to th' country somewheres, yer flow'r jes' died an' dried up like a stick, leddy. Me little bruver died, too, an' th' doctor said he'd 'a' lived if he'd gone into th' country.

"I'm sorry, leddy, fur yer flow'r. P'raps 'twus 'cause it never went to no country place. I tried me best, leddy, but —"

No, don't reproach yourself, madam. You didn't know. How could you know, living in another world? It was really good of you to think of the tenement children, and to give them your flowers.

Poor little children of the tenements! It was good of you to think of them. Their homes are squalid, and flowers do make the home brighter. And their little lives do need the refining and spiritualizing influence of flowers.

But neither the babies nor the blossoms can flourish there. They pine and droop and die together. True, some of them live — babies and blossoms — but how?

You are a woman and you love children and flowers. Tell me, did not the pale, sickly children and the pale, sickly plants impress you as even more saddening than the dead plants — the constant reminders of dead children?

Their slow, prolonged dying is more terrible than death to me. And I love them both, children and flowers.

I honor your tears. They proclaim you to be possessed of a human heart. But you are a misfit in your sphere. Your place is in our world.

You mean well, but your guild is only a toy. The problem is not to be solved so easily. If you would help solve it, you must give something more than plants. You must give yourself.

And this is the work which calls for your service and sacrifice: —

To bring blossoms and babies together where both can thrive. To restore the child-sense of kinship with Nature, that to every child may come the joy of understanding Nature's eternal harmonies. To bring the freedom and beauty and companionship of beast and bird, flower and tree, mountain and ocean, stream and star, into the life of every child.

It is a big task, madam; flower shows and ribbons



A LITTLE FISHERMAN

"Fresh Air Fund" child from a crowded tenement district.

and tears will not fulfil it. If you are serious, you will find more serviceable things to do.

Some there are, the despised builders of Humanity's temples, who are laboring to give this vast heritage to the children of all the world. They build patiently, for they have faith in their work.

And this is their faith — that the power of the world springs from the common labor and strife and conquest of the countless ages of human life and struggle; that not for a few was that labor and that struggle, but for all. And the common labor of the race for the common good and the common joy will give blossoms and babies the fulness of life which sordid greed with its blight makes impossible.

Are you of the faith of the builders? Are you a builder?

APPENDIX A

HOW FOREIGN MUNICIPALITIES FEED THEIR SCHOOL CHILDREN

THE problem of the underfeeding of children and its relation to the many and complex problems of health, education, and morality has long been the subject of careful study and experiment on the part of the most progressive municipalities of several European countries.

At the present time it is one of the most vital issues in English politics. When, in the early eighties, Mr. H. M. Hyndman and his few Social-Democratic colleagues advocated the enactment of legislation compelling the municipal authorities to undertake the feeding of the many thousands of children in the public schools, the proposal was derided as "visionary." To-day, however, it has the earnest support of some of the ablest and most influential members of the House of Commons. Men like Sir John Gorst, ex-cabinet minister, on the Conservative side, and Mr. Herbert Gladstone, on the Liberal side, are united in the advocacy of the Socialistic proposal.

Inquiries made by a Royal Commission, a Special Inter-Departmental Committee, and several local investigating committees in cities like London, Birming-

ham, Glasgow, Dundee, and Aberdeen, have revealed a most alarming state of affairs. In London, it has been estimated by the leading authority, Dr. Eichholz, there are over 100,000 children of school age who are chronically underfed. The reports from the other cities named are equally serious. Public sentiment has been aroused to such an extent that there seems to be little room for doubting that in the very near future, Parliament will be compelled to enact some measure providing for the feeding of children in the public schools. In the meantime, many thousands of children are being fed by charitable organizations, working in conjunction with the school authorities. In most cases the meals are sold to the children at one cent per meal, with the understanding that if they are too poor to pay, the meals will be given free of charge. It is astonishing to learn that many thousands of the children are found, after careful investigation, to be too poor to raise even one cent.

The experiment which has for some time been tried in Birmingham has attracted widespread attention in sociological circles, not only in England, but throughout Europe. This charity makes no effort whatever to deal with any but the most destitute children, those that, in the words of the Committee, are "practically starving." The meals are kept scanty and unattractive in order that no child will accept them unless compelled to by sheer hunger. In addition to this safeguard, careful investigations of the circumstances of the children are from time to time made. The meals are

given free of charge to the children, and the cost to the committee is less than one cent per meal, — including the manager's salary of $500 a year. Yet, despite all the restrictions by which it is surrounded, his charity is to-day feeding 2½ per cent of the total child population of the city.

The results of this feeding, poor and insufficient as it is, have been most beneficial, both from a physical and mental point of view. Educationally, I am informed by experienced teachers, the results have been most inspiring. The children both learn and remember better than before. But it is felt upon all sides, that this charity, admirable as it is in many ways, only touches the fringe of the problem, and the demand is made for definite municipal action, upon a much more generous basis, to take the place of private philanthropy. It is difficult, in fact, practically impossible, to form any idea of the extent of such private philanthropy throughout the country. Almost every industrial centre has its "Free Dinner Association," and in almost every case the authorities find that private effort is inadequate, and that there are many children who cannot afford to pay even one cent for a meal. If the cent is insisted upon, they must go hungry. This is important to us in America, because it has been the experience wherever similar experiments have been tried here. In Chicago, for instance, at the Oliver Goldsmith School, free dinners have been provided for a large number of children for some time past. Here, as in England, it was found that a number of

children could no more afford a penny for a meal than they could afford to dine at the Auditorium Hotel.

