RUSSELL SAGE
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—

MOTHERS WHO MUST EARN

BY

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WEST SIDE STUDIES

NEW YORK
SURVEY ASSOCIATES, INC.
MCMXIV

THE TROW PRESS
NEW YORK

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Photographs by Jessie Tarbox Beals

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INTRODUCTORY

THIS report gives an account of a detailed study of a group of wage-earning mothers and a statement of the conclusions of the study. The group of women in question lived on the Middle West Side of New York in the district limited by Fifty-fourth Street on the north, Thirty-fourth Street on the south, Eighth Avenue on the east, and the North River on the west.

The report does not aim to measure the amount of wage-earning by mothers of families which exists in the district defined. For this purpose, a house-to-house inquiry would have been necessary and we were not prepared to make a canvass on so extensive a scale. The study, therefore, confines itself to an intensive survey of a limited number of cases with respect to wages, hours, regularity of work, and the effect of these upon health and family life. It was, however, important to know whether the problem of the necessity for wage-earning among mothers was characteristic of the field selected, and evidence on this head was forthcoming from a number of sources. Social workers in the neighborhood declared that the working mother was an ever-recurring problem. The women of the tenements said that it was common for their neighbors to work out. One tenement mother—herself a scrubwoman in a hospital—informed the visitor that every woman in the twenty-family house where she lived worked away from home more or less regularly.

The informal evidence of residents is corroborated by the results of certain investigations carried on recently within the district. In the statistics of the schools of the Children's Aid Society for 1910–1911, the number of children whose mothers were at work is reported for all the schools, including the two within the West Side District. Of the 554 pupils in the Fifty-third Street school, 29.6 per cent, and of the 572 pupils in the Thirty-eighth Street school, 36.4 per cent were the children of mothers who worked out.* A study of juvenile delinquency on the West Side, made by the Bureau of Social Research, found that in 222 families dealt with, 39.2 per cent of the mothers were wage-earners.†

Having ascertained that the district here described was suitable for an inquiry of this character, a list of addresses was obtained for purposes of investigation. Especial pains were taken to secure these from as great a variety of sources as possible: the day nurseries, kindergartens, schools, settlement and church clubs, the Charity Organization Society, the Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor, the Child Labor Committee, the Special Employment Bureau of the Young Women's Christian Association. Altogether about 18 different agencies were visited for addresses. Workers were also sought out at their places of employment; that is, at the theaters, department stores, laundries, office buildings, etc., within the district or near it. In this way a wide range of ages, occupations, and family types was secured. Because of the variation in oc-

* Unpublished data, compiled by Mr. M. P. Adams, superintendent of schools of the Children's Aid Society, New York City.

† See Boyhood and Lawlessness. (West Side Studies.) Russell Sage Foundation Publication. New York, Survey Associates, 1914.

cupation represented by the cases studied, they may be regarded as typical in a sense that the cases of women in selected trades could not be. In the latter there would be more uniformity as to hours and wages and conditions of work, and conclusions drawn from them would be applicable only to the trade in question.

The total number of wage-earning mothers whose cases were studied was 370. Of this number, 237 were visited to secure information for this particular inquiry. The remaining 133 cases were studied through records of families obtained for other investigations of the Bureau of Social Research.*

The information desired could be supplied only by the women themselves, and the collection of all the facts needed meant the expenditure of a great deal of time in visiting. About 50 of the women were seen from time to time for more than a year. Many of the calls had to be paid in the evening, after the women had returned from the day's work. Office scrubwomen could be found at home during the day, and theater cleaners have two or three hours for their own housework while the matinee is in progress. To say that they could be found at home at this hour is not to say, by any means, that they could be found at leisure. When one considers the amount of work done by these women in one day—the washing, ironing, house cleaning, mending, dressing and feeding of the children, in addition to the day's work outside—one realizes that it is a working

* Those who, besides the writer, took part in the field work of the investigation, were Miss Ruth F. Waldo, Miss Zaida E. Udell, and Miss Eleanor Sparkes. The group of 133 cases was derived from collateral investigations conducted by Miss Ruth True, Mr. Thomas D. Eliot, and Miss Eleanor Adler. Supplementary field work on these cases was done by Miss Dora Sandowsky, who also assisted in the preparation of the tables.

day without a leisure moment. Under the circumstances, the lengthy interviews which are unavoidable in a study of this kind seemed almost an imposition. But in spite of this fact, the visitor met with unfailing kindness and hospitality. "Sure, it's only when you come that I sit down," was a frequent remark. As a rule, however, the women worked as they talked—mending stockings, paring potatoes, ironing the family wash, bathing the children and putting them to bed, or attending to any one of a thousand duties that could not wait.

Besides the interviews held in the homes and with the families, calls were made at many of the places of employment in order to observe at close range the work done and attendant conditions. The principal local laundries were visited to verify statements as to conditions and processes.* Similarly, the work of waitresses in department stores and restaurants was studied by personal observation. However, more time and attention were given to the work of cleaners in large buildings than to any of the other occupations. There were two reasons for thus emphasizing public cleaning. First, this class of work is largely followed by women in the district; and, second, there has been no previous inquiry into the work of charwomen in buildings used for business purposes. To collect information on this head, practically all the theaters and opera houses of importance, several large office buildings and department stores, and one of the largest Pullman car yards were visited and the methods of cleaning carefully observed.

* For report of an investigation of sanitary conditions in the factories of this district made by fellows of the Bureau of Social Research, see Preliminary Report of the New York State Factory Investigating Commission, 1912. Vol. I, Appendix V, p. 301.

Usually the superintendent of the cleaning force was interviewed. Almost all of the places were employing, or had employed, some one or more of the women visited. The schedule used in the inquiry was that adopted in the Bureau of Social Research for family and individual histories. It consists of three forms, copies of which are given in Appendix A.

The title "Mothers Who Must Earn" was selected as the most accurate one for the subject. To describe them as the "gainfully employed" would have implied a discrimination against labor in the home as productive work, which married housekeepers who do not receive wages justly resent. On the other hand, "working mothers" might just as well have included the toiling housekeeper one flight up or down from the selected case. Much of the work done by the women was temporary and casual, but it was paid for in wages and not in kind. If some of the women were not working when visited, this only meant that they were looking for a job and was indicative of the irregularity of their employment. All of them were either supplying the entire yearly income of the family or supplementing it by their earnings.

CHAPTER I

THE WORLD OF THE WEST SIDE MOTHER

THE lives of the families whose circumstances are reviewed in this study are peculiarly bound up with their environment. One can fancy some Jacques of the West Side reviewing the seven ages of man as they are lived by thousands around him. The infant, born and nursed in the dark tenement room; then the school boy spending a few years in some numbered "P. S." to learn for a brief season from some nameless "Teacher"; the adolescent making love on a Tenth Avenue corner; the young adventurer risking his life in a gang fight or in a game of street baseball; the workingman with a growing family, who takes a drink to forget his troubles; the derelict, old at forty, finding it hard now to get a job; and then the grandfather, house-bound, minding his daughter's baby while she goes out to do a day's work,—such are perhaps the scenes in which he might shadow forth the "strange, eventful history" of the citizen of the West Side.

Not all members of the family are thrown back alike on the resources of their immediate environment. The father has glimpses of the world, even if only from the driving seat of his truck. The son or daughter may go to work downtown, and though it costs 10 cents a day in carfare, the young worker has thus a daily glimpse of something beyond the West Side. It is the

mother of the family who least often sees beyond the neighborhood limits. Even the mothers who work away from home seldom journey far to a job. They cannot afford to spend the time in traveling back and forth, and they cannot afford to pay carfare out of their wages. They are even less adventurous in seeking recreation. A woman of thirty-five replied, when I asked her if she had ever seen Riverside Park, "No, dearie, I was never above Sixtieth Street in my life."

The close relation existing between the conditions of the neighborhood and the people who live there makes it necessary for us to describe briefly the district itself. We shall therefore glance at some of the salient features —racial, physical, industrial, social, and moral—which influence the group of families whom we shall later study in detail.

The basis of population is German and Irish and the social order reflects the racial characteristics of both. To the Irish comes an admixture of English and Scotch. Each group preserves to some extent its native habits and morals, the more serious German dwelling side by side with the easy-going Irishman. The characters of Gerhardt Hauptmann's sociological dramas live under the same roof with those of John Galsworthy. Teamster Henschel, with his dark rebellion, and Timson, the cab driver and drunken philosopher, meet as neighbors on the common stairs. Nowhere is the difference between the German and the Irishman more strikingly revealed than where the effects of long continued poverty and drink are to be observed. The German poor man tends to cruelty, and the Irishman to brutality. In German homes were tragedies unrelieved by humor, and in Irish homes, brutalities enhanced by an

easy-going acceptance. The German wife under the influence of want and overwork tends to melancholy, while the Irish wife slides down into indifference and slovenliness, and sometimes takes to drink.

In the second generation, the Irish and Germans have largely intermarried. There has always been religious agreement between them—the majority of the Germans having sprung from the Roman Catholic districts of Southern Germany*—and this agreement has facilitated their union. The newer Italian element they regard as strangers and aliens. An Irish woman, herself born in County Cavan, for instance, commonly refers to her Forty-sixth Street Italian neighbor as a "foreigner." The Poles and Greeks who are beginning to settle in the district are not merely aliens; they are interlopers. Their advance is resisted on every side. Hence the newer arrivals live in more or less closed "colonies," with peculiar languages, social customs, and standards of living.

The population of the district, consisting in 1910 of about 110,000 people, is housed in 80 oblong blocks. The elevation is comparatively uniform; the streets are straight and parallel; the houses vary but little in height. Climb up five or six flights to the top of any one of them, and go out upon the roof through the scuttle. On all sides stretches a dull rusty prairie of roofs. Only a few tall chimneys relieve the monotony of the view, for this region is not as yet marked by the presence of large, modern manufacturing plants. The sky line on the eastern border of the district is broken by towering new office buildings, in comparison with

* See Cartwright, O. G.: Historical Survey of the Middle West Side. (West Side Studies.) Russell Sage Foundation Publication. In preparation.

which its factory buildings seem old and shabby. The North River and the high Jersey banks close the view to the west. A flock of pigeons, flying up from a neighboring roof top, circle in the air, their colored breasts flashing in the sunshine. Slowly they return and settle upon the same roof they left, singling it out from the hundreds of rusty housetops. These flocks of city-loving birds furnish a touch of color and romance in the dingy neighborhood.

The loss of the picturesque element has not been made up by the addition of comfort and convenience as has been the case in not less monotonous but more luxurious sections of New York. The neighborhood seems like the great neglected back yard of the rest of the city. Much of the cast-off clothing and refuse food from better streets find their way thither. At the Salvation Army headquarters half-worn garments can be bought for nominal prices,—an overcoat for 25 cents, a pair of shoes for 10 cents. Under the Ninth Avenue Elevated on Saturday night the push-carts of "Paddy's Market" display great heaps of vegetables, fruits, and other wares rejected from better quarters. Everywhere there are "seconds"—oranges that have been frozen, nicked dishes, faulty shoes and garments—to be bought for next to nothing. During the day, the peddler carts similar wares up and down through the streets, filling the neighborhood with his hoarse cry and selling his load for what he can get.

In the poorest quarters are families that almost live on waste. The children forage for wood, coal, and ice along the railroad tracks and among the warehouses, and the mother brings home from work gifts of clothing and fragments of food. It is surprising how large a part

of the minimum necessary to support life on the West Side can be picked up from the streets by boys and girls whose hunting instincts have been sharpened by necessity.

Segregated from the greater houses and the grander streets of the city, the West Side lives its own life in its own way, working when it must and snatching its pleasures where it may. Old houses, poor and costly transportation facilities, and human inertia combine to produce an isolated, overgrown village. Its numerous rear tenements give it the stamp of neglect and sordidness. Living in these little rear houses are the most conspicuously underpaid workers of the community,—irregular earners of both sexes bringing in just enough to keep soul and body together.

Congestion of population, as that term is understood in Manhattan, is not extreme, the density being only about one-half that of the most congested ward in the city. Frequently, however, from eight to 20 families occupy the same house, dwelling in identical compartments, using the same stairway and front door, flocking on the same threshold on hot summer nights for a breath of fresh air. The word "neighborliness" ceases to suggest a virtue to the women of the tenements. They will declare self-righteously that they do not "bother with their neighbors, but keep themselves *to* themselves."

Families with children tend to congregate in the same house. There are some landlords who make a point of not renting to large families, and others who, having once admitted a number of children, are satisfied that the whole house shall be given over to them. For example, a five-story tenement in Fifty-first Street houses

10 families that muster among themselves but two children, while a certain house on Eleventh Avenue has 15 children living on the top floor alone! Needless to say, the houses where the most children live are no better adapted for their presence than are the others. A tenement with a roof garden or any other sort of children's garden is not to be found in the district. As for the admirable "Children's Houses" which are beginning to appear as a part of working-class tenements in certain foreign cities, such things are apparently undreamt of for the little people of the West Side. In the meantime, they have only the common halls and the streets for a playground, and where they live the street door always stands open. It is not surprising that sober middle age goes about looking for a house with a locked front door, where "there ain't such a raft of children."

Removals from flat to flat are frequent, but the family seldom wanders more than a few blocks at a time, and sometimes proceeds in a circle, like a man lost in the woods, back to the original dwelling. Remarks like the following are typical: "I was born on the block." "When I came to America, twenty-five years ago, I landed in this house." "One of Michael's teachers is the same as taught me." Many families whose circumstances would warrant removal to better surroundings are held fast by old habits and associations. Yet many of these men and women, it must be noted, once had the enterprise to journey from the old world to the new. Somehow they have lost it on the West Side.

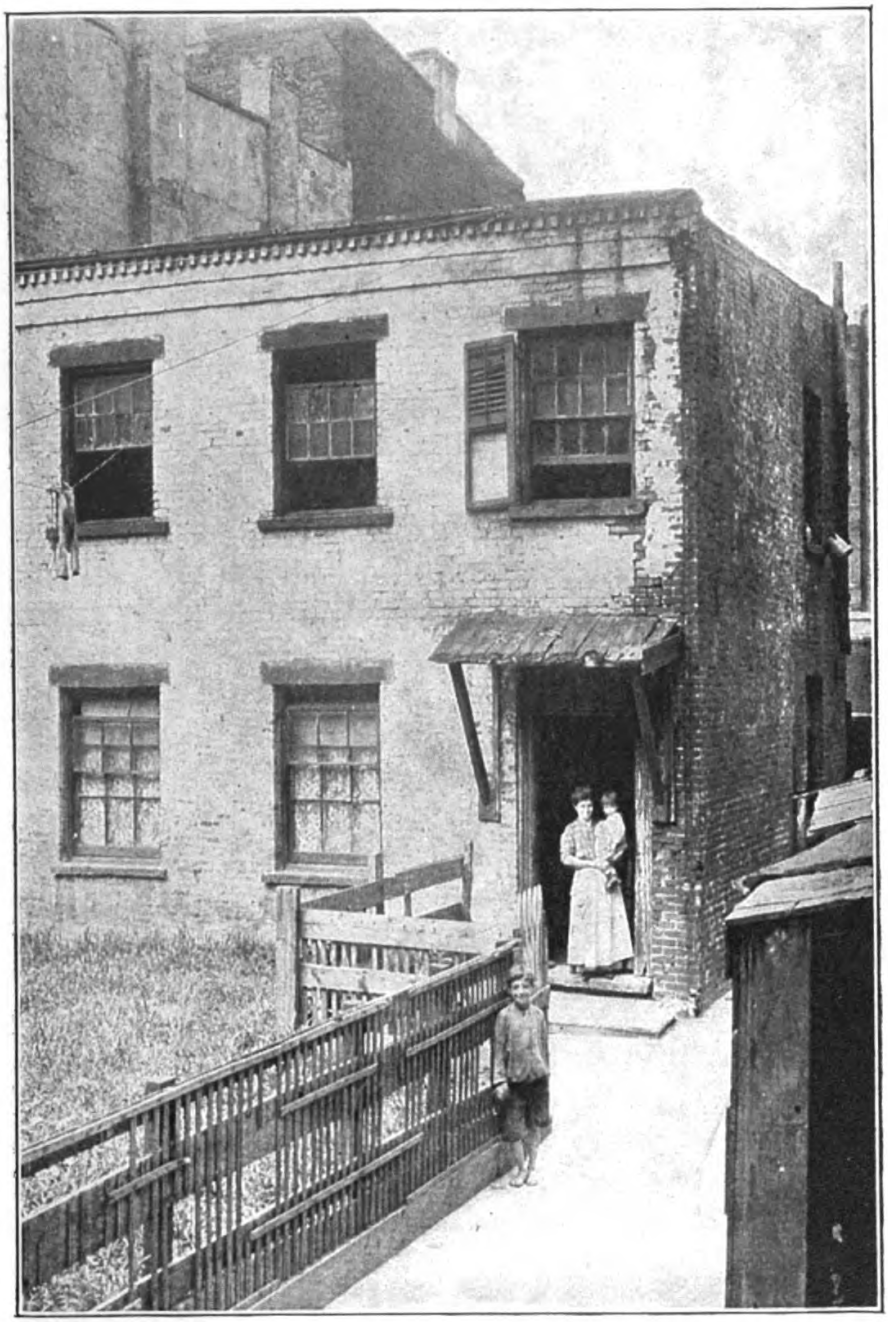
The West Side is the home of stables. This is due to the fact that a large amount of unimproved property is

included within its limits, and wherever unimproved property exists, stables are likely to be built. To this district great numbers of draft horses, as well as many of their drivers, go home to sleep. Stables of all kinds are to be seen. Some, especially those on the river front blocks, are ramshackle wooden sheds, just large enough to accommodate a single team. Others are scattered along the cross streets, separated by only a thin partition wall from adjoining tenements, so that at night the occupants of the latter can hear the stamping of the horses in their stalls. Nearer Broadway are tall, storied barns, built of concrete, where the horses are sent up to bed in elevators.

Along Broadway, just east of the district, are distributed about 50 theaters and concert halls. This region contains also the principal hotels and restaurants of the city, as well as great numbers of small Sixth Avenue lunch rooms. In the Thirties are some of the largest department stores in the city. Along all these streets giant office buildings are rapidly multiplying. To this Broadway area, which includes the region commonly called "Longacre," * many of the West Side people go to look for work, as it has the great advantage of lying within walking distance of their homes. Hence the kind of work offered in the Longacre buildings determines to a large extent the occupations followed by residents of the district.

Industrially, this region is very largely the home of unskilled and casual labor—of men who are drivers and day laborers; of women who scrub and clean in private houses by the day or in public buildings by the week.

* See Cartwright, op. cit.



MAYER'S PLACE

Unique for its grass plot. Janitress in the doorway

Many families exist from year to year on the precarious earnings derived from odd jobs and day's work; for the West Side is a hotbed of unemployment.

Not only the women but also the men are in a class of labor which has hitherto been neglected. Very little attention has been paid to domestic and personal service or to transportation workers. No studies have been made. No legislation has been attempted in their interest. The hotel waiters' strike, which occurred while this investigation was in progress, brought to light for the first time conditions in this especial occupation. But outside this single spot of light the field of domestic and personal service is still a dark one.

There is evidence of a decrease during the past twenty years in the amount of skilled work done by the dwellers in this district. Indigenous to the West Side are the woodworking trades, the metal trades, and textile work. All of these have greatly declined in importance. It is true that one branch of the woodworking trade—the manufacture of pianos—has become the most important local industry, being the largest employer of male workers.* But aside from the piano factories, the woodworking establishments are small workshops. Textile work, a traditional occupation for women, has declined even more strikingly. The laundries now stand chief in importance among the trades employing women.

The commercial world which has grown up on the borders of the district seems to have sapped it of its industrial vigor and reduced the dwellers to the lowest

* Preliminary Report of the New York State Factory Investigating Commission, 1912. Vol. I, Appendix V, p. 305. The information was gathered by fellows of the Bureau of Social Research.

ranks of those who fetch and carry in the service of commerce. One after another, spinning, knitting, and weaving mills have moved away.* Two large twine factories moved away less than ten years ago. A large carpet factory has likewise shifted to the country. Several knitting mills, including a plant which manufactured the once-popular "jersey," have passed out of existence. Some of the buildings thus vacated are now occupied by piano factories and laundries.

With the passing of the textile factories has gone also a considerable amount of home work. "Finishing" yarn for the knitting mills, knotting silk fringe, and making bead and passementerie ornaments of all kinds are instances of home work formerly common. The German women did chair caning. The Brewster Carriage Factory, which has also passed away, once gave out its rattan carriage seats to be woven by the women in their tenement homes. Some work, such as finishing paper boxes, has been taken inside the factory by improved machinery. On the whole, the Americanized German and Irish women are too independent to allow themselves to be exploited at home work. If they must work, they prefer outside wage-earning, as they know that they get a better return for their time.

From Mrs. Dooley,† who was born in the district of North-of-Ireland parentage forty-five years ago, I received many shrewd observations on the changing industrial order about her. She and her sister worked as girls in West Side knitting mills. Mrs. Dooley's employer was a Lancashire man who had set up a shed in Fifty-second Street, and her sister worked at a rival

* See Cartwright, op. cit.

† All names used in this book are fictitious.

shed in Fifty-first Street on the site now occupied by a steam laundry. They continued in the same places until they were married. Neither had returned to factory work since. Mrs. Dooley, however, had been for twenty years janitress in the house where she lived and by this means paid the rent. Her husband kept in steady work running a freight elevator; the son of eighteen worked very irregularly as a driver. A daughter had just arrived at working age, and Mrs. Dooley was at a loss to know where she should try to find employment for the girl.

These sisters deplored the disappearance of the textile mills from the neighborhood. "They were nice places for the girls to work," said Mrs. Dooley. "Agnes and I made good money and we could go home to a hot dinner every day. The way it is now, if a girl don't want to work in the laundries, she's got to travel so far to get any other kind of work she can't come home at noon. She has to pay 10 cents for carfare and 15 cents for lunch, and that makes a quarter every day. The laundries around here are no place for a young girl to work. There was a different class of girls in the mills. Young girls like my Annie there used to go in the mills and stay there till they were married. They weren't like the girls now, changing around all the time. Many of them would come back as widows and could make a living there. You never heard of widows having to put their children away in those days."

Notwithstanding the fact that this section was once the seat of the textile trades, and that these trades have always been the stronghold of married women in industry, there is no local tradition favoring wage-earning by married women. The wife of the West Side working-

man does not earn because she wishes to be independent. The idea is foreign to her experience. She feels fully entitled to her husband's wages, and it is one of her grievances that he does not hand over enough of his pay. The American atmosphere has created in the more ambitious of them a desire for respectability and the appearances of respectability. Not to work is a mark of the middle class married woman, and the ambitious West Side family covets that mark. Hence comes the attempt to conceal the mother's employment, if she has one, which is one of the little snobberies of the poor.

Mrs. Garrety worked all day in a milk station and cared for husband and children besides. Coming home from work one evening, she found a sailor's suit cut out of cambric lying on the bed. Her youngest son explained that she was to make up the suit for him to wear in a school entertainment, and that the Sisters had cut out the costumes for the mothers of the small actors to finish. "Sister said," the boy added, "if any of our mothers worked, for us to hold up our hands, and she wouldn't send the suits home, but would have them made. I didn't hold up my hand. I wasn't going to tell them that you worked." Mrs. Garrety sighed but accepted the point of view as undebatable. She completed the sailor's suit by sitting up late at night, and considered it a small sacrifice to bring to the altar of family pride.

Furthermore, when the women go out to look for work they find that their families are a handicap. For this reason many of them conceal their home conditions and give their names with the prefix "Miss." However, it is not my observation that this prejudice against them on the part of employers is well grounded. Be-

cause of their greater age, experience, and responsibility, the older women try harder and take their work more seriously than unmarried girls. What Nora Tully, a waitress, said of herself is true, no doubt, of many others. "When I first worked at Story's I didn't try extra hard, because I always thought 'Oh, I'll be getting married soon.' But since I came back a year ago, when John was laid off his engine, I've worked hard and put my brains in it, I can tell you."

Against the somber background of West Side conditions, the group of women forming the basis of this study stood out in distinct relief. It was not only because we focused attention on the simple realities of their lives that these women seemed better than their environment would have led us to expect. The fact that the women were working qualified them at once for respect. They had had the enterprise to find work and the industry to keep it. They had not "put their children away," but were making every effort to keep up a home. Their determination to shoulder their obligations and meet the responsibilities was nothing short of heroic. To a large extent, they represented the best standards and the best elements of West Side life.

CHAPTER II

THE ECONOMIC FAMILY

CONJUGAL CONDITION OF THE MOTHERS

THE condition of the family depends primarily on the condition of the principal breadwinner. Whether the father is dead or absent, or whether he is living at home and is unemployed or at work, will roughly determine the economic circumstances of the family. For the sake of greater accuracy, the 370 women studied are here divided into six groups,—those whose husbands were withdrawn from the family through death, desertion, or separation forming three of them, and those whose husbands were living at home in a state of incapacitation, idleness, or employment forming the remaining three. Table 1 shows the number and percentage of mothers in each group.