In Berlin, and several other German cities, children are fed in the public schools upon a plan which provides that those must pay who can, while those who cannot are given their meals free of charge at the public expense. As a rule, however, these German experiments are confined to schools situated in the poorest districts. As yet, the German authorities have not gone so far as to provide meals for all children, irrespective of their circumstances.

Much the same plan is followed in Reggia Emilia, San Remo, and some other Italian cities, though the movement is more widespread in Italy than in Germany. There is one Italian city, however, which has for some time past gone very much farther than any other city that I know of, though his Excellency, the Italian Ambassador at Washington, informs me that there are other Italian cities which have adopted the same plan. Vercelli is a city of about 25,000 inhabitants in the province of Novara, Piedmont. Its fame chiefly rests upon its fine library, which contains a wonderful collection of ancient manuscripts, some of them of fabulous value. In this little municipality, then, the city fathers have for a long time provided free meals for every child attending the public schools, *and made attendance at the meals absolutely compulsory as to the school itself!* Every child must attend school and partake of the meals, unless provided with a doctor's certificate to the effect that to attend the classes, or to partake of

the school meals, would be injurious to its health. Further, medical inspection is also compulsory, and is accompanied by free medical attendance. The results appear to have been most beneficial physically, and the educational gains resulting from this intelligent, ordered, and regular feeding have been enormous. It is unlikely, however, that such a system will be adopted in the United States for many years to come, notwithstanding its many undoubted advantages.

In Christiania, Trondhjem, and a number of other Norwegian cities, the municipality provides all children who desire to avail themselves of it with a nutritious midday meal, irrespective of their ability to pay. The entire cost of the system is met by taxation. This has been felt by the Norwegian authorities to be the simplest and best method of dealing with a grave problem. It avoids the difficulties which inevitably arise when there is a distinct class of beneficiaries created. "Where all are equally welcome none are paupers," they say. With its simple, homogeneous population, this direct method is admirably adapted to Norway, however little suited it might be to the needs of a cosmopolitan nation like ours. The free dinner is a part of Norway's admirable educational system, which abounds with features well worthy of being copied. One of these is an arrangement whereby the school children from the cities are taken, twice a month in winter, and three or four times a month in the summer, on excursions into the country. The children from the country districts are, in the same manner, taken into the cities.

The railroads have to carry the children at a purely nominal cost, which is also met out of the public funds.

When I applied to one of the members of the Municipal Council of Trondhjem for information as to the working of the school-meals system, he replied: "You can best judge that, perhaps, from the fact that although the scheme was bitterly opposed when first it was proposed by a small group of radicals and Socialists, it is now unanimously supported by all sections. There is now no demand whatever for its curtailment or abandonment. Educationally, we have found that it pays. It is possible now to educate children who before could not be educated because they were undernourished. The percentage of 'backward children' has been greatly reduced, notwithstanding that the test is more severe and searching. Economically, we believe that we can see in the system the gradual conquest of pauperism made possible."

In Brussels, and other Belgian cities, good midday meals are provided for all children who care to partake of them. A small fee, equal to about two cents, is charged for each meal, but those children who cannot afford to pay are given their meals just the same. There is also an excellent system of medical inspection in connection with the schools. Every child is medically examined at least once every ten days. Its eyes, ears, and general physical condition are overhauled. If it looks weak and puny, they give it doses of cod-liver oil, or some suitable tonic. The greatest care

is taken to see that no child goes ill shod, ill clad, or ill fed. There is also a regular dental examination in connection with every school at regular periods.

In several Swiss towns the authorities for a long time granted substantial subsidies to private philanthropic bodies, leaving to them the organization of systems for providing school meals and the whole administration of the funds. But this method proved to be very unsatisfactory. It led to abuses of various kinds, and sectarian jealousies were aroused. Moreover, it proved to be a most extravagant method, the cost being disproportionate to the results. Consequently, the practice has been very generally abandoned, and most of the municipalities have adopted the direct management of the school meals as a distinct part of the school system. The plan generally followed is that of Germany. Those who can must pay, but those who cannot pay must be fed.

But it is to France that we must turn for the most extensive and successful system of school meals. Those who, particularly since the publication of Mr. Robert Hunter's book, *Poverty*, have advocated the introduction of some system of school dinners in this country, have with practical unanimity pointed to the French *Cantines Scolaires* as the model to be copied. For that reason, and not less for its own interest, it may be worth while giving a somewhat fuller account of the French system and its history.

The school-canteen idea is a development of an old and interesting custom, borrowed by the French from

Switzerland, the little land of so many valuable experiments and ideals. The custom still obtains in Switzerland to some extent, though not so extensively as formerly, of newly married couples giving a small gift of money, immediately after the wedding ceremony, to the school funds as a sort of thanksgiving for their education. These funds are used to provide shoes and clothing for poor scholars who would otherwise be unable to attend school.

In 1849, the time of the Second Republic, the mayor of the second *Arrondissement* of Paris conceived the idea of introducing this Swiss custom into Paris. Accordingly a fund was created, called the Swiss Benevolent Fund. Before long the name fell into disuse, and we find the *caisse des écoles*, or school funds, spoken of with no reference to their Swiss origin or to their benevolent purpose. In the latter days of the Second Empire, in April, 1867, the Chamber of Deputies passed a Primary Instruction Law, which was drafted by M. Duruy, the Minister of Public Instruction, providing that any municipal council might, subject to the approval of the Prefect, create in the school districts under its jurisdiction a "school fund." The object of these school funds was to be the encouragement of regular attendance at school, either by a system of rewards to successful students, or material help in the shape of food, clothing, or shoes to necessitous ones. These funds were to be raised by (1) voluntary contributions; (2) subventions by the school authorities, the city, or the state. Where deemed advisable,

several school districts might unite in the creation of a joint fund for their common benefit.

But the law of 1867, so far at least as the school funds were concerned, was little more than a pious expression of opinion in favor of an idea. Three years later the Franco-Prussian war broke out with its fury and devastation, and, as war always does, set back all reforms. Not till 1874, three years after the terrible bloodshed of the Paris Commune, was anything done. Then the district of Montmartre and one or two others raised funds. Montmartre is a district of some 200,000 inhabitants, which has always been characterized by a strong radical or socialistic sentiment. From a pamphlet issued by the managers of the school fund in that district, soon after its establishment in 1874, it appears that they paid little attention to the subject of giving prizes, deeming it of more importance to provide good strong shoes and warm clothing for the poorer children. Next, it seems, they undertook to provide outfits for some girls who had won scholarships at the *École Normale* (Normal School), but were too poor to dress themselves well enough to attend that institution. So, from the very first, the idea of using the school funds to provide children with the necessities of life prevailed. As a result there was soon developed a nucleus of bodies dealing with poverty as it presented itself in the area of educational effort, and, what is equally important, public opinion was being educated and accustomed to the idea. It was, therefore, an easy transition to compulsory provision for the feeding of children. In 1882

a law was passed *compelling* the establishment of school funds in all parts of France, but leaving the application of such funds still at the discretion of the authorities. So it happens that the *caisse des écoles* are universal in France, but the *cantines scolaires* are by no means so. The latter are, however, quite common throughout France, and by no means confined to Paris. There is no official record of the number of districts in which canteens have been established, because the districts are not obliged to make returns showing how their school funds are expended.

Since the state now makes education compulsory, and itself provides the means of enforcing the law, the managers of the school funds do not have to devise schemes to induce a regular attendance at school. They are therefore free to use their funds in such manner as seems to them best calculated to promote the health of the children. This they do mainly by the following means: (1) Free meals, or meals provided at cost; (2) provision of shoes and clothing where necessary; (3) free medical attendance; (4) sending weak, debilitated, and sick children to the sea-side or the country, homes being maintained, or in some cases subsidized for the purpose.

This last-mentioned feature of the French plan is most interesting. It appears to have been adopted as a result of favorable reports upon the working of a similar plan in Switzerland. The managers of the Montmartre fund, for instance, purchased a great mansion with a magnificent park, and to this delightful

spot, not many miles from Paris, the children are sent in batches and kept for two or three weeks at a time, much to their physical betterment. There are several of these "school colonies" maintained by the various school funds of Paris, and the City Government subsidizes them to the extent of about $40,000 a year. The custom of providing a special grant, or subsidy, in aid of these colonies is quite common throughout the whole of France. The importance of these health-building institutions and the provisions made for the medical care of sick children cannot be overestimated. To give an idea of what is meant by medical care alone, it is only necessary to refer to a recent inspection in the New York public schools. Out of 7000 children examined, fully one-third were found to be suffering from defective eyesight, while more than 17 per cent suffered from defects so serious as to interfere with their chances of ever earning a living, as well as with their general health. A similar investigation in the public schools of Minnesota recently showed that there were 70,000 children with defective vision of the most serious nature, less than 10 per cent of whom were provided with glasses. In a very large number of cases the parents are simply too poor to buy glasses. Such children would, in Paris, be provided with the necessary glasses and oculist's care out of the school funds. And there would be no suggestion of pauperism about it, no humiliation; it is the child's right. Medical inspection is thorough, and the American witnessing it is very apt to feel

ashamed of the farcical "inspections" so common in his great and wealthy country.

For a long time, whenever food was given the managers of the school funds simply issued coupons, or orders upon some restaurant, entitling the holder to so many meals at a given cost. Usually some teacher or charitable worker was deputed to accompany the child to see that it actually got what it was intended to get. There was no system. But in 1877 the Prefect of the Seine appointed a commission to study the question, raised by some Socialists, of how good a warm meal might be provided in the schools at a low cost. Most of the managers of the school funds treated the matter in a very lukewarm, indifferent sort of way, and the commissioners reported that all they had been able to ascertain was that good meals could be provided at an average cost of twenty-five centimes (five cents) each. So the matter dropped and was not again heard of until the trying winter of 1881. Then it was suggested that, purely as an experiment, the children of school age whose parents were receiving poor relief should be fed. The managers of the Montmartre school fund at once volunteered to undertake the experiment, and their example was soon followed by others. They did not long confine the meals to the children of pauper parents, but at an early stage of the experiment extended it so as to include all children. The example of Montmartre was very soon followed, and within a year there were fifteen canteens which had served between them 1,110,827 "portions." One-third of

these "portions" were meat, each weighing twenty grammes, one-third were bowls of soup, and the other third portions of vegetables, these varying with the season. The number of portions paid for by the children was 736,526, and the number given to children too poor to pay, 374,301. It should be said, perhaps, that a most searching investigation was made to make sure of the inability of children's parents to pay. The total cost of the meals was 59,264 francs, of which amount the children paid 36,776 francs. After a while, when they had gathered experience in the management of the canteens, the managers found that it was possible to increase the size of the portions of meat and, at the same time, to cut down expenses by nearly 50 per cent.