It must be noted that the distribution of women according to family status, shown by the table, is not representative of family conditions in the district. Naturally, the proportion of widows, deserted wives, and separated wives would be much higher among wage-earning women than in the general population of the locality. It must be noted also that "incapacitated" in the following table means invalidity through specific disease and not old age alone. Mere age as a test of incapacitation is difficult to apply. Whatever the man's years, he was not put into this class unless

his infirmities placed him there. Husbands were counted "idle" only when they had been out of work for at least a year. Among those "at work," many intermittent or irregular workers were therefore included. Men who worked only three or four days of the week, those who were out of work on account of

TABLE 1.—CONJUGAL CONDITION OF 370 WAGE-EARNING MOTHERS

Group	Conjugal condition	MOTHERS	
		Number	Per cent
I	Widows	125	33.8
II	Deserted wives[a]	40	10.8
III	Separated wives	9	2.4
IV	Wives with incapacitated husbands	21	5.7
V	Wives with idle husbands	12	3.2
VI	Wives with husbands at work[a]	163	44.1
	Total	370	100.0

[a] Among the women visited were two who had formed irregular unions and were the mothers of illegitimate children. As one of them had been deserted and the other was still living with the father of the child, they were assigned respectively to the groups of deserted wives and wives with husbands at work.

illness or a strike, those who worked regularly at a low-paid occupation, and those who earned more but drank and did not "give their money in"—all these fell into the group "at work." In a district like the West Side, which offers so many opportunities for casual employment, it would be unfair and inaccurate to class as "idle" the men who were simply fitting into their industrial environment as they found it. Hence several men whose work histories for the year

showed long and repeated gaps were nevertheless assigned to the class of working husbands.

One-third of the women visited were widows. There were 125 of these fatherless families where the mother was compelled to perform the duties of two parents and to support wholly or partially a family of several persons on an income scantily adapted to the needs of one. To all these homes disease or accident had dealt a blow which had permanently altered the family structure. The deserting husband may return and take up his responsibilities once more; the loafer may reform and go to work; the man who has lost his job may find another next week or tomorrow—vague hopes like these play their part in the lives of the women whose husbands are still whole and sound.

But where disease and accident have done their work the situation of the family is comparatively static. It is true that the widow's children are growing on toward the day when they also will become wage-earners. The precariousness of the family's position is proportioned exactly according to whether that day is in the near or distant future. It is also true that the widow herself may remarry. This is by no means unlikely on the West Side where remarriages are frequent.*

The subject of marriage was frequently discussed, for the shrewd wisdom of the women on this head was not to be lost. It is not the fashion among them to speak in praise of "marriage life," as the Irish women say. "If I had it to do over, I'd never marry," was almost the universal remark. At first I set this down

* Of the 370 women visited, 10 per cent had already contracted second marriages. We may suppose that a certain proportion of the 125 widows will take second husbands. Indeed, there were several who were on the eve of doing so.

Fifty-five Years of Age and Forty-five Years of Toil

as the conventional language of disillusionment, the kind of remark which the women thought proper for middle age to make. As I came to know them better, I realized that there was a much deeper reason. The strain of bringing up a family on the average workingman's wages, reduced as this is likely to be by unemployment, sickness, or drink, constitutes, indeed, the dark age of the tenement mother's life. It is not strange that the goodwill existing between husband and wife often gives way beneath it. "I tell my husband," said Mrs. Gurney, "it's not right for us to be quarreling all the time before the children. But it seems like we can't help it. He's so worried all the time and I'm so tired. If we were easy in our minds we wouldn't do it."

Occasionally there was a sad story of cruelty at the hands of a man degraded by drink or brutalized by every influence from his youth up. There were sordid stories such as are rehearsed daily in the domestic relations court. There were tales of men who, deprived by circumstances of everything but their power over wife and child, found their greatest pleasure in the exercise of this power; wretched types "who know no influence but that of force, no reason, and no gentleness, since these have never come their way; who know only that they must keep that little which they have, since that which they have not is so great and so desirable." *

Some of these sad histories ended in desertion or separation; 40 deserted wives and nine who had separated from their husbands were among the group

* Galsworthy, John: A Commentary: Demos, p. 39. New York, G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1911.

studied. Divorce is unknown on the West Side. Legal counsel is too expensive and the societies which furnish legal advice free to the poor are not willing to undertake this kind of case. Other histories equally grim or sad were only terminated by death. More than one woman candidly confessed that her husband's death had been a relief. Mrs. Brunig, a sincerely religious woman, said to me, "You may think we are having a hard time. But I don't mind it. It's nothing compared to what it was when Brunig was alive. I never had a happy day then."

In contrast to these dismal homes there were others where mutual affection and sympathy had survived every strain, and where one found instances of absolutely heroic loyalty on the part of a wife toward an unlucky husband. Some of the men were sick and a hospitable institution was waiting to receive them and relieve the over-burdened wife of this care and expense. Yet a woman would say, "He was good to his family as long as he had work. It's not as if he were a drinking man and wasted his money. I won't send him away now." And then there was Mrs. Cary whose husband's earnings fell so low—he was a longshoreman handicapped by hernia—that she started out to find work. The neighbors all said, "You'll spoil him." To which Mrs. Cary replied firmly and proudly, "Everybody knows their own best," and went her way.

But whether the situation has been relieved by goodwill or aggravated by ill feeling, the strain of making a home for a family under the usual West Side conditions is a stern experience. The woman who has gone through it looks on a second marriage from a practical point of view based on something more than the nor-

mal amount of disillusionment which goes with the middle years even under happier conditions.

Few women are likely to be as extremely practical as Mrs. Cooley was in her second marriage. If her attitude seems somewhat materialistic, it must be remembered that Mrs. Cooley's life had been spent in the pursuit of food, clothes, and shelter, and not of ideals. Here is the story as she told it:

" My first husband was a hoisting engineer. It was easy work, but only a sober man could do it. Barney was sober enough—and jolly, too, when he wanted to be. He could make others laugh, but he only made me cry. He never drank, but he beat me. Even before I married him, up to the day of the wedding, I was always dreading it. The night before, I looked him in the eye and said, ' Barney McBride, will ye be good to me? ' I would have left him after Henry was born, but he was sickly and I knew he wouldn't live long. I took care of him till he died, but it's God's truth, I was glad when I saw him in his coffin.

" I was working over at the carpet factory at Greenpoint then, going all that way back and forth every day because I didn't want to break up my home. After awhile Samuel Cooley began to come around. He was a boiler maker. He'd be waiting at the gate of the factory when we come out at night and walk along with Maggie and me a ways. But I had had enough of marriage life. So I left the Greenpoint factory and come back to New York so's to get rid of him. Then I went to scrub in a hotel. But one day I come home and there was Samuel standing before the door. He told me he was married thirty-two years to his first wife and she never did a day's work outside her house all that

time. I left him waiting three months and then I married him in the fall. That was October. I didn't mind working in the summer, but when winter came I wished I had a husband so's I wouldn't have to go out."

As I have said, Mrs. Cooley's frankly materialistic attitude was unusual. The women were not as a rule inclined, as girl wage-earners generally are, to look forward to marriage as a means of escaping work. Experience had taught them better. They were more likely to marry for companionship.

Mrs. Grant, a middle-aged silk weaver and a shrewd observer of life, analyzed thus the motives of her own two marriages. " I was married the first time when I was only eighteen. Because my sister, a year younger than me, was getting married, I thought I couldn't let her beat me and took the first chance. It was just as well, too, for it kept me out of harm's way. After my husband's death I went back to the silk mill. The second time I married was thirteen years after the first time. I expected to go on working, but I wanted a good companion."

Perhaps in a worse plight than the widows was a small group of women, 21 in number, whose husbands were either sick or maimed, as in the case of Mrs. Cary. Each of these unfortunate men was an added responsibility for his wife. Besides requiring care and, in some cases, constant nursing, he made another member of a family which had to be supported on an income scarcely sufficient to supply the needs of one person.

CAUSES OF DEATH OR INCAPACITATION OF HUSBANDS

These two groups, widows and wives with ailing husbands, made 146 in all, or 40 per cent of the whole num-

ber of families. They were alike in that disease or accident had contributed to the peculiar family situation. The causes of death and incapacitation of husbands were as shown in Table 2.

TABLE 2.—CAUSES OF DEATH OR INCAPACITATION OF THE HUSBANDS OF 146 WAGE-EARNING MOTHERS

Cause of death or incapacitation	HUSBANDS			
	Deceased	Incapacitated	Total	
			Number	Per cent
Tuberculosis	46	6	52	35.4
Pneumonia	19	..	19	13.0
Work-accident	11	5	16	11.0
Heart disease	6	1	7	4.8
Insanity	..	5	5	3.4
Alcoholism	3	..	3	2.0
Liver diseases	3	..	3	2.0
Rheumatism	2	1	3	2.0
Paralysis	2	..	2	1.4
Cancer	2	..	2	1.4
Blindness	..	2	2	1.4
Appendicitis	2	..	2	1.4
Suicide	2	..	2	1.4
Typhoid	2	..	2	1.4
Diabetes	1	..	1	.7
Meningitis	1	..	1	.7
Asthma	1	..	1	.7
Intestinal obstruction	1	..	1	.7
Brain tumor	1	..	1	.7
Erysipelas	1	..	1	.7
Apoplexy	1	..	1	.7
Epilepsy	1	..	1	.7
Anæmia	1	..	1	.7
Softening of brain	1	..	1	.7
Cerebral hemorrhage	1	..	1	.7
Septicemia	1	..	1	.7
Homicide	1	..	1	.7
Lead poisoning	..	1	1	.7
Accidental drowning	1	..	1	.7
Unknown	11	..	11	7.5
Total	125	21	146	100.0

The striking rôle played by tuberculosis in this table is not to be overlooked. It had deprived, either through death or incapacitation, more than a third of the 146 families in this group of their principal breadwinner. Pneumonia stands second on the list as the cause of death. Thus, almost half of the deceased husbands had died of pulmonary diseases.

Of the 125 widows, 37 per cent had been rendered so by tuberculosis. This fact is significant in considering the condition of the family. The lingering nature of the disease makes it the heaviest possible drain on the family fortunes. The husband passes through a long period of incapacitation during which the wife is compelled to earn money for rent and food, to care for the children, and to nurse the invalid. If she has any credit whatever,—but this is rare,—she accumulates debts which wipe out the insurance money should it eventually come. All this means that the widow is finally left not only to take up the physical and financial burdens of the future, but to wipe out also the physical and financial arrears of the past. In families where widowhood means financial distress, it means double distress when tuberculosis has prepared the way.

Third on the list, and forming 11 per cent of all the cases in which the father was either dead or incapacitated, are the 16 cases of work-accidents. In five families, the fathers were partly or wholly incapacitated by injuries received while at work. In 11 cases, the accident had resulted in death. A closer examination of the nature of these accidents and of the occupations which were their source reveals the usual story of the disabled breadwinner and the uncompensated family.

Like tuberculosis, the work injury is a double affliction when it disables a man as a wage-earner and then leaves him, helpless or handicapped, to be supported by his family. Such was the case with James Hadley, a longshoreman, who worked on the White Star docks for eighteen years. One day, in handling a cotton bale, he was struck on the leg by the iron band, which burst and snapped like a great elastic. The wound caused an abscess, and Hadley became a cripple as a result. Haynes lost three fingers on his right hand in an engine explosion. Cary and Finney suffered from hernia caused by lifting on the docks. Compton, a circus performer, was permanently crippled by falling from a trapeze. Three of these men are able to do an occasional odd job. In the case of one of them, ruin of body had been followed by ruin of character, and the man had become a professional beggar.

The tale of the 11 men who had been killed at work, briefly told, is as follows: Stires, working in an electric power house, was caught by a moving belt. Carroll, a longshoreman, was struck by a falling load as the rope on the hoist broke. Gates was killed by falling into the space for the fly wheel of the machine he was cleaning. Reddy was killed by his own locomotive. Kerwin and Sullivan both fell from scaffolds. Mallery, a dock laborer, was drowned. McKinney, a driver in the street cleaning department, slipped from the edge of his cart on an icy day in March, and Wells, a truck driver, fell from his wagon. Deely, working in a foundry, was caught in an unguarded machine. Lane was struck by a truck in excavation work.

Of these 16 families whose breadwinners were injured or killed, only two received any compensation. Mrs.

Stires, by the advice of her husband's fellow-workers, sued "the Company" and received $1,000, of which $250 went to the lawyer who conducted her case. The remainder kept Mrs. Stires and five children in rent and sickness expenses during the next three years. Carroll, visited by an agent of his employers before he died, signed a paper of release for $100, and his wife got no more.

To the list of industrial accidents should be added the one instance of industrial disease—that of lead poisoning acquired in the plumber's trade.

Summing up, then, the cases of tuberculosis, pneumonia, work-accidents, and industrial disease, we find that these causes were responsible for fully 60 per cent of the total number of dead or disabled wage-earners. Only 40 per cent were covered by the long list of other causes given.

AGE OF LIVING HUSBANDS

In considering the question of the men's ages, we must remember that youth is short and old age comes early for people who earn their living by the exercise of muscular force. John A. Fitch found the Pittsburgh steel workers entering old age at forty.* A fact of frequent observation in the West Side tenements is the shocking decrepitude of men and women not over fifty years of age. Having begun to work in childhood, by the time they are fifty they are ready to stop at home and be supported by their children. One broken old man of fifty-two had behind him a working life of forty-five years, almost half a century of toil! He

* Fitch, John A.: Old Age at Forty. *American Magazine*, March, 1911.

was utterly worn out, but was earning 25 cents a day by selling papers. Until recently he had managed to hold his job as a baker at $12 a week by employing a helper at $4.00. This had reduced his wages to $8.00, but his wife went out to work and made up the sum. They had six children, and $12 a week was meager enough for their needs.

On the whole, however, the ages of the 245 living husbands did not run very high. Table 3 shows the number and per cent of specified age periods.

TABLE 3.—AGES OF LIVING HUSBANDS OF 245 WAGE-EARNING MOTHERS

Age	HUSBANDS	
	Number	Per cent
Less than 25 years	4	1.6
25 years and less than 30 years	17	6.9
30 years and less than 35 years	35	14.3
35 years and less than 40 years	58	23.7
40 years and less than 45 years	62	25.4
45 years and less than 50 years	40	16.3
50 years and over	29	11.8
Total	245	100.0

From the foregoing table it will be seen that 72 per cent of the men were under forty-five years of age, 16 per cent between that and fifty, and only 12 per cent fifty years of age or older. Thus only a small percentage of the men had arrived at a time of life where they might loaf with an approving conscience. As a matter of fact, I found only one man who seemed to be claiming the privilege of his years—he was fifty-three—and

willing to depend on his daughter's earnings in the factory for support. Of the 29 men who had passed the fifty-year mark, five were incapacitated and six had long been absentees or deserters. The remaining 18, except for the pensioner above mentioned, were all working intermittently or regularly. Several of the men by marrying late had reached their declining years before their children were old enough to earn.

A second view of the men's ages is given in Table 4.

TABLE 4.—AVERAGE AGES OF LIVING HUSBANDS OF 245 WAGE-EARNING MOTHERS, ACCORDING TO DOMESTIC CONDITION OF WIFE

Domestic condition of wife	HUSBANDS	
	Number	Average age in years
Deserted or separated wives	49	38.7
Wives of incapacitated husbands	21	42.8
Wives with idle husbands	12	40.8
Wives with husbands at work	163	39.5
Total	245	39.7

In none of these groups can the average age be regarded as high. Let us compare them, for instance, with the corresponding groups of husbands in the recent federal report on woman and child wage-earners in the cotton textile industry. In this report the average age of non-contributing fathers in families in which the mother or children under sixteen were at work was found to be fifty and two-tenths years in New England,

and fifty-one and one-tenth years in the South.* Since the non-contributors were counted as such by reason of desertion, sickness, or idleness, they correspond to the first three groups in the foregoing table, for whom the average age is but forty.

The difference is striking. The West Side fathers whose wives were earning were fully ten years younger than the non-contributing men whose wives and children were in the cotton mills.

OCCUPATIONS OF THE HUSBANDS

The working careers, whether long or short, of the 370 husbands, often showed a great many shiftings from one occupation or trade to another. Sometimes the change corresponded with removal from city to city or immigration from the "old country." Thus, for instance, a driver in the street cleaning department had been a plasterer in Boston; a longshoreman had followed in Germany the trade of a sausage maker; another longshoreman had been a tailor in Dublin; a street car motorman had been an iron molder in Denmark. On the other hand, it was not uncommon to find men who had never stirred from the West Side, but had worked along through a variety of occupations. The "drifting" which, as we shall see, characterizes boy and girl workers in this neighborhood, had apparently begun with an earlier generation.

A few examples from the records will serve to illustrate what the past life of those men had been and the stages by which they had arrived at their condition at the time of the investigation.

* Report on Condition of Woman and Child Wage-earners in the United States. Vol. I, Cotton Textile Industry, pp. 441–442. United States Senate Document No. 645.

George Lyon; American; age, 57. As a youth, learned the gasfitter's trade and worked at it for a number of years. Later worked in Devoe's paint factory. Left this to take a job as poultry butcher. Now looks back on this as the "nicest work he ever had." Has been a longshoreman for eighteen years. Went into longshore work because he wanted outdoor employment. When asked for his idea of a good job, he replied, "outdoor work from 7 a. m. to 5 p. m. and $10 regular every week."

William Ryan; American; age, 38. Worked nine years as a knitter in the mills at Amsterdam, New York. Came to New York and was bell boy in a fashionable men's club. Elevator man in same office building for six years. Lost this position because he refused to share with the superintendent of building "the money that he got for being obliging." The owner of building at first promised to place him in another position under a different superintendent, but failed to make good his promise. When last seen, Ryan was trying to get back his old job in the knitting mills.

Peter Farrand; Irish; age, 54. Has been a waiter for the greater part of his life. Worked fifteen years at last place, the Parker Hotel. Lost an eye while chopping kindling in the basement of the tenement in which he lived. A splinter flew up and penetrated the ball. Farrand continued working three years at the hotel after this accident, wearing a glass eye. But the remaining eye was affected and gave him much trouble by watering constantly. Was at last compelled to give up his job. "You can't be attending to your eye while you're waiting on people at the table." Has worked since at odd jobs, as a street laborer. Could get work on the sand piles at the docks where his son works, but "you've got to have breath to keep up with the other men with your wheelbarrow." Now looking for a job as watchman.

John Richards; American; age, 24. Was a vaudeville singer before his marriage at twenty-one years. Filled Coney Island

engagements. Left this work when he married because "there was too much life in it for a married man." Has had only temporary jobs since as driver of an ice wagon, coal handler, and vegetable peddler. Has not yet ceased to look for a job when he has none, but shows signs of becoming a chronic loafer.

James Price; American; age, 28. Went to work in a Fourteenth Street bank at fifteen years of age. Stayed nine years and became assistant bookkeeper. Followed this by four years in another bank as bookkeeper at a salary of $25 weekly. Two years after his marriage was discharged for over-drawing his account, but was given a letter of recommendation. After this worked three months as carpenter's helper and three months canvassing for a news agency. His wife petitioned the bank to take him back and the bank consented. But Price now refused to do anything but outdoor work. At present employed as solicitor for a tea and coffee company.

Charles Malloy; American; age, 48. Was born "on the block"; married and lived there all his life. Until recently had never worked more than two blocks from home. Was employed in the Higgins carpet factory until it moved away. Then in slaughter house as butcher until forty years of age. Had become unfit for the work through corpulency. Since then has had odd jobs as watchman on unfinished building. "But when the building is finished, then I'm out," he explains.

Edward Scully; American; age, 33. Cab driver. Worked eleven years for the same company. Nine years ago was laid up several months with rheumatism and developed anchylosis in the right hip. This did not disable him as a cab driver; but when his employers replaced their cabs with motor cars it was found that Scully's lameness made it impossible for him to become a chauffeur. Out of work three months; then took a job driving truck for a bottle company.

Karl Reber; German; age, 31. Was a bookkeeper in Berlin; nine years with the same firm. In coming to America followed the example of a friend who had done well in New York. Reber and his wife were employed in a hand laundry on their arrival, both doing the same work, washing, starching, ironing, etc. Received their board and a lump sum of $5.00 weekly. Reber soon found a situation as bookkeeper for a German firm at $12 a week. Remained two and one-half years with firm and left because a promised increase in salary was not granted. "He thought he *might* be out a week," said his wife. "That was four months ago." His wife has just secured work for him as a scene-shifter in the theater where she worked as cleaner. Reber earns $6.00 for eight performances weekly. For rolling a drum to simulate thunder whenever the regular drummer fails to appear he receives an extra dollar. Reber and his wife take a cheerful view of their situation, which they regard as only temporary and expect to better.

Fred Reich; German-American; age, 48. Drove a wagon for his father, who had a tobacco store in the district. After father gave up business, Reich drove for different stores and worked as a laborer on a railroad construction job in Pennsylvania. For six months of past year worked in a tin can factory, sweeping up tin cuttings, for $6.00 a week. Now does odd jobs, driving and kalsomining. "Sometimes has four days a week and sometimes less." Trying to get work in the street cleaning department.

Paul Shroh; German; age, 49. Came to America at the age of fourteen and learned the iron-molder's trade. Was employed fifteen years in a West Side foundry. Subsequently drove a wagon for a furniture store several years for $10 a week. For two years past has had only odd jobs. Suffers from iritis and varicose veins, and his age is against him in finding employment. Has always been a drinker, but the habit has grown worse since he has been out of work.

Thomas Mann; American; age, 50. Was born in Virginia. "His folks must have been nice people," said Mrs. Mann. "They were Methodists and he tells how the boys' clothes were laid out for them on Sunday morning and how they went off to Sunday school with a flower in their buttonholes." His father kept a grocery store and the boy helped him. Worked as a grocer's clerk in Atlanta. Acquired the wandering habit and "bummed" his way through the South and West. Came to New York eventually and opened a small butter and egg store, but soon failed in business. Worked as waiter in a restaurant, as porter in a department store, and as hostler. Is out of work more than half the time.

Charles Wood; English; age, 39. Came to America twenty-three years ago, and, like his wife, has always been a silk warper. Has stuck to his trade, but, on the other hand, has seldom remained long in one place, going from mill to mill in New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania. Since his marriage, five years ago, has continued his wandering life, leaving his wife to support herself and their child during his absences.

David McCarthy; Irish-American; age, 27. Born in New York; taken to Ireland by parents at age of eight and returned to New York at fifteen. Went to school during this period in Ireland. First occupation, tallier in a lumber yard. Later, driver for a West Side grocer for a year. Bell boy and elevator boy in a series of clubs and apartment houses, never holding any place long. Last job, that of watchman on railroad, lasted three months. Out of work a year. Hopes to get a place in street cleaning department.

Gustav Nieman; German; age, 35. Served three years' apprenticeship as waiter in Germany. Came to New York fourteen years ago. Worked eight years in the same restaurant and became head waiter. Lost this place two years ago, when management decided the head waiter must speak French as well as German and English. He had not drank

TABLE 5.—OCCUPATIONS OF THE LIVING AND DECEASED HUSBANDS OF 370 WAGE-EARNING MOTHERS

Occupation	HUSBANDS		
	Living	Deceased	Total
Professional service:			
Teacher	..	2	2
Superintendent of institution	1	..	1
Total	1	2	3
Domestic and personal service:			
Laborer	26	14	40
Waiter	8	6	14
Bartender	5	5	10
Elevator man	5	1	6
Cook	4	1	5
Watchman	3	2	5
Janitor	4	..	4
Street cleaner	2	1	3
Barber	1	1	2
Bootblack	2	..	2
Saloon keeper	2	..	2
Dish washer	1	..	1
Total	63	31	94

Occupation	HUSBANDS		
	Living	Deceased	Total
Trade and transportation:			
Driver	48	24	72
Longshoreman[a]	13	3	16
Merchant and dealer	15	1	16
Clerk	3	6	9
Salesman	8	..	8
Hostler	5	2	7
Porter	4	2	6
Chauffeur	3	2	5
Bookkeeper	2	2	4
Fireman	4	..	4
Foreman	2	2	4
Stage hand	3	..	3
In express business	..	2	2
Ship officer	..	2	2
Street-car motorman	2	..	2
Agent	1	..	1
Brakeman	1	..	1
Car inspector	..	1	1
Engineer (locomotive)	..	1	1
Gate-tender	..	1	1
Peddler	1	..	1
Street-car conductor	1	..	1
Typewriter	1	..	1
Total	117	51	168

[a] In the United States Census of 1900, longshoremen were included under "Domestic and Personal Service." They are here classed as Transportation Workers in accordance with the more recent classification of the Department of Labor of New York state.