Nowadays the cost of a meal, consisting of a bowl of good soup, a plate of meat, two kinds of vegetables, and bread *ad libitum*, is fifteen centimes (three cents). That is the sum paid by the children, and I have been assured over and over again by those in charge of various canteens that it is more than sufficient to pay the cost. There would be a not inconsiderable profit if all children paid for their meals, but that is not by any means the case. When a child's parents are too poor to pay the full price, and that fact has been ascertained by the investigators, they are permitted to pay less, even as little as two and a half centimes, or half a cent. The policy is to encourage as many as possible to pay the full price, or such sums as they can muster. But the very poor are never turned away,

and in the poorer quarters thousands of children are fed gratuitously, especially in winter, when in Paris, as elsewhere, there is more distress due to sickness and interrupted employment. In the poor quarter of Eppinette the children's fees amount to only about 20 per cent of the cost, while in the wealthier quarters they amount to 75 or even 85 per cent. In an ordinary industrial district, like Batignolles, the children pay about 45 per cent on a yearly average.

The Municipal Council of Paris makes an annual subsidy to cover the natural deficit of the canteens. These deficits vary from year to year, but the total subsidies required for the three years, 1901–1903, amounted to $200,000. In connection with this question of financial management there are two items worth noticing. One is the fact that private subscriptions to the school funds show a great falling off now that in practice they have become incorporated in the municipal government. It has not been found that citizens are willing to contribute to the funds now that the city has assumed responsibility for them. The other fact is that the expenditure in poor relief on account of children is very much less. Children have always served as the best of all reasons why poor relief should be given. Now, when that plea is made by an applicant for relief, he or she is referred to the school canteens, where the children are sure of being fed.

I fancy that I can hear some good reader's mocking sneer at the idea of being fed at a "common, socialistic trough." Well, I can only say that, having eaten

meals in two or three of the schools, I much preferred them to an average American restaurant "Regular Dinner" at twenty-five cents. Everything is as neat and clean as it could possibly be, and the cooking — well, it bears out the reputation of the French as the master-cooks of the world. There is, apparently, no "graft," and that is probably due in large part to the fact that the meals are not confined to pauper children, who might, alas! be badly served with impunity. From the first it has been one of the chief aims of the authorities to keep the canteens free from the taint of pauperism. The children of the well-to-do are encouraged to attend — not, indeed, by direct solicitation, but by making the meals and the surroundings as attractive as possible. And the plan succeeds very well. No child knows whether the child next it has paid for its dinner or not. Small tickets are issued, each child going through a little box-office, which only permits of one being in at a time. If a little boy or girl claims to be too poor to pay for a meal ticket, no questions are asked, the ticket is issued, and the child's name and address noted. By next day, or at most in two days, inquiries have been made. If it is found that the parents can afford it, they are compelled to pay the full price and to refund whatever sum may be due to the canteen for the meals their child has had. If they are found to be really too poor to pay, tickets are issued to the child for as long as it may be necessary. In such cases the account is not charged against the parents. No distinction is made between the tickets

of those who pay and those who do not, and it is thus practically impossible for the child who has paid for its meal to jeer at its less fortunate, dependent comrade. Thus the self-respect of the poorest children is preserved, — a most important fact, as every one who has studied the problems of charitable relief knows.

Another highly important factor is the presence of the teachers at the meals. Fully 90 per cent of the teachers use the canteens more or less regularly, though there is absolutely no compulsion in the matter. They prefer to do so on account of the cheapness and wholesome character of the meals. I have myself sat down to a three-cent dinner in the company of a well-known member of the Chamber of Deputies, a Professor of Languages, and several teachers, each one of us having gone through the little box-office and bought his ticket in exactly the same manner as the most ragged urchin. All the children are provided with cheap paper napkins, and the presence of the teachers is a sort of practical education in table manners. The canteen serves, therefore, as a great educational and ethical force as well as a remedy for one of the worst evils arising out of the national poverty problem. The *cantine scolaire* is a great institution, well worthy of careful study.

If, as the evidence gathered by Mr. Hunter seems to show, we have at least two million underfed children in the public schools of the United States, victims of physical and mental deterioration, the time must come, and the sooner the better, when we must deal with the

problem. Some of the Utopians among us would doubtless like to see the all-embracing compulsory system of Vercelli adopted, but it is most likely that we shall find the French methods better suited to our needs.

NOTE. — I am indebted to the publishers of my *Underfed School Children — The Problem and the Remedy*, Charles H. Kerr and Company, of Chicago, for permission to reproduce the foregoing paper in this volume.