TABLE 5—(CONTINUED)

Occupation	HUSBANDS		
	Living	Deceased	Total
Manufacturing and mechanical pursuits:			
Mechanic	3	8	11
Iron worker	6	3	9
Painter	6	1	7
Plumber	5	2	7
Baker	4	..	4
Blacksmith	1	3	4
Butcher	4	..	4
Piano worker	4	..	4
Plasterer	..	4	4
Engineer (stationary)	1	2	3
Printer	..	3	3
Bricklayer	1	1	2
Button worker	2	..	2
Carpenter	1	1	2
Gasfitter	1	1	2
Leather worker	1	1	2
Machinist	1	1	2
Mason	1	1	2
Shoemaker	2	..	2
Silver plater	2	..	2
Stone cutter	1	1	2
Tinsmith	..	2	2
Tobacco worker	1	1	2
Manufacturing and mechanical pursuits (continued):			
Wire worker	2	..	2
Wood worker	2	..	2
Bookbinder	1	..	1
Bottler	1	..	1
Butcher's helper	1	..	1
Caulker	..	1	1
Chewing gum factory worker	1	..	1
Cooper	1	..	1
Concrete layer	1	..	1
Gas-house worker	..	1	1
Gilder	1	..	1
Harness maker	1	..	1
Hatter	1	..	1
Marble finisher	1	..	1
Roofer	..	1	1
Silk warper	1	..	1
Slaughter-house worker	1	..	1
Tailor	..	1	1
Upholsterer	..	1	1
Total	64	41	105
Grand total	245	125	370

to excess before, but now he began to do so. His character appears thoroughly demoralized by idleness and drink. His wife, however, who is capable and industrious, seems sincerely anxious to help him to his feet and may succeed.

Let us now examine in detail the occupations of the 370 husbands, including the 125 deceased. Deceased husbands were entered according to their last place of work. The men who were returned as being unemployed were listed according to the last job held. Table 5 shows the occupations represented and the number of men in each.

One of the most important questions about wage-earning widows is, What was their economic position prior to widowhood? The foregoing table throws some light on this question. We find that about the same occupations had been followed by the 125 deceased husbands as by the 245 living husbands. The comparison is to be seen in Table 6.

TABLE 6.—OCCUPATIONS OF 245 LIVING HUSBANDS OF WAGE-EARNING MOTHERS COMPARED WITH OCCUPATIONS OF 125 DECEASED HUSBANDS

Occupation	HUSBANDS					
	Living		Deceased		Total	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
Professional service	1	.4	2	1.6	3	.8
Domestic and personal service	63	25.7	31	24.8	94	25.4
Trade and transportation	117	47.8	51	40.8	168	45.4
Manufacturing and mechanical pursuits	64	26.1	41	32.8	105	28.4
Total	245	100.0	125	100.0	370	100.0

This table illustrates but slight divergence between the occupations of the living and the deceased wage-earners. Roughly speaking, their occupations were distributed similarly between the three branches: domestic and personal service, trade and transportation, and manufacturing and mechanical pursuits. A somewhat larger percentage of deceased than of living wage-earners is found in the list of manufacturing occupations. The husbands of 33 per cent of the widows had been engaged in factories and mechanical work, while but 26 per cent of the married women had husbands in these occupations. This is perhaps to be accounted for by the fact that while industrial accident and disease are extremely common among laborers, drivers, and transportation workers generally, machinery and the building trades still take the heaviest toll.*

A further correspondence between the work of living and of deceased husbands is seen in the predominating occupation for each; the largest number of men engaged in a single occupation were drivers and the next largest, day laborers.

This correspondence shows that the economic position of the widows prior to their husbands' death was similar to the present position of the married women at work. Indeed, as we shall see later, many of the widows had to go to work even before they lost their husbands for the same reasons that the married women are now going to work. The chief difference between the economic position of the widow at present and prior to widowhood does not depend on whether she worked or not but on the difference of income

* New York State Commission on Employers' Liability. First Report, pp. 5 and 51. March 19, 1910.

during each of these periods. This subject of incomes and wages, however, will be left for a later chapter.

Considering now the 370 husbands as a group, we find them distributed over a great variety of occupations—79 in number. Trade and transportation engaged the largest number, 168, or 45.4 per cent. Next in order came manufactures, with 105, or 28.4 per cent. In domestic and personal service there were 94, or 25.4 per cent, and in the professions 3, or .8 per cent.

Looking more closely into the three principal classes, we find that within trade and transportation the drivers, 72 in number, compose the largest group. In domestic and personal service the day laborers form the principal group with 40. Thus 112 men, 30 per cent of the group, had irregular work. In manufactures no particular trade predominates, as the largest group includes but 11 men and the others are fairly well distributed throughout the list.

UNEMPLOYMENT

A very small number of the living husbands had been at work regularly during the year. Some had been out of work a month, some two months, some four months —not sick or ailing in body, but just *out of work*, that dreadful West Side affliction which is feared more than the direst sickness. Some of the women would speak of it as if it were an impersonal misfortune. "Do you know how long that man was out of work last winter?" said Mrs. Reinhardt. "Four months!" She had counted as you would count a pulse every day of the anxious gaps between her husband's successive jobs as

waiter. In the same way Mrs. Gilhooly reported the ill luck of her husband, a laborer. "My man hasn't done a tap of work for two months!"

Sometimes it strikes a man without a word of warning. His wife sees him coming home in the middle of the morning and she knows by his face what has happened even before he speaks. If she is apt at nothing else, she is quick to read the signs of this particular misfortune. Sometimes it strikes the family just when they have begun to entertain hopes and to make plans. The Gurneys had just moved into a four-room flat with rent at $16. They had formerly lived in a rear tenement, but Mr. Gurney, who was a cab driver, thought he was "in steady" for awhile. Then one day Mrs. Gurney, coming home in the afternoon, "saw his boots and his bandbox with his hat in the middle of the room." Mr. Gurney was nowhere about. He had gone out again after leaving these silent witnesses of misfortune. Mrs. Gurney threw herself on the bed and wept despairingly. The Gurneys were soon living in a basement.

"Laid off" and "fired" are familiar words in the family vocabulary. They are among the first Americanisms acquired by the immigrant workman and he can pronounce them with dreadful distinctness. A young Danish woman with gentle manners and refined habits had recently moved to the West Side and was learning English very slowly. In due course of time her husband lost his place, or, as she put it when I happened in on the very day of the disaster, "Me hoosband bin fired." In this grotesque and sad little statement lay the gist of all the dark possibilities now confronting the Carlsen family. Fortunately, however, these pos-

sibilities never arrived, for Carlsen was out only six weeks. In the meantime his wife took her children to the day nursery and did day's work.

Why had this group of ablebodied men been out of work off and on throughout the year?

The recent report of the New York State Commission appointed to study unemployment throws considerable light on these questions. The report quotes an investigation of unemployment made by an agent of the Charity Organization Society and the Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor, which found that "out of 1,933 men interviewed, 37½ per cent were unskilled laborers. The other well-represented occupations were teamster's work, longshore work, and the building trades, particularly house painting. There were also a good many cooks and waiters." *

The six occupations mentioned in the report as characterized by unemployment are very well represented among the husbands of our working mothers. The following table shows to what extent the 370 men, including the 125 deceased husbands, were engaged in these occupations.

From this table it will be seen that 54 per cent of the men were, or had been, engaged in work in which unemployment is characteristic.

Again referring to the report of the commission, we find that "about 40 per cent of our wage-earners suffer some unemployment every year, that on the average they lose ten weeks each, and that the loss in wages

* New York State Commission on Employers' Liability and other matters. Third Report, 1911. Unemployment and Lack of Farm Labor, p. 50.

amounts to 20 per cent of what the earnings would be were employment steady throughout the year." *

The West Side men of our study fall well within this class. They had suffered more or less unemployment during the preceding year. Many of them had lost 20

TABLE 7.—NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF LIVING AND DECEASED HUSBANDS OF WAGE-EARNING MOTHERS ENGAGED IN OCCUPATIONS IN WHICH UNEMPLOYMENT IS CHARACTERISTIC

Occupation	HUSBANDS	
	Number	Per cent
Teamster (driver)	72	19.5
Building trade worker [a]	52	14.0
Laborer	40	10.8
Longshoreman	16	4.3
Waiter	14	3.8
Cook	5	1.4
Total	199	53.8
Other occupations	171	46.2
Grand total	370	100.0

[a] The group of men reported as "building trade workers" consists of 11 mechanics, 9 structural iron workers, 7 painters, 7 plumbers, 4 plasterers, 2 bricklayers, 2 carpenters, 2 gasfitters, 2 masons, 2 stone cutters, 1 concrete layer, 1 caulker, 1 marble finisher, and 1 roofer.

per cent of their time or even more. It is true that 20 per cent of the year is considered only a normal period for a paid vacation in a few occupations. But for these men, a vacation of one-fifth of the year taken

* New York State Commission on Employers' Liability and other matters. Third Report, 1911. Unemployment and Lack of Farm Labor, p. 69.

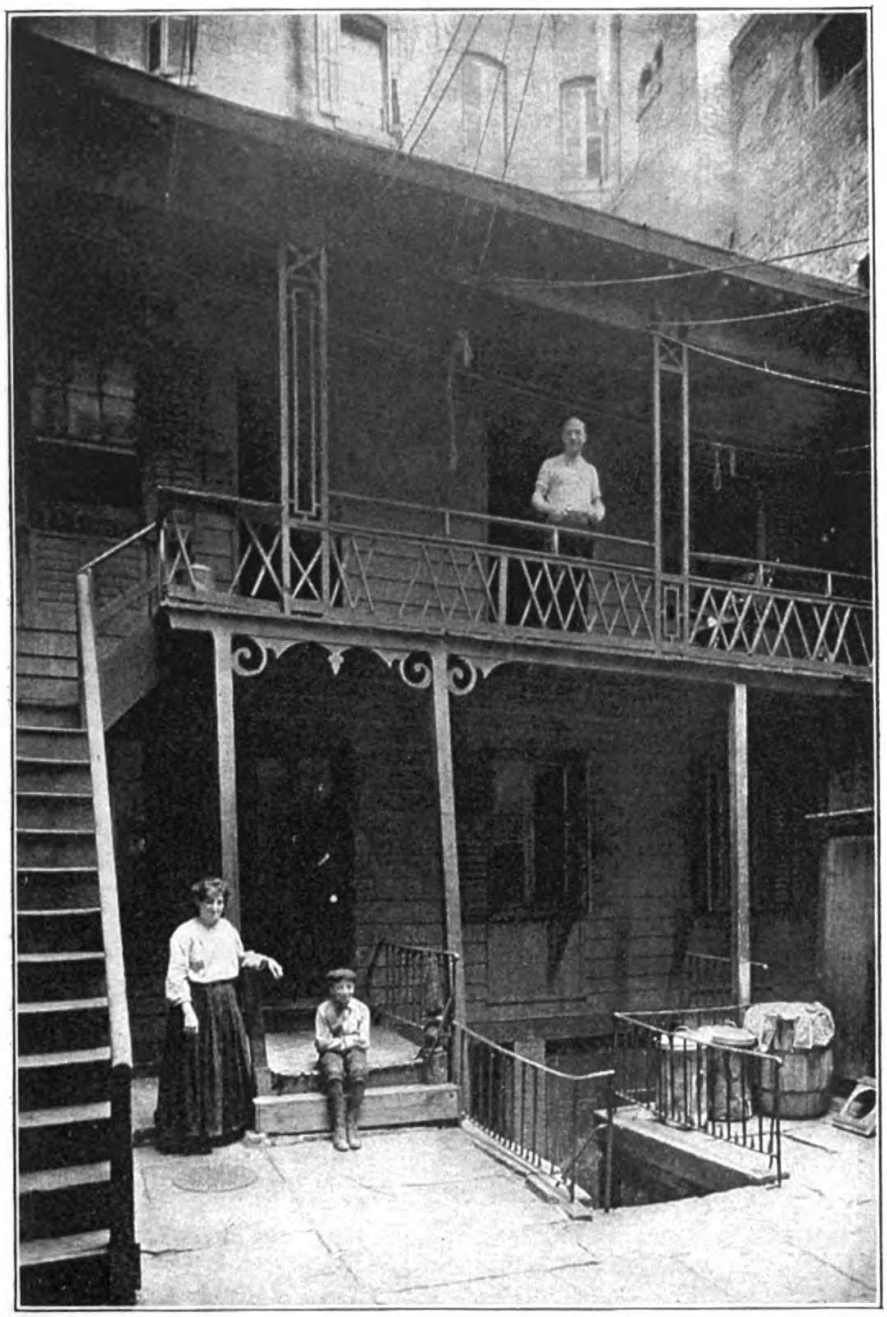
piecemeal or all at once, meant that the wife went to work to pay the rent and the family went hungry. "Up to the mark all day and every day," as Mr. Galsworthy points out, is the only successful formula for the workingman's existence.

Women who had worked intermittently all their lives usually continued to look upon their employment as temporary. The gradual demoralization through unemployment of men who have been steady workers for years is something for which they are unprepared. If they are convinced that the husband or son is really trying to get work and maintain a previous wage level, they are patient with his not accepting employment at a lower wage. The spirit which they find only natural in their husbands and sons, however, they themselves seldom try to imitate.

WORKING CHILDREN

The number of wage-earning children is a primary factor in the condition of the family which must be considered. Among the widows listed are some with children who have reached working age and whose combined earnings more than replace the deceased father's earning capacity. In such cases an advance in the standard of living, a lack of filial consideration on the children's part, or perhaps the continuance of the working habits of years on the mother's part keep her in employment even after the absolute necessity for it has passed.

While some mothers insist that the son's or daughter's pay envelope be turned over to them unbroken, others make a regular allowance of, say, a dollar a week. Those who require the unopened pay envelope do it



THE WAGE-EARNERS OF A FAMILY

The father is a cook and the mother a janitress. The boy is the oldest of four children

partly as a matter of family discipline. " I'd like to see the child of mine that would open his own pay envelope," remarked a German mother, with a flashing eye. But the mother who is most rigorous in maintaining her maternal authority in this way is often most open-handed toward the boy or girl after the letter of the rule has been observed. She pays out more than the family income warrants in order to give her daughter a becoming dress and hat, and her son the pleasures of Sunday baseball or an extra " bite " between meals. " I can wear anything," is a common remark, " but Mamie must have a tailored suit." Or, " It costs me 25 cents every Sunday for Chrystie to go to the baseball." Or, " I tell my boy he's not to go hungry from carrying trunks up and down stairs all day, but to have a piece of pie and cup of coffee middleways of the afternoon."

The girls of the family give in their wages more regularly than the boys, and receive back a smaller portion for their own use. There is a strong temptation for both boys and girls to conceal the exact amount of their wages. For example, it is easy to forget to mention last week's raise of 50 cents. This lack of confidence between members of families at a financial level where their existence depends on family solidarity is surprisingly common. It is partly due to the fact that the typical family of the district, while co-operating on the necessities of life, does not co-operate on luxuries or pleasures. Recreation for the husband is one thing, for the wife another, and for the individual children yet something else. Hence each member tries to reserve from the common fund as much as possible for his individual pleasures—the saloon, the social club, a necktie

in the new shade, the coveted white flannel suit, a visit to the moving pictures, or whatever may represent the momentary heart's desire.

But notwithstanding personal deviations of all sorts, there is, as already stated, a prevailing standard for the contribution of working children. In the great majority of the families visited, the rule was for the children to give the full week's wages to the mother, and receive from her a daily allowance for lunch and carfare.

TABLE 8.—AGES OF 283 WORKING CHILDREN OF 170 WAGE-EARNING MOTHERS

Age	CHILDREN	
	Number	Per cent
14 years	22	7.8
15 years	57	20.1
16 years	45	15.9
17 years	46	16.3
18 years	32	11.3
19 years and over	81	28.6
Total	283	100.0

The number of families assisted by the wages of boy and girl labor was somewhat less than half of the entire group. Of the 370 families 170, or 46 per cent, had working children, and 200, or 54 per cent, were without working children.

The total number of working children belonging to the 170 families was 283. Their ages are given in Table 8.

Thus 28 per cent of the working children were under sixteen years of age. In homes where circumstances are poor enough to force the mother into employment, the children naturally go to work as soon as the law permits.* There were very few cases where the mother was trying to keep children in school after they were able to qualify for work. For the majority of the women it required heroic efforts merely " to keep the family together." When shelter, food, and clothing are matters of insecurity, education is beyond the possible.

The occupations of the working boys of the families are seen in Table 9, on the following page.

From this table it may be seen that the largest group of boys, including 70 per cent of the total number, were engaged in trade and transportation. Nearly all of them were drivers and helpers on wagons, errand boys, or office boys—that is to say, "runners" of various kinds. Their jobs do not lead to promotions. The boys drift from one position to another, acquiring no particular ability at anything, and soon reach their maximum wage. Only 24 per cent of the boys were engaged in manufacturing occupations.

There are two reasons why so large a number of the youths were found in unskilled and futureless work. The same conditions that cause the mother to work make it difficult for her to stand out for advantageous employment for her children. They must take the first job that presents itself and consider themselves lucky

* The labor law of New York forbids (1) the employment of all children under fourteen, (2) the employment of children under sixteen except when permitted by a special employment certificate issued by the board of health. The certificate is granted upon presentation of proof of age and good health and the passing of simple educational tests.

TABLE 9.—OCCUPATIONS OF 172 BOYS IN THE FAMILIES OF WAGE-EARNING MOTHERS

Occupation	Boys
Professional service:	
Theatrical performer	1
Total	1
Domestic and personal service:	
Elevator boy	2
Laborer	2
Bell boy	1
Cook's boy	1
Door boy	1
Hairdresser's apprentice	1
Total	8
Trade and transportation:	
Driver	25
Errand boy	22
Office boy	20
Driver's helper	15
Clerk	8
Messenger	5
Handy boy in store	4
Stock boy	4
Chauffeur	3
Salesman	3
Cash boy	2
Fruit-stand helper	2
Newsboy	2
Fish dealer	1
News-stand keeper	1
Stage hand	1
Stenographer	1
Telephone lineman	1
Track cleaner	1
Total	121
Manufacturing and mechanical pursuits:	
Piano worker	8
Printer's helper	4
Metal worker	3
Plumber	3
Carpenter's helper	2
Plumber's helper	2
Tailor's helper	2
Blacksmith	1
Box factory handy boy	1
Bookbinder's apprentice	1
Carpet cleaner	1
Cleaner of moving picture slides	1
Draftsman's apprentice	1
Electrician	1
Iron worker	1
Jewelry designer	1
Laundryman[a]	1
Pattern folder	1
Painter	1
Sand blaster	1
Silk dyer	1
Shirt cutter's apprentice	1
Soap factory operator	1
Tinsmith's helper	1
Whitewasher	1
Total	42
Grand total	172

[a] In the United States Census of 1900, persons employed in laundries were included under "Domestic and Personal Service." As laundries have been legally classed as factories in the state of New York since 1901, the occupation of laundryman is here included under "Manufacturing and Mechanical Pursuits."

if anything offers. A second reason is simply that trade training is not available. Many of the women expressed themselves as eager for their boys to learn a trade and complained that opportunities were so rare. One mother, a widow with two boys, was very explicit on this point. Her husband had been a free mason and the boys were eligible for the Masonic Home at Utica. But Mrs. Grady refused to send them there. She could work for them and support them, she said, while they were little; but as soon as they were old enough to learn a trade, she supposed she would have to send them to the Masonic Home because vocational training is provided there. To give the boys this chance, and for no other reason, she was willing to send them away from her.

As we have seen, about one-fourth of the boys had gone to work in manufacturing and mechanical pursuits. Not all of these were on the way to learn a skilled trade. A mother likes to believe that her boy is learning and not treading a mill. Her optimism easily leads her to report him as an "apprentice" where he is in reality but a handy boy or messenger. She wants to believe in his progress and makes the most of his industrial outlook. "James just works on the piano strings," says his mother. "But he keeps his eyes open. He could do all of the processes on his floor, except one, and there's 14 altogether." It is hardly necessary to add that this hopeful spirit frequently does not outlast the boy's first job.

From the list of the girls' occupations given in Table 10 on the following page, it will be seen that the percentage in domestic service is a negligible one. Forty-one per cent of them work in stores and offices and 51

per cent in shops and factories. In the shops they are bundlers and stock girls,—little indoor "runners" corresponding to their brothers as outdoor "runners." In the offices they address envelopes and answer the telephone. In the factories they do light jobs, such as

TABLE 10.—OCCUPATIONS OF 111 GIRLS IN THE FAMILIES OF WAGE-EARNING MOTHERS

Occupation	Girls	Occupation	Girls
Professional service:		*Manufacturing and mechanical pursuits:*	
Kindergarten assistant	1	Candy packer	10
Theatrical performer	1	Bookbinder	9
Total	2	Piano worker	5
Domestic and personal service:		Milliner	4
Domestic	3	Tobacco worker	4
Nursemaid	2	Dressmaker	3
Door girl	1	Sample mounter	3
Total	6	Biscuit packer	2
Trade and transportation:		Factory worker (unspecified)	2
Clerk	13	Hair-goods worker	2
Errand girl	6	Mangle girl[a]	2
Bundler	5	Silk worker	2
Cash girl	5	Bottle labeler	1
Salesgirl	5	Cloak model	1
Cashier	3	Drug packer	1
Theater attendant	3	Embroiderer	1
Stock girl	2	Feather sewer	1
Stenographer	2	Metal worker	1
Telephone operator	2	Pattern sorter	1
Total	46	Upholsterer	1
		Water-wing maker	1
		Total	57
		Grand total	111

[a] As laundries have been legally classed as factories in the state of New York since 1901, the occupation of mangle girl is here included under "Manufacturing and Mechanical Pursuits."

pasting, folding, sorting, and packing. It makes little difference whether they are in stores or factories. The character of their work is very much the same, involving light effort, monotonous performances, and protracted hours.

If the girls prefer a job in a store, it is mainly to avoid the factory stigma. Mothers who won't allow their daughters to work in factories declare that factory girls are "boisterous." Or if, perchance, the merciful job happens to be tending or feeding a machine, the mother will admit the nature of her daughter's work, but will add that her Annie doesn't "bother" with the other girls. Mrs. Honig held out long against the factory, but was at last compelled to let Stella take a job in the piano works. But she regarded the step as the downfall of all her ambitions for the girl, and she told of it with the tears streaming down her face.

The strength of this prejudice is recognized by the manager of a large pattern factory in the district who urges his employes to wear their hats to and from work so as to avoid being taken for factory girls. It is only a slight step in the direction of dignifying the atmosphere of his place. But he finds that it pays—in the kind of girls that he gets and the length of time they remain with him. Much more could be done in the same direction by providing dressing rooms for the operatives in order that they might present a proper street appearance on leaving the building. It is a literal fact that in most of the factories of the district the girls have no place to stow their hats during work hours. Better dressing room provisions would mean not only better health but increased self-respect. If they had but a small part of the lavish toilet facilities furnished

gratis by every department store to its customers, they might achieve that which contributes more to the sense of personal dignity of a working girl than any other single thing—a decent and proper street appearance.

Mrs. Hogan's Margaret was sitting on an upturned basket eating her lunch when the factory inspector came along. "Where is the wash basin on this floor?" asked the inspector. "Got none," said Margaret. "Dressing room?" queried the inspector. Margaret shook her head. "Towels? Mirror? Lockers?" "We got nothing," said Margaret, with a scornful laugh. To see the girls troop forth from this factory at noon and at 6 p. m. is sufficient evidence that Margaret spoke the truth. Hatless, bearing all the marks of factory toil, they pour out into the street, their relaxed behavior reflecting their dishevelled appearance. It is no wonder the women of the neighborhood declare that the girls are "wild" in this factory and that they "would sooner die than let their daughters work there."

Comparison of Boys' and Girls' Occupations

An examination of the columns giving the occupations of boys and girls separately shows that the distribution by trades is by no means the same for the sexes. Table 11 is a graphic presentation of the difference.

From this table it appears that the boys have a strong tendency toward trade and transportation, and the girls, though to a less marked degree, toward the factories.* It happened in many families that the brother was doing an outdoor job, such as driving or delivering goods, while the sister was a packer or operator. This

* See True, Ruth S.: The Neglected Girl. (West Side Studies.) Russell Sage Foundation Publication. New York, Survey Associates, 1914.

division seemed to represent the two lines of least resistance for the hard-pressed mother of the West Side.