APPENDIX B

LETTER TO THE ROYAL ITALIAN AMBASSADOR AT WASHINGTON FROM THE CHIEF OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF THE MUNICIPALITY OF VERCELLI, ITALY, DESCRIBING THE SCHOOL-MEALS SYSTEM

NOTE. — I am indebted to the Italian Ambassador at Washington, his Excellency Mayor des Planches, for permission to use the following letter. The translation was made for me by Mr. Teofilo Petriella, of Cleveland, Ohio, an Italian journalist. — J. S.

VERCELLI, September 13, 1905.

The school year, 1904–1905, just over, was the *fifth* since the school lunch (*refezione scolastica*) was introduced in our City Elementary Schools, *at the complete expense of the Municipality.*

The school lunch is distributed every day during the whole school year. Limited, at the beginning, only to the city schools, it has been extended, since the school year 1901–1902, to the suburban and rural schools.

To-day, therefore, all the male and female pupils of all the classes of all the elementary schools, in both city and suburbs, take part in the lunch. There are 65 schools with 91 classes, attended by an average of 2500 boys and girls.

The lunch consists of bread with another victual (*pane e companatico*). Each pupil gets a very good loaf of

first quality wheat bread, weighing 140 grammes for the IV and V classes; * 120 grammes for the III class; and 100 grammes for the first two classes.

The victuals served with the bread are: On meat days, raw salt meat (*salame crudo*) in rations of 14 grammes, alternated with cooked salt meat (*salame cotto*) in rations of 20 grammes.† On fish days, cheese (either Bernesa or Fontina alternated) in rations of 20 grammes. All is of first quality, and this is daily ascertained by an inspection on the part of the Steward and the Officer of the Board of Health.

Each ration costs from seven to eight cents of a franc.‡

Every school morning each teacher, within 15 minutes of the commencement of school (from 9 to 9.15), ascertains the number present by roll-call, fills out an order in three copies, keeping for himself the one attached to the stub and sending, by the ushers, the other two to the City Steward.

The Steward keeps one of these duplicate copies for the office accounts and registrations, while sending the other back to the teacher, along with the requested rations in a closed basket.

The office of the Steward, after having received all the

* Twenty-eight grammes equal one ounce avoirdupois. The children in classes IV and V get loaves, therefore, weighing five ounces each.

† *Salame*, here translated "salt meat," is really the best kind of salted dry sausage made of pork sirloin.

‡ One U. S. dollar equals about 492 francs; 100 Italian cents equal one franc, so that one cent of a franc equals about one-fifth of an American cent.

requests from all the teachers, as above said, and after having classified same by degree, locality, and number, sends the orders of purchase to the different supply-contractors.

At 10 o'clock, in a suitable place, under the direction and supervision of the City Steward, the baskets are made up, one for each class. The baskets, once ready, are automatically padlocked — the teacher having the necessary key — and forwarded by proper servants to the several suburbs, while others take the rest, on push-carts, to the city school buildings.

The School Trustees of the respective boroughs, the Principal and the Steward in the City School, visit the different classes to make sure of the regular and exact proceeding of the beneficent institutions.

So much, answering your favor of August 15th.

Truly yours,

The Mayor, per the Chief of the Board of Education, Cero Lucca.

APPENDIX C

I

THE QUESTION OF HEREDITY

In his testimony before the British Interdepartmental Committee on Physical Deterioration, Dr. Alfred Eichholz, one of H. M. Inspectors of Schools, a Doctor of Medicine, and formerly Fellow and Lecturer of Emmanuel College, Cambridge, said: —

"I have drawn a broad distinction between physical degeneracy and hereditary deterioration. The object of my evidence is to demonstrate the range and the depth of degeneracy among the poorer population, and to show that it is capable of great improvement — I say improvement purposely even within the areas of the towns — and to show that there is *a lack of any real evidence of any hereditary taint or strain of deterioration even among the poor populations of our cities.* The point which I desire to emphasize is that our physical degeneracy is produced afresh by each generation, and that there is every chance under reasonable measures of amelioration of restoring our poorest population to a condition of normal physique.

"I draw a clear distinction between physical degeneracy on the one hand and inherited retrogressive deterioration on the other. With regard to physical degeneracy,

the children frequenting the poorer schools of London and the large towns betray a most serious condition of affairs, calling for ameliorative and arrestive measures, the most impressive features being the apathy of parents as regards the school, the lack of parental care of children, the poor physique, powers of endurance, and educational attainments of the children. . . . *While there are, unfortunately, very abundant signs of physical defect traceable to neglect, poverty, and ignorance, it is not possible to obtain any satisfactory or conclusive evidence of hereditary physical deterioration* — that is to say, deterioration of a gradual retrogressive permanent nature, affecting one generation more acutely than the previous. There is little, if anything, in fact, to justify the conclusion that neglect, poverty, and parental ignorance, serious as their results are, possess any marked hereditary effect, or that heredity plays any significant part in establishing the physical degeneracy of the poorer population. In every case of alleged progressive hereditary deterioration among the children frequenting an elementary school, it is found that the neighborhood has suffered by the migration of the better artisan class, or by the influx of worse population from elsewhere. *Other than the well-known specifically hereditary diseases which affect poor and well-to-do alike*, there appears to be very little real evidence on the prenatal side to account for the widespread physical degeneracy among the poorer population. There is, accordingly, every reason to anticipate RAPID amelioration of physique so soon as improvement occurs in external conditions, particularly

as regards food, clothing, overcrowding, cleanliness, drunkenness, and the spread of common practical knowledge of home management. In fact, all evidence points to *active, rapid improvement, bodily and mental, in the worst districts*, so soon as they are exposed to better circumstances, even the weaker children recovering at a later age from the evil effects of infant life. (P. 20.)