TABLE 11.--OCCUPATIONS OF 172 BOYS IN THE FAMILIES OF WAGE-EARNING MOTHERS COMPARED WITH OCCUPATIONS OF 111 GIRLS

Occupation	BOYS		GIRLS	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
Professional service	1	.6	2	1.8
Domestic and personal service	8	4.7	6	5.4
Trade and transportation	121	70.3	46	41.4
Manufacturing and mechanical pursuits	42	24.4	57	51.4
Total	172	100.0	111	100.0

Unemployment Among Boys and Girls

We now pass to the subject of unemployment among the boy and girl workers of these families. It was found that 8.1 per cent of the girls were out of work at the time of the visit and 16 per cent of the boys.

Two facts help to account for the greater percentage of idle boys. One is that so many of them, as we have seen, are in outdoor work, such as driving, which is often irregular, if not casual, in character. Another reason is the boy who "won't work." There are also girls on the West Side who "won't work," but they are rarer than the boys and they do not appear in the records of this particular group of families. On the other hand, the mention of a "wild son" is not uncommon. "I have two good sons and one wild one," a mother is quoted as saying, as if the two classes of sons were too wellknown to need explaining.

It is from this group of boys, precipitated into wage-earning at the age of fourteen without training or preparation of any kind, following occupations that are irregular and unskilled, that the future husbands of wage-earning mothers are made.

NATIONALITIES

As we have said in the foregoing chapter, the Germans and Irish of the neighborhood are strongly Americanized and tend to coalesce. In the particular group of families studied, this neighborhood condition was reflected. The nationalities of husbands and wives were secured separately in order to ascertain whether there were any instances of intermarriage between races with conflicting ideals of home life—a situation which would naturally tend to make of the mother a wage-earner.

TABLE 12.—NATIONALITY OF 370 WAGE-EARNING MOTHERS, AND OF THEIR HUSBANDS, LIVING AND DECEASED

Nationality	Wives	Husbands	WIVES AND HUSBANDS	
			Number	Per cent
American	79	80	159	21.5
Irish-American	44	41	85	11.5
German-American	45	32	77	10.4
Irish	95	76	171	23.1
German	36	43	79	10.7
English	16	28	44	5.9
Italian	19	21	40	5.4
Other nationalities	36	49	85	11.5
Total	370	370	740	100.0

In the above table the distribution of the 370 men and 370 women according to nationality is given.

A GERMAN MOTHER AND HER YOUNGEST
Two other children have been sent to the country by a Fresh Air agency

"Irish-American" and "German-American" are used in the table to designate native-born persons of Irish and German parentage. This means, of course, an American generation. Thus, about 43 per cent of the 740 persons may be classed as Americans. The Irish and German, who together made up about 34 per cent, were for the most part residents of several years' standing. About three-fourths of the group were Americans or fairly well Americanized.

In the particular families representing a German and Irish union there was no tendency, even in an atmosphere full of reproach and recrimination, to blame the faults of either party upon his or her nationality. A German mother-in-law, for instance, was complaining that her son had married a poor housekeeper, an Irish girl from a neighboring tenement. When she was asked whether she thought this might be due to her Irish habits, the old woman took up the cudgels at once in behalf of the Irish, declaring that they were just as good housekeepers as her own countrywomen. Another German mother whose daughter had married an Irish longshoreman who was turning out badly, was never once heard, in all her bitter denunciation of the young husband, to attribute his faults to his race.

There was only one marriage of the entire 370 in which the woman's employment could be directly traced to conflicting racial traditions of the husband and wife. This was the case where an Armenian had married the American-born daughter of German parents. The husband objected to his wife's going on the street alone, saying that in his country "a respectable woman didn't do such things." His wife replied that he was in America, "where things are different."

When her husband continued to object, she went out one day and got a job at her old trade, manicuring. This episode had a happy ending, for when the Armenian saw his wife " holding other men's hands " he surrendered completely. After this, the American wife lived at home, but she walked out alone whenever she liked.

To review then, briefly, the conditions within the families of our 370 mothers:

The largest group of families was that in which the fathers were living at home and were at work. The next largest was the group of widows' families. Of the latter, more than one-third had been deprived of the breadwinner by tuberculosis—the disease which, most of all, exhausts the economic resources of the survivors. Of the living husbands, more than 70 per cent were under forty-five and should still have been earning. An examination of their occupations, however, showed that they were engaged in low-paid work * and that more than half of them were in occupations where unemployment is characteristic. Less than half the families had children who had begun to work, and a large proportion of these, 28 per cent, were still under sixteen. As to nationality, the families were principally Americans, Americanized or German and Irish, with homogeneous social ideals. All these circumstances emphasize the fact that the primary reason why the women worked was not moral or racial, but economic. They were the wives and widows of under-employed and under-paid men and were compelled to contribute to the family whatever earning value their labor possessed.

* As shown in Table 26, page 128, the earnings of the fathers averaged less than $500 per year.

CHAPTER III

OCCUPATIONS OF THE MOTHERS

THE work of these women is largely drudgery. It belongs to the class of servile rather than specialized labor. They have no skill to market; they have only their untrained physical powers to sell.

The appearance of charwomen on their knees scrubbing an office floor, a public corridor, or the lobby of a theater is not one which inspires respect in the ordinary passerby. The work of public cleaning bears, in addition to the ancient stigma attached to menial work, the ignominy of being done in public places. The dishevelled working clothes and the humble posture of the scrubbers seem to deprive them of any measure of human dignity. Some employers are inclined to feel that the kindest attitude toward these workers is to neglect and ignore them. The superintendent of a world-famous building stated that he had had the employes of every department photographed at their work. But he was too considerate, he maintained, to photograph the scrubwomen "on the job," because their work was too "menial." The irony of such considerateness is apparent when one remembers that their work was done in public corridors almost as exposed as a city thoroughfare. They are one of the most familiar sights of the business district.

But familiar as they are, the dingy toilers do not

readily strike the attention. One may pass them again and again without stopping to think that a human life, more or less complete, is imprisoned within each of these humble figures. Least of all does one suspect what a life of heroic effort it may be, or how many of the workers, single-handed, are daily fighting a battle that takes more courage than Waterloo.

A lesser group of the women were working in West Side factories. Here the daily hours are longer, but the work is nearer home than the office cleaning jobs. The laundry on the block or the candy factory in the next street,—almost automatically the women apply at these places for work. They may know conditions in the neighboring factory to be especially hard and conditions in a more distant factory to be more endurable, yet they will prefer the job in the nearer place.

The windows of Mrs. Ray's flat faced the rear of the Diamond Laundry. The " Diamond " was wellknown for its offenses in overtime. Mrs. Ray could see the women at work there evening after evening and noticed the hour when they went home. In November she remarked, " Them poor souls haven't gone home a night this week till 9 o'clock." But later when her husband lost his job as driver, she went straight to the " Diamond" to get work. For, notwithstanding the long hours, the laundry windows overlooked her own apartment and its front door was one short block from her own.

The actual number of women in each of the four occupational groups is to be seen in Table 13, which follows.

Seventy per cent of the women were employed in some form of domestic and personal service, and 23

TABLE 13.—PRESENT OCCUPATIONS OF 370 WAGE-EARNING MOTHERS

Occupation	Mothers	Occupation	Mothers
Professional service:		*Trade and transportation (continued):*	
Professional showwoman	2	Cashier	1
Total	2	Clerk	1
		Stenographer	1
Domestic and personal service:		Telephone operator	1
Day worker	90	Theater usher	1
Public cleaner in		Total	23
office building	31		
theater	29	*Manufacturing and mechanical pursuits:*	
store	9	Laundry worker [a]	33
factory	4	Garment worker	12
hospital	3	Seamstress	10
church	2	Candy factory operative	5
railway car	2	Silk goods worker	4
school	2	Lace maker	3
All public cleaners	82	Bead worker	2
Janitress	49	Bookbinder	2
Hotel worker	12	Carpet worker	2
Laundress (at home)	11	Milliner	2
Waitress	5	Paper-box maker	2
Housekeeper	2	Piano worker	2
Cook	2	Cigarette maker	1
Foster-mother	2	Cracker factory operative	1
Bartender	2	Pearl-button maker	1
Sick nurse	1	Playing-card factory operative	1
Midwife	1	Straw sewer	1
Total	259	Tin-can maker	1
Trade and transportation:		Wig maker	1
Newsdealer and fruit dealer	8	Total	86
Saleswoman	7	Grand total	370
Storekeeper	3		

[a] See footnote to Table 9, p. 48.

per cent, or a little less than a fourth, were factory operatives. A small and unimportant group, 6.2 per cent of the entire number, belonged to the occupations classed under trade and transportation. Two women only, or a half of 1 per cent, are assigned by the list to professional service—both of them being chorus girls in the Hippodrome.

The occupations followed fall roughly into two important groups, with almost three-fourths of the women engaged in domestic and personal labor outside the home, and about one-fourth working in factories.

COMPARISON OF MOTHERS' AND DAUGHTERS' EMPLOYMENT

A comparison between the work of these women and the work of their daughters points to the changing nature of women's work. Referring back to Chapter II we find the occupations followed by the working daughters of our working mothers. The contrast between the work of the two generations is to be seen in Table 14.

According to the percentages, the daughters are not as yet following in their mothers' footsteps. The table shows 70 per cent of the mothers as against 5 per cent of the daughters to be engaged in domestic service. The girls have been drafted off into the newer occupations; stores, shops, and factories have claimed 93 per cent of them. The West Side furnishes very few young recruits to the ranks of domestic and personal service.

But a question arises regarding the future work of these daughters of labor. To what extent will they shift into domestic work outside the home at a later

period of their lives? Many of them, after they shall have passed through a period of child-bearing and home-making, will be compelled again to become wage-earners. Will the domestic experience they may have acquired in the meantime in their own homes influence them to look for domestic jobs when they renew their wage-earning? Or will they turn back to the old job

TABLE 14.—OCCUPATIONS OF 370 WAGE-EARNING MOTHERS COMPARED WITH OCCUPATIONS OF 111 DAUGHTERS

Occupation	MOTHERS		DAUGHTERS	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
Professional service	2	.5	2	1.8
Domestic and personal service	259	70.0	6	5.4
Trade and transportation	23	6.2	46	41.4
Manufacturing and mechanical pursuits	86	23.3	57	51.4
Total	370	100.0	111	100.0

and the old wage? Most of them will probably do the latter. Their first thought will be to get back into the old industrial grooves, to take the old familiar road to money wages.

Let us examine for a moment the industrial careers of their mothers. Have they inclined to return to their abandoned occupations, or to take up new ones when wage-earning became necessary a second time in their lives?

The occupations of the women before marriage and at present are compared in Table 15.

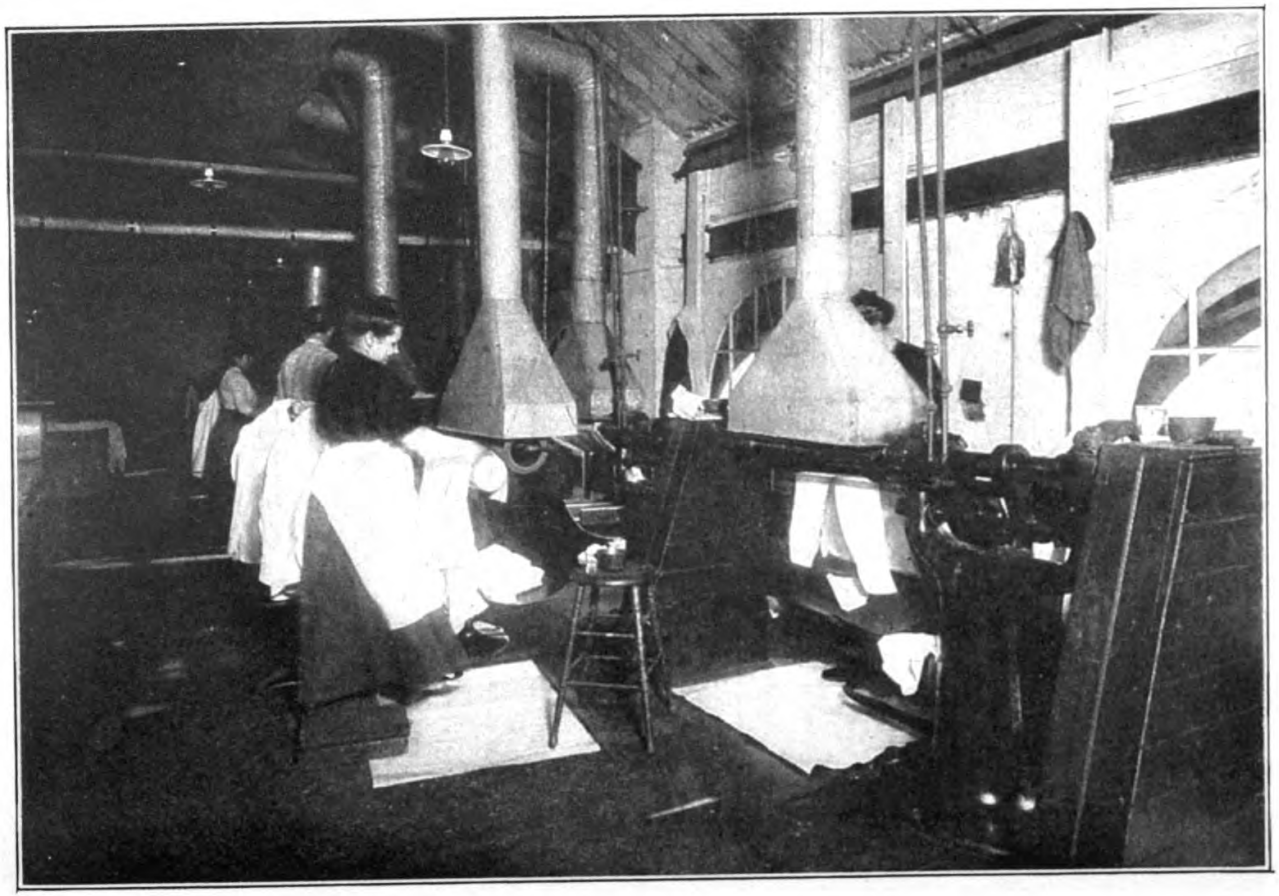
By occupation before marriage was meant the last one followed prior to, or overlapping that event. The make-up of old occupations deserves more detailed description. Agriculture included three women who had been field hands in Hungary and one who had been

TABLE 15.—PRESENT OCCUPATIONS OF 370 WAGE-EARNING MOTHERS COMPARED WITH THEIR OCCUPATIONS BEFORE MARRIAGE

Occupation	MOTHERS OCCUPIED AS SPECIFIED			
	At present		Before marriage	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
Agriculture	..	....	4	1.1
Professional service	2	.5	3	.8
Domestic and personal service	259	70.0	166	45.9
Trade and transportation	23	6.2	19	5.2
Manufacturing and mechanical pursuits	86	23.3	114	31.5
No occupation	..	....	56	15.5
Total	370	100.0	362[a]	100.0

[a] Information is not available as to the occupations before marriage of eight of the 370 mothers.

a vineyard worker in Italy. Professional service included two chorus girls and one teacher. Domestic and personal service included 144 girls who had lived out, 15 hotel servants, five waitresses in restaurants, and two manicurists. Trade and transportation included 12 sales girls, four cashiers, two stenographers, and one telephone operator. Manufacturing and mechanical



A Laundry Where Many Married Women Work

pursuits included 92 factory operatives and 22 seamstresses. Of the entire group of women for whom information was available, 56, or 16 per cent, had not worked out, but had lived at home.

From the foregoing table it appears that most of the women did housework before marriage, 46 per cent of them for wages and 16 per cent without wages in their own homes. After the 62 per cent in housework, the next largest group was 32 per cent in manufacturing and mechanical pursuits. Only 5 per cent were in trade and transportation. Then, as now, the women were divided chiefly between domestic occupations and factory work. They have not shifted their occupations to any great extent, but have engaged in work similar to that in which they were formerly employed.

It must be noted that most of the old domestic jobs meant living out as housemaids, cooks, and nurses. At present domestic labor means working out by the day in private houses or by the week in public buildings. The essential difference is that the latter form releases the women to their own home circles at nightfall. At the same time with the rapid decline in the supply of servants there has come an increase in the demand for the day's worker, the intermittent servant.*

Turning now to manufacturing and mechanical pursuits, we find that they once engaged 32 per cent of the girls and now engage about 23 per cent of the women. The falling off in the percentage of factory workers among the middle aged is probably due more to the

*The building of apartments in which no sleeping rooms are provided for servants has probably helped to augment the demand.

departure of the textile mills from the district and the resulting decline of factory jobs for women than to a voluntary shifting of occupation.

The twine factories previously mentioned had played so important a part in the industrial lives of West Side women that they deserve especial mention. Many of our 370 wage-earning mothers had worked there for longer or shorter periods. Some of them had gone to work as little girls, nine or eleven years old, and had been employed as errand girls and needle-winders. Those who were ambitious learned to operate the ball-winding machines and to weave hammocks. In one of them the spinning was largely done by Polish and Italian girls in rooms on the lower floors. These foreign spinners at work in their dirty, lint-filled rooms, with their heads tied up in cloths, were greatly scorned by the American twine workers who did the cleaner work and occupied the better lighted rooms upstairs.

This factory seems to have maintained a sort of patriarchal attitude which no doubt did a great deal toward making the girls content with their jobs. In pleasant weather they ate their lunches on the roof overlooking the North River. On the top floor there also existed what might be called an old-fashioned welfare department. It was carried on by an old married couple by the name of Garth who lived there as caretakers. The Garths were English twine makers who had started, in a little shed, the original business from which the subsequent owners had developed the large factory. Simply because it was the natural thing for her to do under the circumstances, Mrs. Garth "mothered" the girls a good deal, giving them her simple remedies for head-

aches and colds, and providing merely by her presence a healthy influence over the younger spirits.

The women who had worked there always spoke of the departure of this factory as a great loss to the neighborhood. There were dramatic descriptions of the Monday morning when they went to work as usual and found a notice on the door saying that the works had shut down. What the factory had meant for many West Side families can best be illustrated by the history of the Meaghers.

Mrs. Meagher was a small, wiry woman with a dark, intense face. Her parents were Germans, but Mrs. Meagher had been determined from childhood to be only American. She was sent to a German school, but she ran away, and when her truancy was discovered she declared that she would not go to a school where they spoke German.

Her school career altogether was a very brief one. At the age of nine, she went to work in the twine factory. She began in the hammock-making room as a needle winder, working from 7 a. m. to 6 p. m. with an hour off at noon. She continued in that department, learning to sew and finish hammocks. When she married, she was earning about $12 a week, except during the slack summer months, which she filled in with whatever work she could find, always returning to her twine work in the fall.

Mr. Meagher, whom she left her job to marry, was ten years older than herself. He was of a jovial, boastful disposition, quite as willing to take things easy as his wife was inclined to take them hard. "I'm a thick Irishman, that's the kind of a man I am," was Mr. Meagher's favorite description of himself. "I'm going

to take my wife over to Ireland some day," he added on one occasion. "You mean to the Island, I guess," was Mrs. Meagher's scornful retort.

She had begun her married life with hopes of not working again in the factory. Her husband was employed in a roller mill and earning from $12 to $15 a week. But when her first baby was two years old, Meagher had an attack of diphtheria and rheumatism which lasted six weeks. Although he recovered completely from this illness, he was so completely demoralized by idleness and drink that he never settled down to a steady job again. He contented himself with doing a casual job now and then, gathering fuel for the kitchen stove, and occasionally minding the baby.

Mrs. Meagher returned to the twine factory during her husband's illness and continued working there until the factory closed. When her second baby was born she stayed at home for six months and then returned to work. The older girl, who was ten years old, took full charge of the little one, who learned to call her "mamma." Annie developed many habits like the older women of the tenements. For instance, to go out on the street, she would put a black shawl over her head without tidying herself in any way. It was not strange that at fourteen she was so far behind in her classes that she was not able to get her working papers. After the twine factory discontinued, Mrs. Meagher became an office cleaner. "But," she said, "I'd be working there today if it hadn't moved away."

How have the women bridged the space between their two wage-earning periods—the period before marriage and the present period? Especially, how many of the widows now working devoted themselves ex-

clusively to home making during the years of their marriage? How many of them have experienced that economic tragedy of widowhood, the handicapped return after years of idleness to a forgotten industrial world?

We commonly assume that a period of industrial quiescence has once existed for wage-earning widows. This is what Frau Elisabeth Gnauck-Kühne calls the "Spalte" or Split* in their industrial life. How complete or incomplete the division had been among the widows of our groups was a question to be answered by a study of their industrial histories.

It developed that many of them had been intermittent or constant wage-earners even when their husbands were living. The same conditions which are now sending the group of married women out to earn,—sickness, irregular employment, and idleness among the men,—once operated on the married life of those who are now widows.

Here are the figures for 125 widows: 52, or 42 per cent, had worked at intervals during their married life; 64, or 51 per cent, had never worked before the husband's death; and for nine widows, or 7 per cent, this information was not obtained.

A few of the widows' stories, taken from the note-

* "In general there follows the conclusion that the economic employment of women is not tranquil and unbroken, that rather it lacks continuance on the whole. It is episodic, for it is fundamentally influenced by marriage. A woman does not, like a man, enter upon an enduring, usually a life-long union with a chosen occupation. She, much more than he, has two irons in the fire; besides her gainful employment she has her home-making duties. Her life is dually divided. This is seen from the mere fact that the gainful occupations of youthful years are performed by the unmarried and of later years by widows, that is, by those who have not yet married and those no longer married." Gnauck-Kühne, Elisabeth: Die Deutsche Frau um die Jahrhundertwende, pp. 97–98. Berlin, Otto Liebmann, 1904.

books of the visitors, are given to show some typical sets of circumstances which drove them into wage-earning prior to widowhood.

Mrs. Maxwell's husband was a plumber. Sometimes he would get a job for two weeks and the family would get along nicely. Then again he would work one or two days in the week and the family would go without food. One Saturday night, when he handed his wife only $12, she decided that she herself must do something. She got a place as janitress and took in washing besides. Her husband was very irritable and made a great row if he came home and found her working or any work around in sight. But she did not know how to manage any other way, for there were times when he brought home nothing and the family might have starved without her assistance. "He was a hard man to live with," Mrs. Maxwell declared, "but I miss him."

Mrs. O'Niel worked as attendant in a "beauty doctor's" office before her marriage. Her wages were $10 a week. After her marriage she continued at her work for two years and then gave up working for awhile. During her husband's life she worked off and on, mainly taking in washing and ironing. After her husband's death, she got regular work as a waitress.

Mrs. Downing lived out as a child's nurse until she was married. After her marriage, which occurred when she was eighteen, she went out working by the day. She was earning most of the time during her married life except when the children were very small. At times when it was impossible for her to go out to work, she took in washing.

Before her marriage, Mrs. Schon worked with her father who was a tailor. He took in coats to press from a manufacturer. He pressed the collars and shoulders and his daughter pressed the sleeves. Together they earned about $13 a week. After her marriage, Mrs. Schon worked in

her husband's tailor shop, doing sewing as well as pressing. Together they earned about $25 a week. After her husband's death Mrs. Schon hired help and continued to run the shop.

Some of the occupations that were followed intermittently during married life were office cleaning, bookbinding, box making, carpet mending, braid finishing, silk winding, laundry work, wig making, and dressmaking. However, the most usual occupation was charring by the day, as the requirements of this work were such as could be met by women who could not keep the rigid hours required in factories and stores.

NATURE OF PRESENT OCCUPATIONS

To return to the present occupations: The occupations of each group composed of five or more members will be separately considered. These are, in the order of numbers engaged, day's work, public cleaning, janitress' work, laundry work, hotel work, garment making, laundering (at home), seamstress' work, petty merchandizing, sales work, candy making and packing, and waitress' work.

DAY'S WORK. The work of the 90 women who go out by the day is hard to define. It consists of any or all of the numerous chores which are included under the generic name of "housework"—washing and ironing, window cleaning, brass and silver polishing, floor scrubbing, and perhaps cooking. It is much the same labor that a woman does in her own home, except that as the servant of the middle-class mistress in an apartment house she usually finds better conditions of work than in her own home in the tenement. Her employer's house has running hot water, set tubs, and perhaps

even an electric washing machine. At home she must heat the water in a vessel and lift it on and off the stove. When we compare the lack of conveniences in the tenement house with the "modern improvements" of the apartment house, it is easy to understand why some of the women declared that working out wasn't so hard as working at home.

PUBLIC CLEANING. The great office buildings, the churches, clubs, hospitals, theaters, and schools supply numerous cleaning jobs for unskilled women workers. One office building, for instance, is 50 stories high and has 25 acres of floor space to be scrubbed. There are 145 women employed to do the scrubbing. In the evening, between seven and eight, you may see them leaving the building—a little army of shabby, middle-aged women, many of them in dusty widow's black, and carrying under their arms in brown paper parcels their working skirts and shoes.