"To discuss more closely the question of heredity may I in the first instance recall a medical factor of the greatest importance: the small percentage of unhealthy births among the poor — even down to the very poorest. The number of children born healthy is even in the worst districts very great. The exact number has never been the subject of investigation, owing largely to the certainty which exists on the point in the minds of medical men — but it would seem to be not less than 90 per cent.

"I have sought confirmation of my view with medical colleagues in public work, *e.g.* public health, poor law, factory acts, education, and in private practice in poor areas, and I have also consulted large maternity charities and have always been strengthened in this view. *In no single case has it ever been asserted that ill-nourished or unhealthy babies are more frequent at the time of birth among the poor than among the rich, or that hereditary diseases affect the new-born of the rich and the poor unequally.* The poorest and most ill-nurtured women bring forth as hale and strong-looking babies as those in the very best conditions. In fact, it almost appears as though the unborn child fights strenuously for its own health

at the expense of the mother, and arrives in the world with a full chance of living a normal physical existence. . . . The interpretation would seem to be that Nature gives every generation a fresh start."

[*Q.* 558. There is a fresh chance of getting rid of rickets with every generation?]

"Yes; rickets, malnutrition, low height, poor weight, anæmia, and all the other circumstances of neglected existence. It is from the moment of birth that the sad history begins, — the large infant mortality, the systematic neglect, the impoverishment of the constitution, — the resulting puny material which is handed over to the school to be educated.

". . . It seems clear that every generation receives its chance of living a good physical life, and when to the fact of the large proportion of healthy new births we couple the evidence of improving health and physique in children who pass up the poorer elementary schools, *it seems clear that we are not dealing with a hereditary condition at all, but with a systematic postnatal neglect by ignorant parents, and that heredity, if it makes for anything, makes for recuperation, and so do the other social forces which are brought into play in dealing with the poorer population.*" (P. 31.) — Report of the Committee, Vol. II.

Dr. Edward Malins, M.D., President of the Obstetrical Society of London and Professor of Midwifery in the University of Birmingham, was examined upon the same subject. From the Report of the Committee (Vol. II, p. 136), the following extracts are taken: —

"3124. You have been good enough to attend here in consequence of certain evidence that we received the other day in which it was stated by Dr. Eichholz, on the authority of other medical men, that if people are going to have children, they will have healthy children as though Nature were giving every generation a fresh start, and he went on to say that healthy births were about 90 per cent in the poor neighborhoods, and he suggested that we should go to the London Obstetrical Societies to ascertain how far their experience bore out this statement. What are you able to say on this point? — What I have to say at the present time is more a matter of observation and of opinion. *We have not the figures at present to prove the accuracy of it, but I think the testimony of experienced observers would be in accordance with the views expressed by Dr. Eichholz,* though perhaps not to such a large extent. I should say that from 80 to 85 per cent of children are born physically healthy.

"3125. Whatever the condition of the parents may be? Whatever the condition of the mother may be antecedently.

"3126. And you think the deterioration sets in later? — I do, materially so. *The weight of children at birth as far as I know — and I have weighed a great many — is generally not below the average; the average keeps up very much no matter what the physical condition of the mother may be for the time.* Since receiving this information we have instituted at the Obstetrical Society of London, in connection with Lying-in Charities and Hospitals in

London, a tabulated form for ascertaining these facts — what the weight of children is at birth; their physical condition, and whether there is an increase or otherwise during the time a woman is under observation. That time is not very long, not more than 10 days or a fortnight generally.

"3127. Will you be able to furnish us with these facts when collected? — Certainly. I will give the information later on, but I think there is a general consensus of opinion, at all events irrespective of figures, which I am not able to give, that the average is kept up no matter what the condition of the mother may be.

"3128. That proves what you say in your *précis*, — that Nature intends all to have a fair start? — Yes."

II

MALNUTRITION

"One of the most striking things about children suffering from malnutrition is their vulnerability. They 'take' everything. Catarrhal processes in the nose (adenoids), pharynx, and bronchi are readily excited, and, once begun, tend to run a protracted course. There is but little resistance to any acute infectious disease which the child may contract. One illness often follows another, so that these children are frequently sick for almost an entire season. Their muscular development is poor, they tire readily, are able to take but little exercise, and their circulation is sluggish. Mentally, they are usually bright, often precocious. Many would

be called nervous children." — *The Diseases of Infancy and Childhood,* by L. Emmet Holt, M.D., LL.D., p. 231.

"General malnutrition is the commonest pathological feature of infant life. Probably 50 per cent of all infants in this country (England) suffer from a greater or less degree, and this large proportion is caused undoubtedly by the extremely unsatisfactory methods of substitute feeding at present in vogue. Illness, in the usually accepted sense of the word, is not present. No specific disease can be diagnosed, and unless the indications are realized, the degeneration is allowed to proceed until marasmus or some acute disorder supervenes. . . .

"Marasmus represents the extreme result of gradual and long-continued malnutrition. Extreme wasting is the cardinal, and indeed only, specific symptom. The term is not applicable to those cases where the wasting is the result of exhaustion due to the incidence of specific disease, such, for instance, as tuberculosis. . . .

"The most striking and perhaps the commonest result of impaired nutrition is the disease generally known by the name of rickets. Though some of its most obvious features are those associated with changes in the osseous system, those are by no means the only effects of the disease. Rachitis is the expression of profound pathological changes occurring in practically all the tissues of the body.

"No other disease illustrates so completely the effects of inadequate nutrition. An infant nursed by its mother and receiving from her a sufficient supply of ade-

quate food, never contracts the disease, however disadvantageous its environment may be in other respects.

"Defect in the diet is the prime and essential cause of rachitis; while, as might be expected, the most advanced forms of the disease are to be seen when the effects of inadequate food are intensified by unhygienic environment. . . .

"The effects of rachitis on the general constitution are extremely severe. The relationship between the nutrition of the infant and the condition of the child and adult has received but little attention. But there can be no doubt that the defects of nutrition occurring in infancy are of paramount importance in regard to the development of the adult. The cases of retarded physical and mental development in the child and the adult are numerous at the present time, and it is probable that their chief cause lies in defective nutrition during the period of infancy.

"Rachitis is a disease attended with a high mortality with which it is never credited, for the disease itself is seldom, if ever, fatal. In consequence of the cachectic condition and the extreme debility associated with advanced rachitis, the specific infectious diseases, such as measles, pertussis, and others, are associated with a much higher mortality in these cases than in others. Associated more or less closely with rachitis is a large class of disorders, such as bronchitis, diarrhœa, laryngismus stridulus, convulsions; these are attended with many fatal issues." — *The Nutrition of the Infant,* by Ralph M. Vincent, M.D., pp. 226 *et seq.*

III

MIDWIFERY AND DEATH

Dr. Thomas Darlington, President of the New York Board of Health, says: Any movement for a proper regulation of midwives has my earnest support. Under the laws of New York as they now exist there is no adequate regulation. It is very easy for a woman to become a midwife in this city. She is required, it is true, to come to the department of health with a certificate from some school of midwifery, here or abroad, or to present statements from two physicians as to her fitness and character, but the *status* of the school does not enter into the consideration, and that it is not difficult to obtain the indorsement from the two doctors is indicated by the great degree of incompetency and carelessness to be found in the ranks of the 800 midwives of New York City. Under the laws now existing we have no right to demand further proof of qualification. If the applicant meets the slight requirements, we must put her down as a "registered midwife." She brings this phrase prominently into use in her solicitations for business in her neighborhood, and it inspires confidence — a good deal more confidence than it should. Thus are the people deceived by the laxity of the law. A measure was introduced in the legislature, providing for a much stricter supervision of midwives than is now the case. The bill had the support of this department and of the medical societies of standing, and yet, because of ignorance and indifference concerning the evils of the practice, it failed

to reach a place on the statute books. My own opinion is that the midwife should, before being allowed to practise, undergo a schooling at least as long and as careful as that of the trained nurse.

Dr. Henry C. Coe, Professor of Gynecology at Bellevue Hospital, New York, and Chief Surgeon of Gynecology and Obstetrics at the General Memorial Hospital, New York, says: Midwives are responsible for the majority of cases sent to public hospitals. It is a sad commentary on the mediæval customs of obstetrics that such facts, known to all doctors, should be ignored by coroners. The remedy is plain, — to have educated midwives, as in Germany.

Dr. J. Clarence Webster, of the Rush Medical College, Chicago, says: The midwives are, as a class, uneducated and untrained. They are responsible for the great majority of maternal deaths. Every gynecologist who works in a large charity hospital can give evidence of the morbidity among poor women resulting from infection where the attendant was a midwife. The splendid results obtained by the lying-in hospitals and dispensaries, where women are attended by skilled physicians and trained nurses, are chiefly due to a rigid technique, the essential feature of which is cleanliness. It is a disgrace to every city that the benefits of such institutions cannot be extended to all poor women. Any surgeon who would dare to operate under the conditions observed by midwives would be denounced not only by the medical profession, but also by the enlightened laity. Yet the latter are apparently indifferent to the work of the mid-

wife, and allow her to carry on her dangerous career uncensured. The extension of the benefits of scientific obstetrics is chiefly due to the persistence and self-sacrifice of the medical profession, but the doctors are unable, unaided, to do what remains to be done.

Dr. Francis Quinlin, President of the New York County Medical Association, says: All reputable physicians who have given the matter the slightest consideration are of one mind in regard to the menace to life in the ignorant work of the great majority of midwives. The New York County Medical Association has let slip no opportunity to throw the weight of its influence on the side of remedial measures. That little has been accomplished so far is due to the fact that the midwife, as she exists to-day, is a time-honored institution, difficult to uproot. Most midwives have apparently no conception of the scientific cleanliness which is rightly regarded by physicians as being of prime importance. The most ordinary antiseptic precautions are ignored, with the result that, every day, women who have been attended by midwives are brought to hospitals suffering from blood-poisoning. In their habits of carelessness the midwives also carry from one house to another the germs of infectious diseases. In the interest of a host of poor mothers and of children whose lives are valuable to the nation, I say that the practice of midwifery should come under a much closer scrutiny of the law than is now the case.