In scrubbing floors the women creep about on their knees, with brushes and pails of suds, in the most laborious and time-wasting fashion. They spend hours daily in this cramped position. In some places they are either on their knees or stooping the entire day. They kneel on a mat or wear knee pads to prevent housemaid's knee. But even this slight aid is not always available. Their knees grow blistered and callous. Mrs. McCarthy, whose duty it was to scrub down the stairs of the "white staircase" every day, would sometimes "go home and cry because her knees hurted her so." She had no kind of a lotion in the house but vaseline, so she applied that. "But it was the worst thing I could do. It made them soft, and

OFFICE CLEANERS ON THEIR WAY HOME AT 9:15 A.M.

you want them hard, you know." After a friend had helped her to make a pair of well-fitting knee pads, she went about her work more comfortably.

The women suffer excessively from "cricks" in the back and neck, due to the long-continued strain of stooping and kneeling. But they are not allowed to use long-handled mops. The reason usually given is that it is not possible to clean so thoroughly with mops. However, it was observed in a certain hospital where most of the floors are done by women on their knees, that a few rooms, including the floor of the antiseptic operating room, were considered sufficiently clean after a porter had gone over them carefully with a long-handled mop.

The scrubbing is done in the most primitive fashion, and as long as the women's labor is as cheap as it is, there is little incentive for employers to adopt improved methods of work. There is also a general belief that women do this sort of work more thoroughly than men, —a fact which has served to prolong their tenure. Moreover, the scrubbing machines which have been tried so far have not been satisfactory. The superintendent of one building experimented with one in the large ground floor thoroughfare, but gave it up and returned to primitive hand-and-knee scrubbers. It was difficult to get the superintendent to speak calmly of this scrubbing machine, or to refer to the experiment at all further than to declare he would never repeat it. However, he consented to make the following charges against it: "It took three men to run it—one to operate it, one to carry water, and one to wipe up after it. It didn't clean the floors and it didn't *touch* the corners."

The machine and the three men were banished, and

instead six women were set to scrubbing the pavement with brushes, powdered pumice, and water. These women work evenings from 7 o'clock until midnight. They will continue to hold their jobs as long as they clean the floors better than the machine and as long as the six of them can be hired for no more than the cost of three men.

Most of the theaters have installed vacuum cleaners operated by male porters. But, as yet, they are not seriously depended on, and their daily use is said to wear out the carpets. At the most, they remove a part of the dust, so that the women who follow them do not raise such clouds as otherwise. The charwomen instinctively recognize in the vacuum cleaner a natural enemy, and none of them can be induced to say a word in its praise. They realize that as hand cleaning in public buildings is replaced by machine cleaning their jobs will disappear.

A great opera house gives work to 20 women. The entire house—orchestra, balconies, and galleries—is carpeted with red plush, which is swept down daily, including Sunday, with whisk brooms! Beginning at the top and working downward through the sections, the women go along between the rows of chairs on their knees and brush the dirt and paper into dustpans. This laborious process occupies them for at least half the working day and they are constantly breathing dust during its performance.

A serious feature of public cleaning is the thirst caused by breathing in dust. In one well-conducted theater, the 18 scrubwomen had a cup of tea together at 10 o'clock in the morning. The manager was alive to the fact that sweeping is a dusty and fatiguing occu-

pation, causing excessive thirst and creating one of the primary conditions for the beer-drinking habit. One woman in another theater related that she drank five cups of coffee at intervals during the day; another declared that chewing gum incessantly had "saved her from the drink habit."

Moreover, the psychological effect of constantly dealing with dirt is unwholesome. The women feel that constant association with dust and sweepings is degrading.* It disintegrates their personal standards and self-respect. By contrast with scrubbing dirt from floors, coal shoveling seems a clean occupation. One theater charwoman said bitterly, "The 'scrubs' dassent even be around where the actresses are."

The dangers to health from constantly breathing the germ-laden dust of great assemblage places need scarcely be mentioned. The public cleaning woman is the first and chief victim of the disgusting habit of spitting. Decent women were compelled to scrub floors unspeakably defiled by spitting, a condition as dangerous as it was revolting. One woman was said to have acquired tuberculosis in her finger from scrubbing the floor of an orchestra. It is true that not all cleaning jobs were equally bad, but the worst involved hardships which were an offense against humanity and bore no relation to the numbers of women engaged.

It would be well if some wet vacuum process could be devised, or a method of squeegeeing with water containing carbolic or a similar disinfectant which would

* Mr. E. Bevan, in an article on Dirt in the *Contemporary Review*, February, 1911, points out that the relation between the moral sense and the sense of uncleanness is not only one of analogy, as we have been accustomed to consider it, but that the connection is much more intimate.

not be injurious to the cleaners. In any case, whether such floors are cleaned by hand process or machine, disinfectants should if possible be applied in the early stages.

But the ability to make the best of conditions which cannot be remedied belongs to these women as well as to others more fortunate than they. Hear Mrs. Clinton, as she walks to the theater at 5 o'clock on a snowy winter afternoon. "I think I'm going to be able to keep this job," she says, "because six women have tried it before me and all of them gave it up. But I'm a steady worker, and that's what people want in New York. I tell that to my son-in-law to encourage him. He's just come from Toronto with his wife and baby so we could all be together. He's only getting $8.00 a week in the piano factory where he works, and he's beginning to get restless. But I tell him to stick to it. 'Norman,' I said, 'you'll have a chance in New York to show what is in you.'"

JANITRESS' WORK. The duties of the janitress in the tenement are to clean down the stairways and halls, oversee the removal of ashes and garbage, to collect rents, and remain on the premises always when there is an empty apartment in order to show it to prospective tenants. In return they hold in temporary usufruct an apartment in the house. It is granted the janitress either rent free or for a sum less than the usual amount paid for it. If the house is one of the meaner tenements, consisting of two and three-room apartments, her quarters are just as good as those of any of the other tenants. If the apartments are larger, she either puts up with mean, dark rooms on the ground floor or pays some rent besides giving janitress' serv-

ice. In the next higher grade of apartment house, she must live in the basement; from a person in authority, as she was in the tenement, she has become a menial. The consequence is that the women often prefer a janitress' place in a shabby tenement to that of a caretaker in a better house, and these positions in the neighborhood are at a premium. There is usually one janitress to a house with 20 families, although sometimes she takes charge of two or three houses.

Occasionally a janitress will develop very fair business capacity for her work. A large real estate dealer in the district says that he depends on the character of his janitresses to keep his apartments rented. "A good janitress will keep your house full," he said, "and a poor one will soon have it empty." Some of the women hold their places for years. A housekeeper in Fiftieth Street had had charge of her house for nineteen years. On the other hand, if she collects the rents satisfactorily, she may be careless in the performance of every other duty. There are no especial standards of cleanliness and order, and in this respect janitress' service in the district is poor.

LAUNDRY WORK. Laundry work engaged the largest single group of those in manufacturing and mechanical pursuits. The processes represented were folding and feeding on the mangle (14 women), shaking (six women), hand ironing (four women), flannel washing (three women), starching (two women), forewoman's work (two women), collar machine operating (one woman), and marking and sorting (one woman). All of these processes except the last require constant standing.

The work on the mangle is comparatively light and

unskilled. It is done by the younger women and involves less strain on the muscles than other laundry processes. The causes of fatigue lie in the monotonous motions of feeding and folding and in the excessive heat and moisture of the workrooms.

The work of the shakers is extremely laborious. Shaking out wet sheets and towels, or barbers' coats and aprons, means not only heavy lifting, but constant bending, stooping, and reaching. Like the jobs at the mangle, shaking is unskilled, but it is far more arduous in character. It is the most poorly paid work in the laundry. The middle-aged women who are forced to go out and earn money are most likely to be given this work. Mrs. Harrison, for instance, at the age of thirty-seven, was glad to shake out sheets in the laundry next door to her home for $4.50 a week. The Charity Organization Society arranged to give her three weeks' training as an ironer so that she might be able to do the more skilled and better paid work. But Mrs. Harrison, after two weeks' trial, decided that she was "too old to learn," and fell back on shaking at her old wage. This is too often the frame of mind of middle-aged women who, after years of unskilled housekeeping in the tenements, are forced again into the thick of industry. They decide that they are "too old to learn" or "haven't the patience" to acquire skill in any line.

Conditions in the laundry trade have recently been made the subject of thorough investigations.* The

* In 1910 the Consumers' League of New York City made an investigation of conditions in steam laundries, the results of which are given in a book entitled Making Both Ends Meet, by Sue A. Clark and Edith Wyatt. New York, The Macmillan Co., 1911.

In 1911 the Federal Department of Labor published, in Volume XII of Condition of Woman and Child Wage-earners in the United States, a report on the Employment of Women in Laundries.

West Side laundries, in particular—14 in number—are described in a recent report of the state factory commission. According to this report, "Machine washing and ironing, as it is carried on in the motor laundries visited, retains all the worst features of domestic drudgery and adds the further evils of long hours, speeding, and dangerously unhealthful conditions." *

Regarding one of the largest laundries on the West Side, the same report says: "In one laundry, so-called 'scientific management' is maintained throughout the departments. The following is an example of problems which have been worked out by experts in the office. 'If 10 women shake 6,925 towels in five hours, how many towels can one woman shake in one hour?' In this way an average of capacity is obtained and standards are set for different processes. The workers are probably unconscious of how it is done, but they feel that some power is speeding them ahead. There is no evidence that the experts are studying the fatigue of the workers and apportioning rest periods so as to prevent over-exertion."

Let us, for a moment, follow one of these women home after she has been shaking towels at the rate of two a minute all day.

Mrs. Kadowski is a comely Polish woman with black hair and eyes. On her face are many tired lines though she is not an old woman by any means. She is not particularly clean or neat in her dress. That is not strange, as she has just returned from her long day in the laundry. She has no sooner crossed her own threshold than she rolls up her sleeves and begins her family washing. A little must be done every

* Preliminary Report of the New York State Factory Investigating Commission, 1912. Vol. I, Appendix V, p. 345.

lived. There were staunch friends masquerading as lodgers. There was Mrs. Williamson's absentee lodger, for instance, who paid $10 a month. He was a sailor, as Williamson had been in his lifetime and as Mrs. Williamson's father also had been. After Williamson's death, his friend paid continuously for "trunk room" in Mrs. Williamson's flat, although he came into port only at long intervals. This arrangement allowed Mrs. Williamson to remain in her sunny Tenth Avenue apartment instead of retiring to a dingy rear tenement.

Another such friend was Blanche Cavor, who first worked side by side with little Mrs. Stroebe in the candy factory and afterward went to lodge with her. When Mrs. Stroebe's health failed and she went to the hospital, her lodger did all the housework in her absence, took the little one to the day nursery every day and cared for her at night. Mrs. Stroebe, lying in her hospital bed and struggling with an ominous cough, said of her, "Blanche is a good girl, even if her eyes *are* as small as pin heads. I'm going to make her a nice present when I get well."

It must be noted that the 14 families who had been receiving aid from charitable sources had been receiving it more or less regularly. This number does not include the families who may have had emergency relief during the year, or those whose children had received personal care and attention from charitable sources. The 14 families enumerated were regular pensioners. In addition, there were families who had had emergency relief during the year from the Charity Organization Society, the Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor, and local charitable agencies. But these sources of income were too scattering to be completely ascertained.

In general, however, it was found that of the 370 families, 139, or 38 per cent, were wholly unknown in the relief records. That the proportion of self-supporting families was so large a one is due, of course, to the fact that the mothers, possessed of unusual courage and determination, had stood between their families and destitution. The exceptional character of the women also accounts for the excellent family morale which characterized so large a proportion of the homes of this group.

EXPENDITURES FOR RENT, INSURANCE, AND CARE OF CHILDREN

Those who pay their bills with a check book can scarcely realize how important the frequency or infrequency of pay day is for those who are earning a bare subsistence. Whether wages are paid once a month, twice a month, or every week is a serious consideration aside from the actual amount of the wages.

The fact that rent is invariably paid in advance and wages not, is seldom complained of by working people. As long as they have the money they like to pay the rent in advance. Then if work stops unexpectedly, the family is sure of shelter for a time at least. When Farley suddenly lost his job in the middle of the winter, Mrs. Farley's first comment was "Thank God, we've got the rent paid two months in advance."

Wages, as a rule, are paid every week, while rents on the West Side are paid once a month. In a few recently erected West Side tenements the plan of collecting rents by the week has been introduced. The custom, a convenient one in that it establishes a correspondence of period between income and outgo, finds favor with tenants. Also, in many of the houses where

monthly payment is the rule, the manager has been obliged to yield to a kind of instalment system by which payments are made irregularly during the month. The very poorest families cannot pay their rent in a lump sum. Once a week they "pay in what they can" until in the course of the month the full sum has been paid.

In some instances, notably hotel service, the archaic custom of paying wages once a month still survives. This does very well after the woman is once launched in the occupation, but it sometimes makes the penniless weeks of waiting at first an insuperable obstacle between herself and a steady job. She falls back on day's work where the earnings if irregular are at least immediate.

Just how serious a matter this delay in wage payments may become is illustrated by Mrs. McCurdy's story of how she and others began work as car cleaners in one of the car yards nearby. The wages were $35 a month, paid once every two weeks. But since it is the rule of the railroad company to keep all employes two weeks behind in their pay, the beginning scrubwoman must wait a month for her first wages. When Mrs. McCurdy got the job, the Charity Organization Society, which had already been helping her, "staked" her for the first month, as she said, and thus saw her through. "But," said Mrs. McCurdy, "not many of the women can stick it out so long. Just the other day a woman told me she wanted to stay with the job, but she'd have to quit it because she couldn't wait a month for pay day. I told her to try to borrow somewheres. But she says, 'For God's sake, where could I borrow that much?'"

There is a current belief that the American workingman turns his wages over to his wife on Saturday night

and allows her to apportion all expenditures. This custom is perhaps more prevalent in America than in European countries, but it is by no means universal if the habits of West Side workingmen may be considered as examples. There is little regularity of practice regarding what they contribute to the family. On the other hand, the contributions of the children are usually standardized. How much they keep for themselves, how much they give in, is made a matter of rule and custom. There were many instances to show that what the wife gets from the husband's wages and what he keeps for himself depends on the personal adjustment between them and not on a recognized rule.

A carpenter who earned $20 a week regularly, gave his wife $10 and kept $10 for his personal wants. Out of her share she was to pay the rent and provide for a family of five children. A friend of the family undertook to remonstrate with him, but he insisted that her allowance was sufficient, for most of his neighbors' wives were compelled to do with less, as their husbands did not earn more than $10 a week. Again, there was Mr. Ryan who gave his wife $5.00 on Saturday night, and when she said "Is that all?" put the $5.00 back into his pocket. A stern disciplinarian was Mr. Ryan. A woman who had been married fifteen years declared that she had never known her husband's exact wages. Another, married ten years, said the same. In one family the father had steady work at $14 a week, but he often spent as much as $4.00 of this on tobacco and drink. His wife cheerfully allowed this amount, saying that he worked in the refrigerator room of a packing house and that he needed stimulants to keep him warm.

In Table 27 the relation of the average yearly rent

and the average yearly earnings of the mother to the average yearly income in the different types of families is to be seen.

TABLE 27.—RELATION OF AVERAGE YEARLY RENT AND AVERAGE YEARLY EARNINGS OF MOTHER TO TOTAL AVERAGE YEARLY INCOME, IN THE FAMILIES OF 370 WAGE-EARNING MOTHERS ACCORDING TO MEMBERS OF FAMILY AT WORK

Members of family at work	Families with specified members at work	Average yearly income of family	AVERAGE YEARLY RENT		AVERAGE YEARLY EARNINGS OF MOTHER	
			Amount	Per cent of income	Amount	Per cent of income
Mother only at work	101	$393.64	$115.96	29.5	$346.84	88.1
Mother and children at work	106	773.76	146.64	19.0	294.32	38.0
Mother and father at work	96	705.12	146.12	20.7	218.92	31.0
Mother, father, and children at work	67	1,112.28	164.84	14.8	209.56	18.8
Total	370	$713.49	$141.43	19.8	$273.74	38.4

The women seemed to trace a direct connection between their earnings and the payment of rent. Throughout the district, there is a strong tendency for the wife to assume the responsibility for this item of the family budget. Certainly the mother's interests are most closely bound up in the preservation of shelter and warmth. In smaller towns, wives whose husbands earn scarcely more than the wage of the West Side workman may save and "skimp along" until they eventually succeed in "owning a home." For the tene-

ment mother of the city, this is impossible. A janitress' place with free rent is the nearest approach to "owning a home" that her own exertions can ever bring her. But not all of them can be janitresses. Most of them must earn money to pay rent instead of exchanging labor directly for house-room and shelter.

The above table shows that the rent item consumed nearly 30 per cent of the incomes of women who were the sole support of their families, 19 per cent of the incomes of those with mother and children at work, 21 per cent of the incomes of those with mother and father at work, and 15 per cent of those with father, mother, and children at work.

The rent paid by the widows and other women who were the only wage-earners in their families, averaged $115.96 a year, or $9.66 a month. Generally speaking, this represents the minimum which must be paid for rent on the West Side. Seven dollars to $8.50 were paid for two and three-room apartments in rear tenements. Two women were living in basement apartments for which they paid $7.00 a month. Removal from a rear tenement house to a front tenement house means a decided step upward in the West Side world. When Mrs. Grubinsky moved from the rear house to the front, she was at last gratifying the ambition of years. And Mrs. Berger was only waiting for her oldest girl to go to work when she should move into the front house.

In disbursing the income, the rent is the first expense to be met. As one woman said, "Many's the time we've gone to bed without supper, and with money in that yellow bowl on the shelf for the rent. Whatever you do, you don't want to be turned out on the street." After the rent, the mother's next care is the life in-

surance payments. The insurance is simply intended to cover burial expenses. The payments are made weekly and amount to 5 or 10 cents on each of the children, and occasionally to as much as 25 cents for adults. This is an expense that is kept up until resources are at their last gasp. One family lived for weeks on bread and tea, meeting the insurance dues every week.

We might expect unusual expenses in this particular group of families owing to the mother's absence from home. She might pay someone to help her with the work. But such was not the case. She did her own housework mornings and evenings and on Sundays. The only additional expense that was incurred on account of her going out was the cost of caring for the younger children. The day nursery fee—where a fee is charged—amounts to 5 cents a day. But some day nurseries of the district make no charge. The fee, of course, does not cover the cost of caring for the child in the nursery and is regarded as only a nominal fee by those providing the nurseries. However, it is well to remember that to the woman who is keeping two children in a nursery at a cost of 60 cents a week and who is earning for the same time only $6.00, the sum is by no means a nominal one.

But the cost of "minders" was much more than the cost of day nurseries. From $1.50 to $2.00 a week was the price paid to a neighbor for caring for a child during the mother's absence. Then the mother was also expected to supply the "findings," by which is meant the little one's milk and other food. It is at once apparent that this expense is considerable in proportion to the low incomes we have already scheduled.

In 15 homes out of 370, housekeepers were found.

At first glance it appeared that these mothers had delegated their household duties to others. But it invariably developed that there were young children in the family and the housekeeper's real function was that of a nurse for these children. She was in most of the cases an elderly person who gave her services for her "keep." Mrs. Shea's housekeeper described her functions thus: "You see, Mrs. Shea is forelady in the laundry. She writes down the names of all the girls and keeps track of them. She is a great scholar. And she don't have to worry about Willie, because I'm here to have an eye on him and holler at him when he needs it."

Even where the child was left with relatives during the day, the mother was accustomed to pay something, though perhaps less than the customary price. Only among the Italians, who exhibit such remarkable community of interest in their way of living, is it common for a neighbor to care for a child without remuneration. This is one of the ways in which, as the social worker on the West Side says, the Italians "will take care of their own." But the native West Side woman expects to pay for what is done for her and to be paid for what she does. As women working in factories cannot get away on overtime nights to fetch their children from the day nursery at the closing hour, they usually engage some school girl or boy in the neighborhood to do this service, paying 10 or 15 cents a week. This is one of the numerous ways in which West Side boys and girls earn money after school hours.

It is apparent that when these women workers have children below school age, the expense of securing care for them becomes a necessity and the women must strain their incomes to meet it.

CHAPTER VI

HOME LIFE

WITH rare exceptions the women were "keeping up a home." To live in a furnished room is generally regarded on the West Side as reprehensible in a married woman. It is condemned not only as expensive and improvident but also as a hand-to-mouth practice which indicates a tendency to shirk housekeeping and home-making duties. The women who are doggedly engaged in "keeping up a home" for their children by doing the housework and earning the money to support it, take great credit to themselves for their efforts, and well they may.

In many instances two broken families had combined to form a single household. In one case three generations of broken families were living together. The grandmother, aged sixty-five, was virtually separated from her husband because of the nature of his job at the piano factory only a few blocks away. He worked as porter during the day and was engaged to sleep on the premises at night. Her daughter, a widow of forty-five, had a son of fifteen, just beginning to work. Her granddaughter was a deserted wife of twenty-two, with a little daughter of six. The old grandmother kept house while the other two women worked, the one in a factory and the other in a theater. Four generations regularly gathered around the supper table.

The typical flat consists of three or four rooms—a

sitting room, a combination kitchen and dining room, and one or two bedrooms. Seldom is more than one room well lighted. Space is at a premium. Folding wire cots, chiffoniers, and drop-leaf tables are popular articles of furniture as they economize space. A sewing machine, bought on the instalment plan, is seldom missing. The "grandest" piece of furniture in the flat was perhaps secured with green trading stamps, as the housewife will tell you at the first opportunity. The collection of trading stamps is regarded as a practice of great thrift, and the parlor lamp thus secured is enjoyed not only for its own sake but also as evidence of the chief housewifely virtue. Occasionally, a prize piece, like Mrs. Keifer's mission clock, is secured in a puzzle contest of the *Journal*. In one of the poorest homes I came upon a shining new upright piano. Its presence was proudly explained as the result of little Annie's "cuteness" in making up more words than anybody else out of the letters in the manufacturer's name.

Closets are unknown. When the mother comes home from work she hangs her dusty little black hat on the gas jet or deposits it on the mantel. Unless she can afford to buy a wardrobe the children's clothes must hang on the chairs. Where to put away freshly ironed clothes is a serious problem. Some of the mothers meet this difficulty by leaving the most precious garments unironed until they are about to be worn. The little white dresses for Sunday are washed out and starched early in the week and then stowed away in a small bundle until Saturday or even Sunday morning, when they are ironed while the family waits, so to speak.

The kitchen, as well as the bedroom, is without stor-

A Summer Afternoon in Mayer's Place

age capacity; a shallow cupboard is built against the wall, but pantries are unknown. Food is bought from day to day, as the average income is so low that supplies could not be bought in quantities; hence the need of a pantry is not so great. The cupboard, with the dishes set forth on shelves decorated with bright oilcloth or gay scalloped paper, is likely to be the most attractive and orderly feature of the house. It is out of the children's reach, and various things besides dishes,—the keys of the house where the mother scrubs, rent receipts, insurance books, pawn tickets, all the little objects so sadly significant of their hard-pressed lives,—are stowed away there for safekeeping.

On Saturday afternoon a little girl came dashing into an apartment where her mother was scrubbing. It was the end of her brother's first week of work at his first job after getting his working papers, and the news which his sister had run three blocks to bring was, "Frank has brought home his *salary* and has put it in the cupboard under the glass sugar bowl!"

The space under the stationary tubs is used for storing kindling. Certain warehouses and stores in the neighborhood make a practice of giving away empty packing cases on certain days of the week, especially on Saturday morning. The cases are dragged home by the children or the mother and split up on the sidewalk. The axe stands in the corner of the kitchen, or perhaps, if it is a very good one, it is placed in the corner of the sitting room as a safer place than the kitchen. The entire supply of coal is kept in a tow-sack or a box in the kitchen. Even in the coldest weather a fire is made in the kitchen stove only mornings and evenings. If any of the family stay at home from school or work on the

coldest days they may lie in bed to keep warm; it is cheaper than burning coal.

Housekeeping in these cramped quarters is exceedingly difficult. Such a home absorbs an endless amount of labor without making much return in the way of tidy appearance; the housekeeper can overcome the dirt more successfully than the disorder. "It looks as if the place was upside down," they would sometimes say, "but it's clean, anyway." Washday, especially, reduces the home to chaos. The bed is left unmade while the only pair of sheets is being washed and dried; the clothes are boiled on the kitchen stove, filling the apartment with steam; from the open wash tubs, zinc or stationary, rises soapy vapor. All sorts of discomforts and inconveniences must be endured until the clothes are on the line. A small laundry, just struggling into existence on Tenth Avenue, announced very low prices beneath a sign which read, "Does it pay to upset your home on Mondays?" The legend must have made a strong appeal to hundreds of women who passed the window and read it. However, the cost of laundry work, even at the lowest prices, is prohibitive for families living at even a higher economic level than those visited in the course of this investigation.

While the women are doing less and less cooking and sewing in their own homes, they seem to be doing more and more laundry work. One mother of two immaculately clean little daughters was asked how she managed to do it. "I wash and iron every day," she replied. The women who work away from home all day usually spend at least three or four evenings of the week washing and ironing. The clothes are hung over the stove to dry over night, or put on the wash lines at-

tached to the window. A settlement worker who went to live in the neighborhood was much puzzled by the sound of squeaking pulleys late at night until she learned that clothes were then being hung out to dry. Some of the tenement houses of the better type put up wash lines on the roof and do not allow them to be attached to the windows. This arrangement is not popular with the women, however, because clothes drying on the roof must be watched to prevent theft,—an arrangement which necessitates the housekeeper's absence from her apartment for inconvenient intervals.

A philanthropic institute maintains a laundry for the use of the neighborhood women. They are allowed to bring the family wash, do all the work there, and take the clothes home ready to wear. About six women can be accommodated and the place is always used to the limit of its capacity. It is kept open evenings for those who work during the day. One woman had been going there regularly for four years, just "to keep the mess out of her house," as she said. The companionship of the other women is an added attraction. There are German women in the district who have not forgotten how they used to go down to the river bank in their own country and work together in large cheerful companies. It was a pleasant custom, although it was terribly hard work. The tenement kitchen with all its imperfections is a great improvement on the river bank for laundry purposes.

As has been said, cooking and sewing in the homes are on the decrease. Prepared foods are stacked high on the shelves of the small, dingy grocery stores where these women spend their wages. More and more the housewife buys these foods. They save time and fuel,

—and fuel is a heavy item. Only occasional survivals of old-fashioned methods of preparing food were met. For instance, a hardworking theater cleaner was found in her kitchen using her entire matinee furlough of three hours to pickle a hare in the primitive German fashion for her children's Sunday dinner. We have seen that on the further West Side there are families who manage to piece out an uncertain income by the use of the kind of "waste" peculiar to the neighborhood. The children pick up wood and coal. On Fridays, when the brewery throws out a quantity of ice, they are on hand and drag away great chunks by means of a piece of twine. Similarly they haunt the produce depots on Eleventh Avenue for refuse fruit and vegetables.

Sewing is almost an unknown art among the middle-aged women of the district. If there is any sewing done in the home, it is more likely to be the work of an older daughter who is able, by using Butterick patterns, to make her own shirtwaists and perhaps a dress for a younger sister. The presence of a sewing machine in the majority of the apartments is evidence of the machine agent's industry rather than of the amount of sewing done in the family. Ready-made garments are the rule. There is little push-cart trade in clothing in the district; but the Ninth and Tenth Avenue stores are kept open regularly at night and are especially busy on Saturday nights. The women buy the cheapest garments to be had,—children's dresses and rompers for 25 cents, muslin pantaloons for 9 cents, knitted shirts for 12½ cents, stockings for 10 cents, and so on. The goods are thin and sleazy, and fade promptly, but they make a brave appearance in the store, with their bright new colors and all finished to the last button and

buttonhole. As Mrs. Rooney said, displaying a pink flannellette dress for the baby, "Now, who would put them little things together when you can buy them for 19 cents?"

More assistance is received in the form of clothing, perhaps, than in any other way. Relatives in better circumstances may send a box of "left-overs"; a friend or employer donates an outworn garment; the settlements and relief societies distribute clothing; the school gives away garments. A woman who is too proud to accept money or food will willingly accept a gift of clothing. Mrs. Reilly, walking out in a tailor-made suit which was worn last year by the well-to-do woman for whom she washed, would give you no hint of the tea and bread diet on which she and the children might be subsisting—which was exactly what Mrs. Reilly wished.

Small and cramped as these tenement homes are for the uses of daily living, they are even more deficient when the use expands into a ceremony. There comes one day to every family an event which transforms the home into a temple of joy or a temple of sorrow. One day in November the Rudiger flat was the scene of a funeral. The shutters of the little sitting room were closed, though needlessly, against the sunshine. Rows of candles were lighted at the head and foot of the casket, but the tallest candle remained unlighted for fear it might ignite the ceiling. The mother whom the Rudiger children had lost had been a tall woman, and the casket seemed huge within the narrow walls of the small sitting room. The place looked pitifully small and sordid in the presence of death, but after all it was far better adapted to its present use than to be the home of a young and growing family.

The Grubinsky home is identical in size with that of the Rudigers. Every Christmas it is invaded by a great Christmas tree which Mrs. Grubinsky buys late on Christmas Eve for 25 cents. Sometimes she waits as late as 11 o'clock to go for it, for like many of the West Side mothers she "plays the market" in her own way. The tree is set up in the sitting room where it reaches to the ceiling and obscures the only two outside windows the flat affords. But there it always stands during two weeks of the Christmas season, occupying the only table the family possesses, crowding Mr. Grubinsky and his pipe out of their favorite corner in the evening, disorganizing Mrs. Grubinsky's housekeeping. But nobody grumbles, least of all the little Grubinskys, who go to bed at night on a shake-down under the green and tinsel branches.

One often hears it said both in this country and abroad, that when the mother works away from home her earnings are swallowed up by the extra waste and expense occasioned by her daily absence from the helm. This statement was made the subject of a careful study in the city of Munich, Germany. The results, based on an intensive study of family budgets, throw some light on conditions in corresponding West Side families as the writer has observed them. Unfortunately, it was not possible to confirm these observations by a detailed budget study similar to Miss Otto's thorough inquiry.

"It is commonly asserted," runs the conclusion of this report, "that the small wage does not pay, and the loss of it would play no great part in the life of the family. The wage does play a rôle because it is added to an income which does not nearly suffice for the satisfaction of the family's necessities. The size of the

deficits disproved the assertion that the women could accomplish as much by thrifty housekeeping as by increasing the family income with their own earnings. On a merely pecuniary basis, this was seen to be impossible. In addition, the investigation of the housekeeping of working class families showed that the domestic arrangements of families with mothers at work did not differ materially from those where the mother was unemployed. Lowering the cost of food in families without a maternal wage-earner was only accomplished by lowering the quantity of food without making up the loss by the substitution of more nutritious values. Contrary to the general assumption that the women who do not work secure with the same expenditure a relatively better nourishment, it was shown that the same kind and amount of foodstuffs were used in both types of families. . . .

"The reason for the uniformity of housekeeping methods which otherwise prevailed was to be sought in the industry of the women themselves, who in addition to their factory work kept the housework going. The limited means of these families fixes a narrow range in kinds of food and the different ways of preparing them. The factory mother does not say, 'What is the quickest?' but, like the woman who spends her whole day on her housework, she asks, 'What costs the least?' This alone conditions the kind and quantity of the materials bought and allows little room for experiments in the art of cooking and the improvement of food. In addition to their limited choice, there is, among all these women, a lack of domestic training and ignorance of the different values in foods which renders impossible the better employment of the small sums available for purchases.

As a final cause to be mentioned is the fact that people hold fast to their old habits of food; and as the budget does not permit any increase in the cost of meals, only the industry of the women can bring it to pass that meals continue in the normal groove. . . .

"By a cruel overburdening of the woman who must do the work of two, it happens that her earnings are not swallowed up either directly or indirectly by increased expenditures at home. A definite surplus remains. This is the answer to the doubt concerning the financial returns from the factory work of women. Whether this is regarded as a real gain depends upon the economic standing of the individual family, who might be compelled to pay for any lowering of their already scanty income with a further lowering of the standard of living and with physical and cultural decay." *

Families are large on the West Side. It is not uncommon to find six children or more in a flat.† But the families of mothers who work are more likely to be below the average size than above it. The more young children a woman has, the more difficult it becomes for her to leave her home and earn outside. Thus her wage-earning activities are automatically limited by the same fact that sometimes makes her need to earn the more acute; that is, by the number of her children.

In the 370 families visited the total number of living children was 1,321, an average of 3.57 per family. Excluding those who were married and a few who had "gone their own ways," there were left in these 370

* Otto, Rose: Über Fabrikarbeit Verheirateter Frauen, p. 288 ff. Münchener Volkswissenchaftliche Studien. Cottasche Buchhandlung, 1910.

† See True, Ruth S.: The Neglected Girl. (West Side Studies.)

families, 1,232 children, averaging 3.33 per family, whose status is represented in Table 28.

TABLE 28.—STATUS OF 1,232 LIVING CHILDREN OF 370 WAGE-EARNING MOTHERS

Status	CHILDREN		Mothers with children as specified
	Number	Per cent	
At home and below school age:			
In day nurseries	40	3.2	31
Others	181	14.7	120
At home and attending school:			
In kindergartens	58	4.7	54
In grades	584	47.4	296
At home and at work	283	23.0	170
Total at home	1,146	93.0	370[a]
Away from home:			
In institutions	45	3.7	27
With relatives	41	3.3	35
Total away from home	86	7.0	57
Grand total	1,232	100.0	370[a]

[a] The total number of mothers. As some children were listed in more than one classification, the sum of the numbers in the last column exceeds the total number of mothers.

Three-fourths of the children were at school or at work. These are the children who suffer least from the mother's employment outside of the home. The school takes care of them from 9 a. m. till 3 p. m. Some of the local schools have a noonday lunch, so that it is not necessary for the pupils to go home at mid-day. There are afternoon classes at the children's aid schools; and some social agencies, including the libraries, have a

story-telling hour in the late afternoon. On Saturday morning a number of sewing schools in churches and settlements are in full blast. Although comparatively few children come under the steady influence of these child-helping enterprises, they are nevertheless a resource for the mother who must earn and who dreads the influence of the street on her children in her absence. There was Nellie Flittner, for instance, who received a gold medal from one of the church sewing schools because she had not been absent from her Saturday morning class for seven years. Her mother was employed in a hotel, working seven days a week.

Eighteen per cent of the children, 221, were below school age. Only 40 of these children were cared for in day nurseries, leaving 181 who were looked after by relatives or neighbors in a haphazard fashion. Only two day nurseries, accommodating but 120 children between them, were found in this district. The women regard the day nursery as a type of institution, and as such, distrust it. It must be said that the attitude of the management too often shows the strain of autocracy with which we are prone to dilute our charity. At one nursery, the hotheaded Irish mothers were always getting their baby carriages mixed and then squabbling over them. Righteously indignant, the management finally forbade them to leave their go-carts at the nursery any longer. This severe ruling made it necessary for the mother either to carry a heavy child to the nursery in her arms or to let him walk too far on his unsteady legs, for it was impossible for her to return the go-cart to her home and get to work on time.

Prejudice against the methods of caring for their children was not common among the mothers. But some

FACTORY WORKERS LEAVING THE DAY NURSERY WITH THEIR CHILDREN

made very intelligent and just criticisms, and there were several who might very well have served on the visiting committee of the nursery. These were women who had been long in domestic service before their marriage and were well trained in the care of children. However, ignorant mothers were occasionally met with. "Do you think, dearie, the baths they give the children in them places makes 'em sick?" they would anxiously inquire.

Only 45 children, or 3.7 per cent, were in institutions. That so small a number of the children had been "put away" is mainly due to the ever lively and active prejudice against institutions on the mother's part. This prejudice, combined with fear and suspicion, furnished indeed the chief spur to their efforts. What were they working for if not to keep the home together?

Most of those who had put their children away were widows with more children than they could possibly support. They had kept at home the younger children, spreading a small income out thin to make it nourish as many as possible, and had put the older ones in institutions. At fourteen, these little hostages return to their homes, and are required to take up duties and responsibilities from which their institutional life has carefully trained them away. Fresh from an environment which has deprived him of even a normal sense of property,—often the institution child doesn't know how to handle money or count change,—he is thrust into industry and wage-earning. The little autocratic world he has left did not train him in responsibility, but now he must suddenly assume it. His mother, who has looked forward to his homecoming and his pay envelope as a relief to her burdens of work

and responsibility, often finds that she has leaned on a broken reed. "I was hopin' when he come home we'd have it a little easier," she says bitterly. "But he's no good to me."

Almost as many children, 41, or 3.3 per cent, were being cared for by relatives as by institutions. An aunt is a very near relative on the West Side. She takes it for granted that she should help out where her sister's children are in distress. "My aunt brought me up," "My aunt kept a candy store and I helped," "My aunt took us home after my mother died,"—these are common introductions to the life stories of West Side working girls. Often the aunt is blamed by her foster children, as the stepmother is blamed, for hard conditions which she cannot help, because tradition has taught them to pick flaws in her. As a matter of fact, she herself is often a hardpressed mother who has trouble making room for the new member of her family, but does not question that it is her duty to do so.

The 370 mothers had borne altogether 1,758 children, an average of 4.75 children per family. They reported 437 deceased children, an average of 1.18 per family, or 25 per cent of all the children born.

The mother's task of child-rearing is no easy one. Each new baby means illness, expense, and further strain on the small family income.* Consequently abortions are common, and unsuccessful attempts are even commoner. Patent medicine vendors and certain classes of doctors and midwives carry on an illicit business in the district. A practice which the women know to be so common they can scarcely regard as immoral;

* See following chapter, The Physical Cost, p. 159.

and, in any case, they feel that it is justified by their necessities.

They are strangely apathetic toward the loss of their children by death. Almost as soon as the first pang of sorrow is past, the bereaved mother is ready to say that the little one "is better off" and to speak of death as a merciful release from a life of hardships. One never hears from them the mourning cry of the mother in happier circumstances, "So much love and pain and all for nothing."

It is only because life has not taught her her own responsibility toward the birth and death of her children that she is lacking in wholesome joy in the one and wholesome rebellion against the other. The same mother who resents the coming of children and resigns them so apathetically to death, will toil fourteen hours a day and seven days a week to keep up a home for the young lives in her charge. She meets her responsibilities with matchless heroism.

In our efforts to help her with her children, we sometimes overlook the fact that it is the mother who bears the brunt of many of our well-intentioned requirements. She is summoned to the school, to the juvenile court, to the clinic, to some one of the benevolent agencies by which we are trying to make better citizens of her sons and daughters. These apparently simple errands cost her a half or a whole day's work besides carfare and inevitable worry. If she utters a complaining word at the bureau we quickly remind her that the child "is hers, not ours," implying that she should be grateful for the help of our respective agency or bureau. As a matter of fact, we are not wholly consistent. In so far as we, as society, are interfering in the maternal responsi-

bility at all, to that extent the child is ours. More evening conferences and office hours ought to be arranged for working women who must otherwise make a heavy money sacrifice to take advantage of the free schools and free clinics that we offer her.

In the typical tenement flat of the district, home life and family life in the usual sense of the terms are impossible. The children play in the street, and even the home-keeping mother in her fifth-floor flat or rear tenement is too remote to exercise any real supervision. In the evenings when all the family have returned from work, the little flat is too crowded for comfort and quiet. The more studious children often take their books to the nearest settlement, church, or school for the evening study hour. Others, pretending to do the same, spend the evening on the streets. All members of the family tend to escape a congested flat which the best efforts of the mother cannot make homelike and inviting.

The women have little time for recreation or social life of any kind. They are too tired to go out in the evening or to attend the mothers' clubs at the social centers. Some of the German women belong to lodges, but more for the sake of the sick benefits and insurance than for the sake of the social features.

If Sunday is not a working day, they like to spend it at home. It is also the time for regular visits to relatives. But the Sunday excursion to the country, which is characteristic of the German and French working-class family, is very unusual in this neighborhood. In fact, it is not customary for husband and wife to go out in each other's company. The local recreational organizations seem to accept this segregation of the sexes as fundamental and proceed accordingly. Mothers'

meetings are diligently organized by social workers, but the father is left to go to the saloon.

The workingman, for his part, is quite as contemptuous toward the mothers' meetings as the average middle-class business man is toward the woman's club and other women's activities with which his wife is occupied. In a recent novel which deals with middle-class marriages in America, the author depicts a domestic scene in which the wife, returning from an afternoon at a musicale, is greeted by her husband with the question, "Have a good time?" This phrase, says the author, was the "formula which he used for almost every occupation pursued by women." *

This scene is easily paralleled in workingmen's homes on the West Side. When Mrs. Haggerty and Mrs. Ulrich put on their best clothes and went to the mothers' meeting at the kindergarten it was an event, for they had little time for pleasuring. But when they described the party to Mr. Haggerty, who was a longshoreman, and to Mr. Ulrich, who was a teamster, the men were openly scornful in their comments. "Didn't they just cod us, though!" said Mrs. Ulrich. Mrs. Haggerty, who was much of a philosopher in all matters where Haggerty was concerned, was not much affected by the ridicule, but she was not often moved to repeat the great efforts which were necessary to get away even occasionally to a mothers' meeting.

For mothers who must earn, there is indeed no leisure time problem. The long hours of earning are increased by the hours of domestic labor, until no slightest margin for relaxation or change of thought

* Herrick, Robert: Together, p. 246. New York, The Macmillan Co., 1909.

remains. The majority of our group were both industrious and self-respecting. They looked with disapproval on neighbors who loiter on the tenement stoop, "run in" for a visit at all hours, or spend entire afternoons in the moving picture shows. Most of the women were morally superior to such slack habits, even if their overworked lives had not prevented their succumbing to the indifference and inertia of the tenements.

None of the women expressed a direct preference for outside work over housework. But while the women had not chosen their way of life, they were not inclined to complain of it. Only in cases where the mother knew that her children were definitely suffering by her absence, was she moved to bitter protest. Otherwise the mother was disposed to accept the situation without complaint and even with more or less contentment. A few of the middle-aged women had discovered that a regular occupation is wholesome for the mind, and some expressed a preference for cleaning jobs because of their social character. "The work is hard," said one, "but we all pull together." And "It's rough work cleaning at the opera house," said another, "but every woman has just her own part to answer for, and the head cleaner is one of the best women that ever lived."

Sociability and companionship are things which no class can live without, and these women found in the companionship of their fellow workers some compensation for their days of drudgery.

CHAPTER VII

THE PHYSICAL COST

SICKNESS on the West Side is likely to be discussed in terms of cost. The illness of a wage-earner means the loss of so many days' or weeks' pay, and sometimes the permanent loss of a job. It means, besides, expenses for medicine and treatment. The mother may have a few dollars put by, and there may be other wage-earners who deprive themselves individually to relieve the new strain on the family budget. The family may pull through without an appeal to charity, but the cost of the experience is necessarily uppermost in everybody's thoughts. The period of illness is described as "such and such a number of weeks since he brought anything in." A visit to a doctor who didn't help matters any is reported as a money loss,—"That was a dollar thrown away." This constant, open anxiety about the cost is bound to be observed by the sick person. To an outsider it seems to crowd out all natural anxiety about the invalid's condition. It certainly shows what a strong element poverty is in producing mercenary behavior.

It is only the lack of opportunity which prevents cases like that of Mrs. Anna Ruhl, who managed to earn money by her affliction, from being more frequent. Mrs. Ruhl was almost blind. She suffered from an incessant tremor of the eyeballs, a disease known as nystagmus, as well as from other defects of vision.

With something like pride, Mrs. Ruhl would tell you that she had four separate diseases of the eyes! She had held a place as janitress for years, but had finally lost it through her failing eyesight. The "professor" at the clinic had told her that her eyes were incurable. When he asked her if she would sit for a series of lectures at his clinic, at $1.00 a sitting, Mrs. Ruhl eagerly accepted his offer. It was after she had gone through this experience, which netted her $15, that she made the most of what melancholy distinction there was in having four separate diseases of the eyes. The $15 went into the savings bank and helped to swell the savings of the Ruhl family to the amount of $60.

Among families as poor as many are on the West Side every asset must be converted into its cash value. Even the death of a new baby may be an economic resource for the mother. Her breast milk is worth ten to twelve dollars a month, if she brings home a nursing baby from the hospital.* It is not unusual for West Side women to earn money in this way when the tragical opportunity comes to them. The little boarder is tenderly cared for and the whole family soon forgets that he is a stranger. When the time comes for him to return to the hospital the money loss is the least part of his foster mother's grief.

Mrs. Decker's experience as a foster mother, for instance, extended over two years and brought her $228.

* According to the New York Charities Directory for 1912, published by the Charity Organization Society, the New York Foundling Hospital boards out about 1,650 babies, who are "cared for by nurses of the Out-Door Department at their own homes. These nurses are respectable poor women with families, who use the money paid them principally for payment of rent." Not all the children thus boarded out are nursing infants. Many of them are "walking children."

As long as the baby was breast fed, she received $10 a month, which was clear profit for her family. But during the last six months of the time, the child was given "table food" and milk had to be bought for him. At the same time, his board was reduced to $8.00 a month. Mrs. Decker was, on the whole, an excellent foster mother. She was a small, active woman of a cheerful, wholesome disposition. All during her married life she had gone out to work by the day. Her husband, who was a vegetable peddler, "sometimes came home with $2.00 in his pocket. More often it was 75 cents. Maybe he'd end the week oftener with $8.00 than anything else." While Mrs. Decker was expecting her fourth child, she went out as a charwoman at $1.50 a day. In wiping the dust from a door lintel, the step-ladder slipped from beneath her. She hung by her hands at first from the top of the door, and then, as nobody was near to assist her, dropped to the floor. The result of the accident was the premature birth of her baby, which lived but a few days. Mrs. Decker's mother, who was taking care of her, went at once to the hospital and brought home a week-old girl baby. Mrs. Decker wept bitterly when she had to return the child to the "home" two years later. Several years afterward she would declare that the loss of her own babies had been less of a grief to her than the surrender of little Nora to an unknown fate. "The babies was safe in their graves, anyhow. But anything might happen to Nora."

Unless the illness is an acute one, it is not customary to consult a doctor. For an ordinary indisposition or a chronic complaint it is more economical to go to a drug store and buy a medicine prescribed by an adver-

tisement or a friend. But proprietary medicines are not especially cheap, and the saving thus effected is sometimes illusory. Mrs. Trabold had long suffered from a chronic complaint, but she had never consulted a doctor. She never missed a day's work and was in the habit of treating her own case with a certain proprietary medicine which cost her 60 cents a week—as much as the weekly insurance bill for her entire family. At last, during a particularly severe attack, she went to a doctor and paid $1.00 for a consultation. She came away with a prescription which enabled her to buy the equivalent of her old remedy in another form which cost her exactly one-fourth as much. This particular physician had, through long experience in treating the cases of very poor people, come to consider the cost of the remedies prescribed. Another woman, who was supporting herself and her little girl on the six to seven dollars a week which she earned by washing and ironing, was suffering from an outbreak of eczema on the leg. The small box of ointment which she bought every week cost 50 cents, no inconsiderable deduction from her weekly income.

Among the older generation of German women on the West Side there still lingers much faith in old-fashioned homemade remedies. The herb doctor still lives there and dispenses his magical "teas" to a large clientèle. There are "old wives" in the tenements who make their own salves and distribute them among their friends and neighbors. Mrs. Muller's salve was especially famous. She made it of "some unsalted fat, the juice of a common onion, and the juice of a 'Meerzwiebel'* leaf." Two precious "Meerzwiebel" plants stood

* Sea-onion, or squill.

in the south window of Mrs. Muller's rear tenement flat, and were carefully nursed through the winter. The recipe was one which Mrs. Muller had herself brought from a peasant village in Baden forty years before.

But the women do not avoid the dispensaries and hospitals. They consult the herb doctor, the display in the drug store window, and the dispensary, quite impartially, trying first one thing and then another. They expect the doctor to help them on the first visit and the first bottle of medicine to work a cure. If this is not the case, they are loath to try again the same remedy. A new doctor or a new kind of medicine stimulates more easily the hope that springs eternal.

It is impossible to say how much these women suffer from minor ailments, like bad teeth and aching feet. At the age of forty or fifty many of them are almost toothless. To this is largely due the look of premature age which is worn by women of forty in the tenements. But that is not the worst result of neglect of the teeth. It means much suffering from aching jaws and ulcerations, and is often the cause of chronic indigestion. Incidentally, it excludes the women from occupations in which the standard of personal appearance is high. A young French woman who was looking for work as a waitress was refused a position because she had lost her upper teeth. She might have bought artificial teeth, but that would cost more money than she could save for some time. "I must have teet' to get work; but I must also have work to get teet'," the poor woman said.

Fortunately, the younger generation is faring better in this respect. The young working girl willingly spends part of her wages on her teeth, and takes much

pleasure in the gilded result. But it is not vanity alone which makes her willing to spend her wages in this way. One young woman had suffered for years from toothache and ulcerations before she discovered that this could be prevented if one had money enough to pay for dentistry. She had good health, and a regular occupation, and was able thereafter to keep her teeth in a healthy condition. But she could not get over the wonder of the discovery. "It was a great day when I found out that you didn't have to go on suffering like that," she would say reflectively.