Dr. Eleanor B. Kilham, Head of the Maternity Department of the Women's Infirmary, New York City,

says: That much injury results to mothers and children from the unrestrained practice of midwives there can be no doubt in the mind of any physician who has been brought in contact with the conditions. There is an opportunity here for an important reform, and I am very glad to know that something is being done in this direction.

(These letters are quoted from *Success*, April, 1905.)

IV

MUNICIPALIZATION OF THE MILK SUPPLY AND THE DANGERS OF STERILIZATION

"The real solution of the milk problem is not the supply of sterilized milk of doubtful purity, but rather the supply of clean milk from sources above all suspicion. The transport of milk from long distances under present conditions, as to cooling, transit, etc., may render sterilization all important, but the necessity for sterilization indicates the presence of avoidable organic impurity, and to obtain a naturally pure milk supply is the really important thing. . . .

"If we municipalize water because the public health aspect is of such vital importance, then from the same standpoint we should municipalize the milk supply. We nearly all need milk — many live on it exclusively; its supply is as regular as the water supply, and its distribution demands even greater care for a longer time. The milkman calls more regularly than the postman and the milk bill comes in as regularly as the rate card.

Like the liquor trade, the milk trade is a simple one, and the dividends of modern dairy companies show that it is profitable. . . .

"We should bear in mind that, although under present conditions of supply any stringent enforcement of the most thorough sanitary regulations on farmers, or any distinct raising of the legal minimum of fat in milk, would certainly tend to raise the price of milk to the consumer, and any rise in price would be most unfortunate, yet a high standard of production and distribution is essential. The only way to get both low price and a better article is by means of the enormous economies in distribution, cartage, etc., which would at once result from municipal ownership. . . .

"Finally, it has been shown that all successful attempts to solve the question have been those in which the aim has been other than the ordinary commercial one, and those organizing the supply have been interested in the public health, and in which there has been thorough organization on a large scale both in supply and distribution. These facts alone show that the only solution possible under modern conditions is that suggested by the municipal ownership and control of the milk supply." — F. Lawson Dodd, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., L.D.S., Eng., D.P.H., London, in *The Problem of the Milk Supply.*

Sir Richard Douglas Powell, in his lecture to the Congress of the Sanitary Institute at Glasgow, in July, 1904, said: "There can be no doubt that scientifically conducted dairy farms on a large scale, with urban depots

for the reception and dispensing of pure milk in clean bottles at a fair price to the poor, would pay, and would be a most laudable employment of the municipal enterprise that is often devoted to matters of much less urgent public interest and importance. Apart from the primary benefit of affording a pure milk supply at a fair price, the object lesson to mothers and families in food cleanliness would be beyond price."

Mrs. Watt Smith, an expert employed by the *British Medical Journal,* author of *The Milk Supply in Large Towns,* in her evidence before the Interdepartmental Committee on Physical Deterioration, condemned the policy of the English Infants' Milk Depots, saying: "The milk comes from an uninspected source; they get it from a local dealer. . . . *Then they sterilize that milk to make it safe. It is like purifying sewage to make it into clean water.* It is not right." Dr. Ralph M. Vincent also condemned the sterilization process for the same reason, and, in addition, insisted that sterilization impaired the nutritive value of the milk, causing at least one specific disease, scorbutus. — Report of the Committee, Vol. II, Minutes of Evidence.

Dr. George W. Goler, whose work in Rochester has been so much referred to, says: "For two more years the milk was Pasteurized, though considerable trouble was had with sour milk and in finding a man to furnish reasonably clean milk. After the first year four stations in all were required for the needs of four quarters of the city. Then, in 1899, we established our central station on a farm, and *instead of Pasteurizing milk, with*

all its contained filth and bacteria, we strove to keep dirt and germs out of the milk, and began to sterilize all of the utensils, bottles, etc., and to put out milk that was clean. Clean milk, or milk approximately clean, having no more than 20,000 bacteria per cubic centimeter needs no application of heat to render it fit food for babies. *Heat applied to milk alters it, makes its curd tougher and more difficult to digest, often gives rise to indigestion, diarrhœa, or constipation in the infant,* and, further, the application of heat to milk in the operation of Pasteurizing or sterilizing leads people to think they may cure a condition that is more easily prevented by care in the handling of milk used for food." — "But a Thousand a Year," reprinted from *Charities,* August 5, 1905.

V

A COMMISSIONER OF CHARITIES ON CHILD LABOR

"The objection that is offered most frequently, and perhaps with most effect, to further restriction of child labor, is the *alleged fact* that in a great many instances the *earnings of these little children are needed to supplement the incomes of widows,* of families in which the husband and wage-earner may be either temporarily or permanently or partially disabled, and that without the small addition which the earnings of these little boys and girls can bring in, there would be suffering and distress. It would be easy, I think, to overestimate the extent to which that is true. . . . So we should not

admit that that side is more serious than it is, but do let us cheerfully, frankly, gladly add that there would be many cases in which the proposed legislation (for the restriction of child labor) would deprive many families of earnings from their children, and that *we propose ourselves to step into the breach and provide that relief in good hard cash that passes in the market.* . . . If larger means are necessary to support these children so that they need not depend on their own labor, by all means let us put up the money and not push the children for a part of their support before the time when they should naturally furnish a part of their support. . . . In the long run it is never cheap to be cruel or hard. *It is never wise to drive a hard bargain with childhood.*" — Extract from an address by Homer Folks, Commissioner of Charities, New York.

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