Varicose veins and hernia are familiar complaints. Proceeding, as they do, from muscular overstrain, they are commonly found among unskilled manual workers of both sexes. Varicose veins in particular are terribly prevalent among the middle-aged women, who acquire this disease from long standing in the factory or at their own wash tubs. Once acquired, it is difficult to cure, for the working woman cannot afford to keep off her feet for long at a time; she bandages her "bad leg" as best she can and goes about her work just the same. Sometimes the trouble goes on for years, the woman accepting her affliction with fatalistic patience. Mrs. O'Brien, who was pantry girl in a large hotel, working sixty-three hours a week, had suffered for years from a chronic abscess on the leg. From time to time, when it was worse than usual, Mrs. O'Brien would say, "My leg has been going against me lately."

However, this passivity toward illness and suffering is gradually yielding to the influence of free clinics, free hospitals, and district nurses. More and more the women seek relief through an operation when that is possible. Indeed, "operation" is such a common word

to them that it has almost lost its terror. Hospitals, too, are not the objects of suspicion and prejudice on the West Side that they are in immigrant neighborhoods. A serious accident or a threatened illness usually means a call for the ambulance and removal straightway to the hospital.

When we consider the conditions in these homes, it is not surprising that the hospital ward is so often preferred. No privacy is possible for the sick-a-bed. Very often three or four members of the family sleep together. If one of the bedfellows falls ill, the healthy must turn in with the sick night after night or else go without sleep. When Mrs. McWade lay ill for two weeks with pneumonia, all three of her children clambered into the family bed with her every night. The room in which she lay was totally dark and unventilated except through the door opening into the kitchen. This type of sick room is the rule on the West Side; dark, airless, exposed to all the turmoil of congested family life. It certainly affords the invalid no aid in his battle with disease.

When the mother of the family "gives up and goes to bed" it usually means that she is seriously ill. She may be in a condition which urgently demands rest and medical attention, but with the habit of continuous exertion strongly fixed upon her, it requires the latter stages of an illness to confine her to her bed. "If I sat on a chair three hours," said Mrs. Michel, "my bones would ache." And Mrs. Renner, who passed through an attack of grippe without losing a day's work, had a cheerful theory that "you may feel bad when you first get up, but after you begin to work it passes off."

Another influence which induces the women to keep

up an appearance of health is the fear that they may lose their work through being thought delicate. When Mrs. Slade was engaged by the mistress of a Riverside Drive home to do the laundry work for a house, she was told that her predecessor had regularly used four days of the week. Mrs. Slade, who was hampered by a "bad leg," found it necessary to work overtime in order to get through in four days. She was fully content to do so and hoped the "Madam" would not discover that she stayed late. But the cook reported her, and the Madam came down to the basement to ask, "Are you sure you can do my work?" "I've done heavier washings than yours," replied Mrs. Slade indignantly. "Don't you need another day?" said the lady kindly. But Mrs. Slade, knowing that four days were standard in the house, declared that she needed no more. After this episode, she took pains to increase her speed so as to leave on time in the evening.

A great deal of the illness among the women springs from conditions of neglect and overwork, and proceeds from what may be called preventable causes. The three principal sources are child-bearing, domestic labor for their own families and others, and industrial conditions.

The bearing of children in the tenements is attended by conditions which increase its burdens and its dangers. One of the most serious burdens is the rapid recurrence of pregnancies. The number of pregnancies reported by six women of our group within certain periods of time were, respectively, 15 in nineteen years; 14 in twenty years; 10 in thirteen years; 10 in twelve years; seven in ten years; and six in nine years. The number of living children in each of

these cases, taken in order, was, respectively: five, nine (including a pair of twins), two, two, three, and two.

One would have to search long among middle-class wives of corresponding age to find the duplicate of these histories. The effect of a long series of ineffectual pregnancies on the mother is to undermine her strength and vigor, and, in the worst cases, to produce such complete organic exhaustion that it is impossible for her to bear a mature and fully developed infant. The children who do not succumb to premature birth, or to sheer immaturity following a normal birth, grow onward into a weakened childhood. It is never too late to pay the penalty of having entered the race of life with a poor equipment. This is especially true of children in the tenements where the standard of living is rarely sufficiently generous to redeem a handicap at birth.

Very few of the women have the advantage during confinement of skilled obstetrical treatment. Most of them are attended by midwives—a well represented occupation in this neighborhood. From the peasant regions of Europe the women have brought a strong tradition in favor of being attended in confinement by a woman. That this tradition has yielded so little to the American custom of calling in a physician is largely due to the cheapness of the midwife's services. She asks from five to ten dollars, but sometimes it is a long hard pull to get even this small amount paid. Needless to say, it is a debt which often goes unsettled.

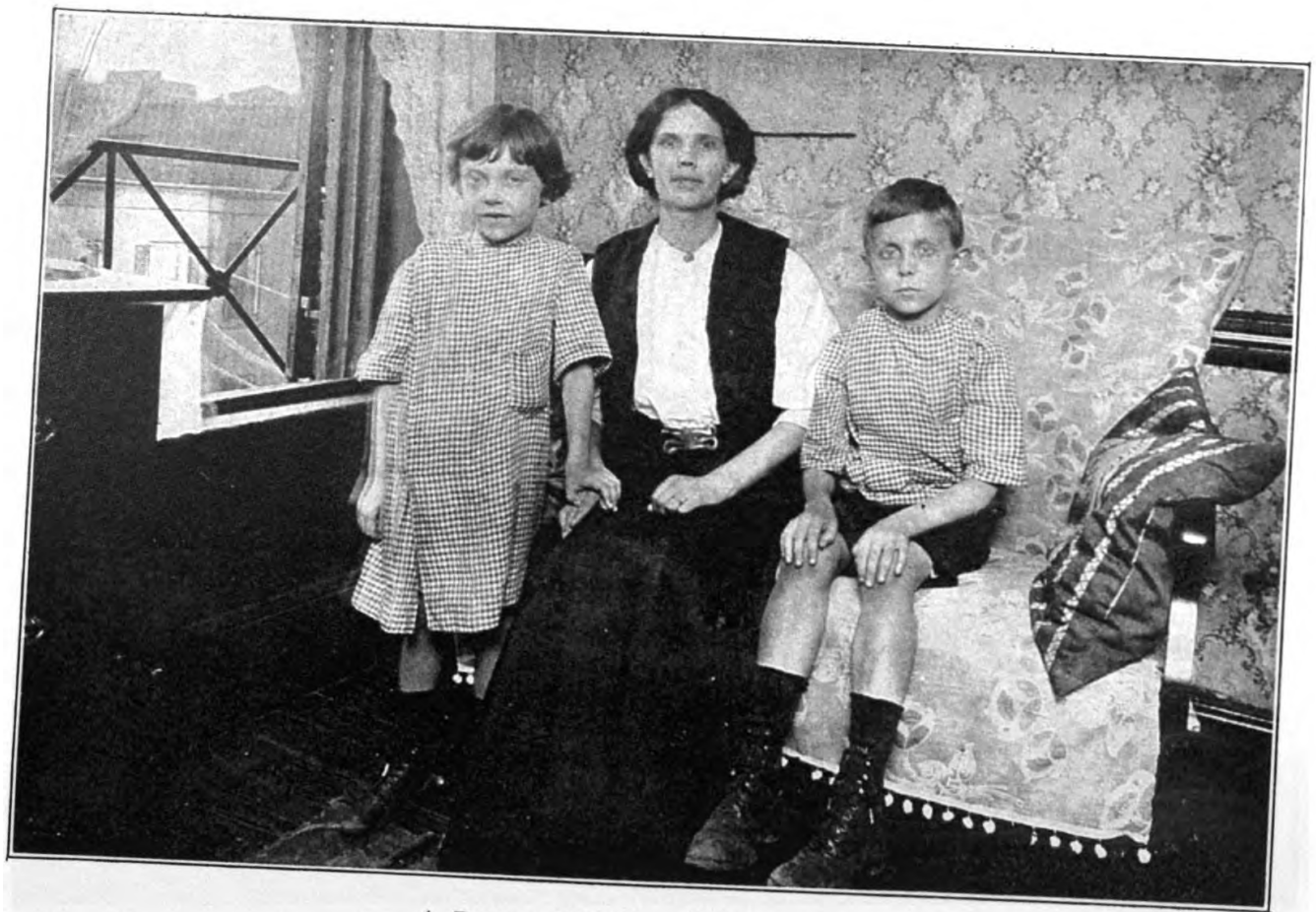
The midwives of the West Side are nearly all German women. As a class they are not more intelligent than their neighbors; their only superiority is that which results from a few months' training and such knowledge as comes from practical experience. The regulation of

midwives in the city is extremely lax. The irresponsible and indifferent and even the criminal practitioners are by no means ruled out. The poor woman who has only five or seven dollars to pay for care during confinement is liable to fall into the hands of a clumsy learner or an ignorant bungler. Two of the women who were visited for this investigation, and died while it was in progress, were the victims of peritonitis due to neglect on the part of the attending midwife.

The sanitary conditions surrounding the woman's confinement at home are about the worst possible. The midwife herself comes from a home perhaps far from clean. Hurriedly summoned from her own housework, she brings to her task a pair of hands which need all the antiseptic scrubbing prescribed by the board of health rules.* But if she is not a person of cleanly habits, she does not appreciate the value of these rules and is apt to neglect them. The room occupied by her patient is of the kind already described,—dark, airless, hard to keep clean. Conditions like these become a test of the sick woman's vitality rather than an aid to her recovery. As one physician said in speaking of the health of one of his patients, "She is a woman with a great deal of resistance. She has gone through two attacks of fever in that house and recovered."

Some of the women avail themselves of the free outpractice of the hospitals. They register at the office, call there for preliminary examinations, and receive free medical attention at home when the time of their confinement arrives. They are less likely to go to a hospital for this than for other kinds of illness. The ar-

* Annual Report of the Department of Health of the City of New York, 1909. Rules for Midwives, p. 165 ff.



A Danish Mother and Her Sons

rival of a new baby is looked on as being more or less in "the day's work" and few precautions are taken. It is one of the inconsistencies of the West Side woman that she stays at home for her confinement and receives such poor obstetrical care that she must afterward go to the hospital and be operated on for a laceration. Or she rises prematurely from her bed to do her own housework and acquires a uterine weakness which must later be remedied by an operation in the hospital.

In cases where a woman was suffering from overstrain, it was sometimes difficult to say whether the cause lay in the nature of her work at home or her occupation. All of these women had been engaged for years in arduous housework, doing the washing of a large family, carrying baskets of wet clothes to the roof to dry, moving and lifting furniture, scrubbing, scouring, and above all, standing continuously. The family wash is the heaviest kind of a strain. The washing of overalls and other work garments requires a great deal of strength. When everybody praises the smart appearance of the street cleaners in their white suits, who thinks of the wives of these men who must wash the coarse, heavy garments at least twice a week?

The conditions of domestic labor for wages are almost wholly ignored in our regulation of industry. The women who work out by the day belong to the class of unsupervised and unregulated labor. It is impossible to compare the relative dangers of their work with factory work, owing to the unstandardized conditions of the former. However, it is worthy of remark that almost every woman who was suffering from prolapse of the uterus ascribed it to some form of overexertion in domestic work. It was also true that most of the

miscarriages reported were the result of domestic labor rather than of factory labor. One explanation of this was that by far the largest group of the women, 70 per cent, were earning by domestic and personal service. One is bound to realize that the heavy tasks of housecleaning in the spring, house opening in the fall, water carrying, rug beating, furniture shifting, and so forth, offer plenty of room for accidents and emergencies to which the pregnant woman should not be exposed.

But instances of diseases which were distinctly occupational were not wanting. Three of the women who worked in needle trades were handicapped by chronic gastritis, a common disease in these occupations. One woman who worked as a felt paster in a piano factory also suffered from this complaint. A laundry worker, after working three weeks as a shaker and standing every day from 7:30 a. m. until 9 or 10 p. m., had to spend the next three weeks in the hospital with a serious affection of the ankle. The laundry workers as a group seemed to suffer most from the effects of their occupation.

The problem of health among these women is, perhaps, a problem of poverty rather than of their industrial employment. The statement made in a recent study of the employment of married women in Birmingham that "poverty alone has such an evident pernicious influence on the health of the mother and her offspring that the influence of industrial employment is to a considerable extent masked," * is also applicable to this group of women. As we have seen, 70 per cent

* City of Birmingham, Health Department. Report on Industrial Employment of Married Women and Infantile Mortality, 1910, p. 20.

were engaged in some form of domestic and personal service. The nature of their work, then, was not so different from that of the hardworking but so-called unemployed mother and housewife. The conditions under which it was done, however, were very different. Compared with the conditions affecting the group of factory women, those affecting the charwoman and other domestic and personal service workers may be considered less exhausting. On the other hand, the most overburdened housewife is never called upon to scrub floors all night long, or even half the night. Doubtless we shall soon see the necessity of regulating the work of women in hotels and public buildings, so that the health and strength of these women as well as of factory workers may be protected from night work and excessive hours.

CHAPTER VIII

THE HUMAN SIDE

WITHOUT consideration of the human factor, our study of conditions would be incomplete. Thus far we have spoken principally of facts and conditions which were common to the group and have largely ignored those which were accidental and peculiar to the individual family and the individual mother. But the importance of character in modifying the influences of environment must be taken into account. Personal ambitions and disappointments, personal desires and weaknesses, personal shrewdness or slackness play their part in these narrow homes as they do in more spacious ones. Therefore, briefly as it must be done, the attempt is made in this chapter to introduce the reader to the personalities and homes of some of the mothers. The life story of any one of these working women might easily fill a volume and would certainly be a valuable biography. But we must restrict our presentation here to the space of a few paragraphs. We hope, however, that these may suffice to give the reader a glimpse beyond the economic elements and to make more real the flesh and blood underlying the facts upon which the statistical tables of the foregoing chapters have been built.

Mrs. Stallmeister's Working History

Mrs. Stallmeister is a widow and lives with her two children in a two-room flat on the third floor of a Tenth Avenue tenement. The common halls and stairs are covered with figured linoleum in good repair. They are regularly and thoroughly cleaned. The street door is kept closed and a fresh muslin curtain hangs over the glass. The house is quiet and almost solitary during the day, as nearly all the tenants are widows and unmarried women who go out to work. The children are at school or in the day nursery. About the only sound to be heard from the stairway is the ticking of many alarm clocks in the empty flats.

Mrs. Stallmeister's own tiny apartment is a model of cleanliness, although how she manages to keep it so, working as she does for very long hours in the laundry, is a mystery. A red cotton cloth covers the kitchen table, and blue spice boxes and canisters ranged on the cupboard shelves in the pleasant German fashion give this room an air of cheer and comfort worthy of its mistress's best traditions as a "Hausfrau."

Mrs. Stallmeister's husband, like herself, was born in New York on the West Side, of German parents. They attended the same parochial school, the girl until she was eleven and the boy until he was twelve. Stallmeister's father and brothers ran an express business in which he worked until he was twenty-three. The entire family then moved out to Michigan where the sons all worked in the copper mines. At the end of seven years the mother died, and the family "broke up." Stallmeister was just thirty at the time. He returned to New York and went to work as a hearse driver. A man of industrious and domestic habits, he was not long content to lead a bachelor life, but soon married and "set up" a home.

He was then earning $11 a week and Katherine Bauer had $400 in savings. There soon began for them a distressing

period of illness and death. The first baby died a week after its birth. Both of Katherine's parents and Stallmeister's father were buried, one after the other, from the Stallmeister home after lingering illnesses. Mrs. Stallmeister nursed all of them. Misfortunes came so thick and fast during her brief married life that they almost crowd every other recollection out of her memory of the time. She takes a sort of melancholy pride in the fact that "she and her husband between them buried 17 near relatives in ten years."

However, as long as her husband's health lasted, he kept at work with the same employer. After the union of hearse drivers was formed his wages rose to $14 a week. The $400 which his wife had brought into the marriage was not drawn upon, but had been doubled by what the couple had added to it, when Stallmeister came down with an attack of pneumonia from which he never recovered. He developed tuberculosis and was ill for two years before his death. His wife would not consent to have him go to a hospital, saying he had always "provided for them when he was well and deserved to stay with his family." She went out to work when she could and the invalid "minded" the two children, always carefully following the visiting nurse's directions for their protection. The $800 was soon gone and for several months before the husband's death the wife was aided by the charity organization society. The sum received from the society amounted to $105, which she repaid out of the $500 which her husband's life insurance policy yielded. But she had other debts as well and only $100 of the insurance money remained when all arrears had been met.

Katherine Stallmeister is about thirty-eight. She is a pale, tall, thin woman, with a pronounced stoop. She dresses the year round in neat calico gowns of an old-fashioned cut and wears about her shoulders in winter a small plaid shawl. There is, in fact, in her own appearance and in her home, a noticeable lack of the sort of tawdry finery which is so pitifully evident in the dress and in the homes of the people

of this section. These things show her power of resistance to the influences of West Forty-ninth Street where she was born and which she has practically never left. The same resistance is seen in the sturdy family morale which preserves church-going habits, the sense of obligations, loyalty to old friends, and simple hospitality. When a chance visitor drops in to see her in the evening after her long day in the laundry, Mrs. Stallmeister is never too tired to brew a cup of tea or too poor to afford it, nor are her housekeeping arrangements too unready. It is noticeable that the visitor is usually an old acquaintance—a schoolmate years ago at the Assumption School, or perhaps a fellow-worker, but seldom a fellow-tenant. Mrs. Stallmeister has strong prejudice against "taking up" with the latter—a prejudice not uncommon among the older settlers in the district.

Her energy is not the effect of very robust health. Early and constant employment have stunted her growth. As a child of eleven, she went to work packing candy in a large factory at $1.50 a week. Here she stayed a year. The next year she and her sister found work in a corset factory, inserting stays nine hours a day for $3.50 a week. But Katherine was ambitious and faithful, and at the age of twelve she was forelady, with six eyelet setters under her. Her earnings averaged $6.00 a week. From this time on her industrial progress was more than praiseworthy; her wages increased slowly but steadily as she advanced from factory to factory, with little loss of time between jobs, always anxious to better herself. Unfortunately, about this time she absolutely ceased to grow. For five years she added to her wages, but nothing to her height or weight. At the age of eighteen she weighed 89 pounds.

Meanwhile Katherine and her sister had gone on from the corset factory to a "jersey" factory. Their mother went with them when they applied, leading the two girls by the hand, for the master of the factory would not employ little girls on their own applications. Katherine was put at sewing

buttons on jerseys—144 buttons for 7 cents. Her hands flew; she worked ten hours a day; at the end of the week she would have between six and seven dollars. But she looked around for other worlds to conquer. The girls at the buttonhole machine earned more than she did. Katherine asked for a chance at the buttonhole machine, but the forelady refused, for Katherine was her most rapid button sewer. The little girl bided her time and when at last the forelady married, a year afterward, Katherine was at the buttonhole machine the next day. Even now, Mrs. Stallmeister tells this story with a thrill of triumph.

She sat over this machine three years; with it she could earn $10 a week, and sometimes more. At last the jersey factory went out of business, and the Bauer girls found employment in one of the new shirtwaist factories which were rapidly multiplying throughout the city. Katherine was made an operator on sleeves. But her sister got the coveted buttonhole machine, and Katherine finally left this place because her sister was earning more than she was. She entered a silk ribbon factory on the West Side and was soon making $10 a week as a weaver.

But her term in the factories now came to an end. At the age of nineteen she began to grow and at the same time to develop curvature of the spine. She was put into a plaster jacket and some relatives living in the country came to the rescue with an invitation for Katherine to visit them for six months. At the end of this time the jacket was removed and the mischief proved to have been arrested. But Katherine was afraid to go back into a factory. She got a position as nurse girl for the opportunity it afforded of being in the open air. She remained in domestic service of one kind and another until her marriage.

She has never been one to sit inactive in the presence of misfortune, or to fail to try a new plan whenever an old one has not succeeded. After her husband's death, she moved to the flat on Tenth Avenue, and thereby reduced her rent to

$7.50. She looked about for work. The character of the district had changed. The steam laundries had come in. The girls were working at the mangles for $6.00 a week. The starchers earned more, by the piece, but the work was terribly exhausting. She decided that she must learn fine ironing. But where does one learn a trade in New York? Especially where does a widow nearing forty, with two children dependent on her for support, learn a trade? It sounds difficult, but Mrs. Stallmeister was used to difficulties. She discovered that there were two commercial laundries in the city which undertake to teach beginners—one in an uptown district and one near Mrs. Stallmeister's home. She went to the nearest one. She paid the foreman a fee of $2.00 and worked for three weeks under one of the regular ironers. What she earned during those three weeks went to her teacher, and Mrs. Stallmeister, keeping track in her careful way of what this amounted to in the course of that time, estimates that it came to $18. Hence it cost her $20 to learn family and shirt ironing. This was expensive tutelage, but the uptown laundry would have charged $15 outright as a fee besides the three weeks' work, so that Mrs. Stallmeister considered she had "got off easy."

She began working regularly in one of the superior laundries of the district. In summer she averages $15 a week; when winter comes she receives less, but the average has been $12. There is a relationship of mutual respect between herself and her employer, and as long as she keeps her health she will probably keep her work. But she can not afford vacations or illnesses; she must always be up to the mark.

Mrs. Stallmeister has proved that she can earn. In spite of the handicaps of years, uncertain health, and children, she has demonstrated her ability as a worker and wage-earner. But what of the children meanwhile?

At first she put them in a day nursery, as they were both too young for school. She paid a neighbor $1.00 a week to fetch them home at 6 o'clock in the evening, for the nursery

made a point of closing on time, although the laundries do not. Sometimes she worked until 9 o'clock. The children could not be left alone evenings. She talked the matter over with the agent of the charity organization society who agreed with her that the present arrangements could not go on. The boy especially was delicate and needed fresh air. So the children were taken for the winter to a "home" in the country where for a fee adapted to the mother's income they are being cared for. Mrs. Stallmeister goes to see them once a week, and tells her acquaintances that the little ones are with "relations" in the country, for it wounds her pride that they should be in a "home." She looks on the plan as temporary and is restless under the separation. She means to have the children with her when summer comes in spite of her sixty hours at the laundry and the extra evenings' work.

A Home Where Nobody Sits Down

Mrs. Fuhrmann lives "across the tracks" in one of the desolate tenements peculiar to the Eleventh Avenue quarter. The halls and stairways by which we reach the fourth floor where Mrs. Fuhrmann's flat is located are bare of any attempt at covering. A couple of lads race past us making a terrific din all the way down. However, the board flooring is well washed and the musty smell which pervades the carpeted hallways in the better tenements to the east is missing here. The Fuhrmann apartment, when we reach it, presents the same meager, well-scoured appearance. The afternoon sunshine pours into the kitchen, and as the apartment has "rooms through," the ventilation is not of the worst. Notwithstanding cleanliness and sunshine, the kitchen looks shabby and uninviting. Two or three straight chairs stand about in casual positions; but it is apparently a home in which nobody ever sits down.

The rent is high—too high for Mrs. Fuhrmann's income. She earns $9.00 a week by working every day including Sunday. During the last year she did not fail her job a single

day out of the 365. Her earnings for the year, therefore, came to $468. Out of this, $144, or 31 per cent, went into the rent. When she moved into these quarters her oldest son was earning also and the rent was less of a tax on the family income, but her son has died since, leaving Mrs. Fuhrmann with the two younger children, a girl of eleven and a boy of seven, to occupy the four rooms, and the mother to meet the rent alone with her slender earnings. She does not make a change, partly because with the entire seven days of the week given over to drudgery, little time is left for house-hunting and even less courage for making changes. Another fact which holds her fast is that the children are favorites "on the block." Hattie, who is rosy and healthy, is a favorite with Mr. Schmidt, the grocer, who says she looks as if she "hadn't long been over," and jokingly doubts Mrs. Fuhrmann's statement that the child was born in Fortieth Street. Little Walter, who looks anæmic and pale beside his buxom sister, has also his patron on the block, a detective, who promises to make of Walter a detective too some day. The housekeeper of the tenement tells the children when to start to school, for Mrs. Fuhrmann must be at her work an hour before it is time for school to begin.

It is true that patience rather than enterprise is the chief trait in Mrs. Fuhrmann's character. She is about forty, a tall, lean, brown-eyed woman, with a very sad face which lights up now and then with an attractive smile. "The men at the theater call me funeral face," says Mrs. Fuhrmann, "but Nellie always speaks up for me and tells them they'd be funeral faces too if they'd been through what I have." She considers that she keeps pretty cheerful, however, through "having to work so hard." And this is doubtless true, although it is the passive cheerfulness of an uncomplaining drudge.

It is characteristic that Mrs. Fuhrmann has never had "but the two jobs in her lifetime." At fourteen she went to work in a shirt laundry and stayed there until she married seven

years later. The laundry itself changed management four times during this period and passed through a series of vicissitudes, none of which, however, were strong enough to dislodge the steady young collar starcher who went right ahead earning her twelve and fourteen dollars weekly.

At twenty-one she married. Her husband was a German cigar maker, who succeeded in supporting his family until his death eleven years later. They had 10 children, including two pairs of twins, but only three survived infancy. When Fuhrmann fell ill with tuberculosis, it became necessary for Mrs. Fuhrmann to look for work although she was then in the fourth month of her pregnancy. She found a place as scrubwoman in a large theater which employed six women to scour the premises—halls, floors, stairs and stage—on hands and knees. For seven days' work she was paid $7.00. On this she kept the family of four during her husband's last illness. After two months he died, and Mrs. Fuhrmann returned to work the day after the funeral. Her job was now more necessary than ever. She continued at it until the day before her baby was born. In her own words, she was "at work Saturday evening and Sunday the baby was there." This was her eighth confinement within ten years.

When the baby was one month old, she put him in the care of a neighbor, paying $1.50 a week for the service, and returned to her work, "thankful to get it again," as she says.

For eight years she has worked at this job. Her absence of a month when her baby was born, and two others, one of seven weeks and another of ten days, both due to sickness, are her only absences in the entire term of service. Her wages have been raised to $9.00 a week. There were a few years, after her eldest boy got his working papers, when his wages made things easier. But this son died at eighteen, and again Mrs. Fuhrmann became the sole wage-earner.

Mrs. Fuhrmann walks to and from her work, making two trips daily. She must be there at 8 o'clock in the morning and work until 1 o'clock. After walking home, she washes

and irons or scrubs her own floors until 4:30 p. m., when it is time to start for Broadway again. At 6:30 she leaves the theater for the day. On Sunday she is not required to return in the afternoon. When we consider the character of the job itself, the four trips daily between Eleventh Avenue and Broadway, the cooking, washing, and ironing at home, it is not surprising that the Fuhrmann home has the air of one in which nobody ever sits down.

A Wife Who Has Been in the Workhouse

The Bradys were both born in Ireland,—Patrick, forty-eight years ago and Catherine, thirty-three. Coming to New York in turn, they drifted to the West Side and have lived there twenty-five and fifteen years respectively. Twelve years ago they met and married. They have four daughters, the youngest of whom is now five months old. Regularly before the birth of each child, Mr. Brady has deserted, and as regularly, when the family crisis was past and Mrs. Brady once more supplied with a paying job, has he returned. He works occasionally as a driver, but what he earns he spends in the saloon. Occasionally he brings home a bag of groceries of his own selection, but he never gives his wife any money. He has been of almost no assistance to her in the support of their children, except, indeed, through his periodical disappearances which have indirectly helped her out; for, with Mr. Brady entirely out of the way, the charitable agencies were the more ready to step in and supply his wife's necessities. Not but that a man of Mr. Brady's temperament would have preferred anyhow to turn out of his home during these comfortless seasons.

Such flagrant conduct would naturally be hard for his wife to justify. However, she makes no attempt to do so. On the contrary, she is eloquent in her abuse of her husband. She forestalls the worst that her friends and advisers could say. "A walking beer-keg, *I* call him," she sniffed on one

occasion, enthusiastically denouncing him in his presence. Mr. Brady, who was playing with the baby at the time, was amiably deaf to all she said. He is not always so tame under insult, however, and it often comes to a fight between them, especially on Saturday nights. On one such Saturday night about two years ago, he had her arrested and she was sent to "the Island" (workhouse) for six months.

In short, Mr. Brady is a debonair type who manages to shirk his natural responsibilities without having to pay the usual penalties. Not only is his wife lenient with him, but he is also very popular with his children, who hang about him affectionately when he is at home, and compete for his attention.

Mrs. Brady, not nearly so easy-going as her husband, has certain standards of family life and complains because their circumstances are so miserable. She has been married twelve years and has worked regularly nine years of the time. She is a woman of robust physique in spite of all she has gone through, and has nursed all her children. But if her health has survived, her home and her children have suffered. "Katie and Mamie have most grown up in St. Joseph's nursery. Katie went there when she was seventeen days old," she said. But sometimes the effort to get them to the nursery is too great. At present, she leaves the three youngest alone in the apartment and "makes a race of it" twice a day besides the noon hour to see about them and nurse the five-months-old baby.

The apartment consists of three rooms in a rear tenement. The rent, $7.00 a month, is covered by Mrs. Brady's wages for one week as scrubwoman in a neighboring laundry. The flat is scantily furnished. A cot covered with quilts without mattresses or sheets, a couple of chairs always heaped with clothing, and a drop-leaf table are the only articles in the living room. Mrs. Brady, who lived out before her marriage and has since done domestic work by the day, has nevertheless no knack at home-making, besides

having no time for it. For a year she has been working from 7 a. m. to 6 p. m. When her baby was born she left off work only a week beforehand and returned when it was two weeks old. She tells the following story of that time to show her employer's good heart:

"I went to Mr. Mack in the office in the front of the laundry on Saturday night. I'd rather died than do it, but I was afraid not to give notice or maybe he wouldn't let me back. 'I've got to take a holiday,' says I. 'Have ye?' says he. Then he says, 'Come with me,' and he took me downstairs and gave me two sets of clean sheets and pillow cases."

The Blind Baker's Family

The Farrells are people who feel the disgrace of poverty more keenly than its physical afflictions. An almost abnormal dread of exposure has prevented their taking the most obvious steps toward obtaining relief or accepting ministrations which might at least have alleviated their distress. When things were at their worst for the Farrells,—the time when the investigator first became acquainted with them,—Mrs. Farrell used to regard any visitor as an intruder and suspect. A knock at her apartment would bring her out into the hall, where she would stand with her back to the door and parley at any length rather than expose the misery of her home to casual eyes. When finally one of the visitors, a district nurse, had penetrated to the bedside of Mr. Farrell, she was shocked at the condition of the invalid,—so much so that she said, bluntly, in the hearing of Annie, the ten-year-old daughter, that he was "starving as much as anything else." Mrs. Farrell knew she had done her best by her disabled husband and could not blame herself for his condition. It was not conscience which caused her to weep so bitterly when Annie told her what the nurse had said, nor a sense of the human tragedy in her husband's fate; it was simply the anguished humiliation of exposure.

Michael Farrell supported his family for twenty-four years before his health gave way. During this time seven children were born and four of them were buried—a record which means a serious financial strain on the family provider. However, Farrell was able to meet it. His wife always had a doctor for her confinement and there was insurance each time to bury the children. For a quarter of a century he paid his rent regularly, the family living all this time in the same house. His trade was that of a baker and for ten years he was foreman in a wellknown East Side bakery, earning $20 a week. At the age of forty-eight, he lost his eyesight after an operation for cataract. Following this came an attack of paralysis which left him a helpless invalid. For a year Farrell has not risen from his bed. Lying blind and helpless in his dark inner bedroom, he continues to be the household tyrant and to rule his family just as he did during the years when they looked to him alone for food and shelter.

Mrs. Farrell is about forty, a small, rather pretty woman, with a shy, nervous manner. Before her marriage, she was an expert lace cleaner and used to earn $10 a week. But she cannot return to that work now on account of her age and her poor eyesight. After visiting several French cleaning establishments, she gave up trying for this kind of work. "When they see you wearing glasses, they won't employ you," she said disconsolately. It is doubtless true that, even with glasses, Mrs. Farrell's vision is no longer keen enough for fine work.

In November, when the theatrical season opened, Mrs. Farrell at last secured a place. Two of her next-door neighbors had worked as cleaners in the Regent Theater for years. When, with the opening of the season, 16 new hands were wanted, they helped Mrs. Farrell secure a position there. As long as the season lasted—she never missed a day. Her hours were from 7:30 a. m. to 6 p. m. with an hour at noon. An hour was too short for her to go home in, so she took her lunch. On the two matinée afternoons of the week she went

home at 1 o'clock and returned to work at 4. On Sundays she worked from 7:30 a. m. to about 4 p. m. or "whenever they finished." At the end of the week she received $9.00.

Meanwhile, the care of the house and of the invalid fell to the seventeen-year-old boy and the ten-year-old daughter out of school hours. Mrs. Farrell and the oldest son brought in $15 a week between them.

Mrs. Farrell's supporting hope always had been that her son Edward would not have to quit school. He reached the second year of high school and had written an essay on chemistry for the high school magazine. He had dreams of going to college and his mother could rehearse the names of several eastern colleges that she had learned from him. Then, quite suddenly, the command went forth from the blind father in the sick room that Edward was to bring his books home and go to work. It lacked but two weeks till the end of the term and Edward and his mother begged hard that he might be allowed to complete it. But Mr. Farrell was not to be moved. Edward got a job driving on odd days for a spring water company.

At the close of the theater season Mrs. Farrell was dismissed. The oldest boy, who had been working as a stage hand, was thrown out about the same time. During the summer, Mrs. Farrell has had but one day's work in the week and the boys have had odd days' driving. Mrs. Farrell has a promise of a place when the opera season reopens, but that is still some months off. In the meantime the rent is beginning to fall behind and none of the family, including the invalid, has been sufficiently fed. They are badly off for clothes. Mrs. Farrell has been going out to look for work on the hottest July days wearing a black cloth jacket, because it was the only decent garment she had. When the baker succumbs, as he will shortly, his wife will receive a check for $413. The check will be given to the undertaker who, after taking out what is due him, will give the remainder back in cash. It will buy new clothes all round for the family and pay the

back rent. But Mrs. Farrell never speaks of the insurance, nor apparently do her thoughts dwell upon it.

One Family That Has Not Failed

From a farm region in a remote corner of Hungary, the home of the Gravats, the Grubinskys have found their way into a West Side tenement. The transition was not made all at once, but by gradual stages. Martin Grubinsky was the son, and his wife the daughter, of farmer people. The first break with farm life occurred when Martin went to work on the railroad. He had charge of a gang of men going over the railroads and making repairs on the tracks. He lost his awe of travel. With the railroad, one could reach the city of Vienna in six hours! Soon the couple shifted there. Mrs. Grubinsky went to work in a factory as a wool spinner and her husband continued on the railroad. After six years in Vienna, they were ready for America. Mary Grubinsky, with their four children, returned to her father's farm and Martin took the immigrant's way to America. In less than a year his wife followed, but the children stayed on the farm where bread and milk and fruit were abundant. Mrs. Grubinsky found her husband at work as a machinist in a Passaic mill and found employment there herself as a spinner. A year in the Passaic mills was followed by removal to New York and the West Side.

For seven years the Grubinskys have been West Siders. Mrs. Grubinsky cooked in a restaurant until her first "American" baby came. It was a little girl, whom she named "Annie." The baby was cherished like a first-born, for the other four children on the remote Hungarian farm seemed almost lost by this time. The mother's devotion to little Annie, however, did not prevent her from going out to do a day's work as often as she could get it. Martin Grubinsky was then earning but $7.00 a week.

Since coming to the West Side, he has worked for the same firm—a factory where furniture is made. He never misses a

At home she is never idle. She helps her husband with the chair caning, makes the children's clothes, mends for her own family and also for hire, cooks, washes, irons, scrubs, tends her window boxes, minds the children of a neighbor who is doing a day's work, fetches ice from the brewery where it is thrown away, forages for kindling around warehouses, runs to the school when the teacher summons her—but a complete list of all that Mrs. Grubinsky does in the course of a week would be quite impossible. In her home, nothing is wasted, nothing lost. Even the feathers from a Thanksgiving turkey were made into cushions and dust brushes.

In short, Mrs. Grubinsky works as hard as her husband does. But she is by no means a spiritless drudge. She is enterprising and adaptable and takes the lead in Americanizing the family where Grubinsky lags behind. She collects green trading stamps diligently and has a clock secured with them. She never buys at the Eighth Avenue department stores, but always on Tenth Avenue where, as she says, rent is cheaper and prices are lower. But, she will tell you, it does not pay to buy things too cheaply. For instance, she paid a good price originally for her wash boiler, but has had it "since the last President was elected." She not only bought a sewing machine, which is common enough among the West Side women, but she learned how to use it, which is uncommon.

Two months ago she moved her family from a two-room into a three-room apartment, thereby raising the rent from seven to nine dollars. This was done in the face of Martin Grubinsky's flat command to the contrary. There are many things Martin Grubinsky does not know about America. How should he? All day long he works on chairs in the factory. Every evening he sits at home and weaves chair seats of cane. How should he know that an American family must have a sitting room besides a bedroom and kitchen, or that Tessie must have white shoes like the other girls when she goes to the church to be confirmed? In these

A Slavic Mother and Her Five Reasons for Working

matters, Mary Grubinsky feels that she must decide and that Martin must accommodate himself.

In this home it is understood that some recreation is necessary. Neighbors drop in for a social evening, well-known neighbors who also came from Hungary. There are no less than seven families living in the same house who came from the same Hungarian district. In the Grubinsky kitchen they sit in a circle, husbands and wives together. Martin Grubinsky and his wife are each at work on cane weaving. The babies play on the floor in the middle of the circle. Perhaps a pail of mild beer is handed around once or twice, but not too often. The Grubinskys and their friends are temperate. Their men do not frequent saloons.

The yearly festivals are celebrated in turn. At Christmas, an evergreen springs up suddenly in the small sitting room, trimmed with the carefully hoarded tinsel from last year's festival. At Easter, Mrs. Grubinsky dyes some eggs and then Martin Grubinsky, with a sharp pointed knife, etches on them the most wonderful designs; for instance, a pair of wheels, two evergreen trees, and two hearts symmetrically placed. He has not forgotten how to do this, since he learned it long ago of the Croatian dwarf who used to etch the Easter eggs for the whole village.

Mrs. Grubinsky, true to her more American tastes, would like to go to a moving picture show occasionally with the children; but Grubinsky will not hear of that, and so she doesn't go. But on the day of the woman suffrage parade, she ran nearly all the way to Fifth Avenue to see the women pass by. One day she persuaded her husband to go with her and the children to Central Park to see the animals. Sometimes Theresa brings home a story book in German from the Children's Aid School, and her mother sits up late at night after the others are asleep and reads it. One book that Theresa brought was the history of Saint Genevieve. Mary Grubinsky sat up night after night reading in her slow, unpracticed way the simple German folk story. Sometimes, as

there was nobody to see her, she shed tears over the cruel misfortunes of the noble heroine. It seemed to her as if "it might have happened just like that in those other times." Martin Grubinsky cannot read and write. He once knew how, but has long since forgotten, which happens not uncommonly with working people.

The Grubinskys have ideals and hopes. These all center around the possession of a little farm in New Jersey. One day, when Mary Grubinsky's parents die, she will have a small remittance from Hungary. Then, too, the children will be working and Mrs. Grubinsky will be able to go out more days in the week. When they get together $600 they will move to a little place on the other side of the Hudson. In the meantime, it is a sustaining hope equally for the husband and the wife, and unites them through every other difference.

The Life of a Weaver

Mrs. Halbe lit the gas in the sitting room into which she had conducted the visitor, and indicated a seat on the sofa. She seated herself at the window through which the night outside appeared as a square of opaque blackness. Her dress was black, and as she told her story, sitting motionless in front of the window, her figure with its dark background appeared like some somber drawing by Albrecht Dürer, her countryman. On the center table was a large Bible and the unfinished stocking she was knitting for her adopted daughter.

"Yes," she began, folding her arms. "I am forty-five years old. I am standing at the loom twenty years. At Stolpin, in Saxony, I went to the village school and was called the brightest scholar in the class. I was given a medal for excellence in Christian doctrine.

"After coming to this country I had to try many ways before learning how to get on. I was at first maid-servant and cook, but at last I learned to be a weaver. Then I wrote to my mother that as my father was dead, she and my sister

should come out. For I had a good place then in a Brooklyn factory.

"But after they came, things did not go well. My sister could not adapt herself to the new conditions and would not work, so that I had to support the three of us. My mother would not learn the new customs and complained of them. I grew more and more discouraged, and my looks began to show my discouragement.

"Every day, on my way to work, I was passing a store where a big man would be always standing in front. I did not know his name nor did he know mine. But one day, seeing that I was looking so downhearted, he asked me what was wrong. I told him how it was,—that my mother and sister would not adapt themselves to the new conditions and help me as I had expected they would. He said that was not right. It would be better that I should marry him and leave them in the lurch. Then my sister would be compelled to go to work.

"This man was Halbe, my husband. He was twenty years older than I. But I thought it would be better to marry him than to go on in the old way. And Halbe, though he pretended that he did, and I believed him, did not care for me at all. As he saw me every day passing his door so regularly on my way to work, it came into his head that I would work as well for him as for my mother and sister.

"After we were married I went every day to the factory and he worked in the store. Soon we had put away $300. In those days I sometimes made as high as $12 or $13 a week.

"Then my husband got sick. He grew so bad that I saw he either had to go to a hospital or I must stay at home and nurse him. He said he would go to the hospital. He was too ill to walk, so I took a cab and we drove to the Bellevue Hospital. I said to the doctor, 'My husband is sick with rheumatism; can you take him in?' 'Certainly,' the doctor said, 'but I must examine him first.' But after he had examined him, he said, 'We cannot take him. Try the Roose-

velt Hospital.' Then we drove to the Roosevelt Hospital, but there they said, 'We do not take these cases. Try the New York Hospital.' When we got to the New York Hospital, they said to me, 'The only place for your husband is the Island.' By this time, though not one of the doctors had told me, I knew what was the matter with him.

"When he got back into the cab that last time he fell into the corner of the seat. As I stood on the sidewalk, he looked at me a long time without speaking. At last he said, 'Linda, for God's sake, don't send me to the Island.' Then I told the driver to take us home and got into the cab. He was sick all that winter. I had to give up my work and nurse him. In the spring when I went back to the factory, all our savings—more than $300—were gone. We moved out of the city to a place in New Jersey. Halbe got a place as traveling salesman and I went to the factory every day, so that we began to save money again.

"In a couple of years, we had got $400 in the bank. About that time Halbe began talking to me about adopting a baby. We had never had any children and I had made up my mind to do without, but he put it into my head. He said if I would adopt a young baby and stay at home and take care of it he would give me $11.50 every week instead of $9.00. The more I thought of it, the more I wanted to do it. It seemed to me as if it might be a good thing for Halbe to have the responsibility of a child. It might steady him. He was getting to drink a lot.

"Without saying a word beforehand, I went to the hospital one day and got the baby. She was just twenty hours old, and I carried her home in my arms. The only question I asked was, 'Is she healthy?' Halbe was surprised, but he was pleased at first. We christened the child Margaret for his mother. He had the baby's picture taken and carried it in his pocket, showing it to everybody. He told everywhere that he had adopted a child. But after awhile he got tired of her, and wanted me to take her back to the hospital. I did

not think it was right, and I told him it was our duty to keep her. He got so he would stay away from home for days. Then he would come back and say, 'I had to sleep out of the house four nights on account of that brat.' It went on like that until at last he went away altogether.

"The baby was nine months old. I took her in my arms and went to the station and bought a ticket to Denver where I had some friends. I had sold my furniture and had some money. In Denver they got me a place as a servant and I was well paid. In the fall I lost that place and when I tried to get another, the child was always a stumbling block. So I came back to New York. I landed at the station with just 10 cents in my pocket. But I knew my place at the factory was waiting for me. I bought some furniture on the instalment plan, and took these rooms.

"I wrote to Halbe and asked him to come to see me, but he did not come. The little one stayed with an Irish woman on the second floor and I paid her $2.00 a week. I was doing well at the factory, making $13 to $15 dollars a week.

"It was a small factory where I worked. Sometimes the warps would be out and the weaver would have to wait until others were ready, one or two days, as the case might be.

"One day when the warps were out, I went out to Glendale to see about boarding the baby there during the summer. I was riding along in the electric car and thinking about Margaret's education and how I could save her from the bad influences of the streets. If she told me she saw thus and so on the street, I would say, 'You have never seen our neighbor, Mr. Coles, do that, have you? Well, that is because he is good and the man on the street is bad.' I thought it would be better to send her to the Catholic school perhaps, though I am not a Catholic. The sisters would teach her some ideas of good and evil and the child must learn these things, and I would not have much time to teach her.

"I was so lost in thought I did not know when the car

started and stopped. Once I looked out of the window and said to myself, 'Why, the car isn't moving!'

"Just then I saw Halbe. He was walking on the platform. He came up to me and spoke to me as friendly as could be. I got out of the car. We talked together and presently he said, 'Have you got a dollar?' 'Yes, why?' 'Lend it to me. I want to treat you,' he said. He took me to a place where some of his friends were and we had coffee and kuchen. As we came away, I said, 'Why did you take me there? I did not want to see those people.'

"I thought he would come home with me and was happy at the thought. But he only wanted to show himself with me in the store, because some of the men had been unfriendly to him, on account of his leaving me and the baby. He wanted them to see him treating me well. It was a long time before he came near us.

"About a year ago he began to come to see us on Sunday afternoons. One day, as he sat there by the table reading a paper, Margaret came in and said to him, 'You are the man that wanted to chuck me when I was a little baby. Do you think that was right? A baby can't work. What would have become of me?' He turned red and said nothing. I do not know who told her that, but she is five years old and smart to remember.

"Now, I know he will not come back to us and will not help us. I must take care of Margaret by myself. My wages are not what they used to be. At the factory where I work, we are all women weavers. We get $1.00 the piece less than the men that work in the Charcot factory next door. Year before last I earned $700; last year I earned $550; this year so far,—and it is November now, you see,—I have earned only $400. They give us poor materials and expect us to make good silk out of it. But it is also true that at my age I cannot do the work as well as I once did. I am often tired and vexed in my mind and then I cannot work so well.

"Yes, I am a long time a weaver. I am standing at the loom twenty years."

A Family of Americans

Martin Crooks is one of thousands of teamsters who may be seen any day throning the high seat of a noisy truck and handling the reins of a powerful team of draft horses. He has been driving trucks for twenty-five years. At the age of fifteen he began to work for Hettenbach in Greenwich Street, and the next five years of his life were spent chiefly on the seat of one of Hettenbach's trucks. Then he went to work for a new "boss," and for fifteen years he was a regular driver at Cronin's establishment. After the teamsters' strike in 1908, Crooks found himself out of a job and it was three years before he got anything "regular" again.

During a few weeks of this time he worked for a company which was carting steel girders. Part of the time he drove four horses and then he got $18 a week; then he drove only two, for which he was paid $15 a week. Any one who saw him standing upon his truck with his load of steel girders and easily guiding the four huge horses would have thought that he looked like a tower of strength and the father of giants.

If one had followed him to his home, one would have found him living in a furnished room with the last remnant of his family—a small, forlorn little boy of eleven. It is hard to believe that an American boy of eleven could be quite so forlorn and frail as Martin Crooks, the younger. He is diffident and quiet by nature and sensitive about his appearance, which, since his mother's death, is truly beggarly. He sleeps with his father and during the day is left to the care of the neighbor women, whose kindness he returns by lending a hand with the younger children. When school is out he goes straight to the home of Mrs. Claffey, a neighbor, where he takes charge of the three little Claffeys while their mother gets supper for her husband. Though only eleven himself,

he had a grave, fatherly habit of addressing Jimmie Claffey as "son."

Martin served his apprenticeship as a nurse in his mother's home, for he was the oldest of five children. Martin's mother, as well as his father, was an American. Like her husband, she was born on the West Side, and spent the entire thirty-eight years of her life there. Like her husband, too, she followed the most obvious occupation thereabouts for her sex, and, again like him, she never changed her trade. As a little girl of thirteen, she went to work in a shirt laundry. There she stayed through slack and busy seasons for fourteen years. At the age of twenty-seven she married Martin Crooks and left the laundry to take care of her own home. The five children were born within the next nine years. Three of the little ones died in infancy, however, and Eddie, next to the youngest, only survived an attack of infantile paralysis to be left a hopeless cripple.

As soon as her husband got out of work in the strike year, Jennie Crooks went back to the laundry which welcomed her with open arms. She took her stand at the same ironing board where she had spent most of her girlhood and young womanhood. From under her patient, skilful hands an endless succession of beautiful, new shirt bosoms went forth to shine in the subdued lights of refined dinner tables. During the slack season in the summer she earned as low as $4.00 some weeks, but during the busy season, by working very hard, she could earn as high as $10.

In the meantime, Martin helped with the children at home, looked for work, and occasionally held down a job for a few weeks. This went on for three years and as the big teamster grew more accustomed to the situation he degenerated rapidly. He jealously guarded his authority at home, becoming very talkative and important before strangers.

His wife accepted the situation uncomplainingly for four years. Then in the spring she had to go to bed with a bad cold which the doctor thought "might get better if she took

care of herself." But immediately she got up again to do her family washing "because she couldn't stand seeing things around any longer."

As long as his mother lived, Martin had shared in the care of his little crippled brother. But after Mrs. Crooks' death, Eddie had to be sent to a "home." Then only the two Martins, father and son, were left, of what had once been a family of seven. The teamster is abroad all day and the little boy is left to spend his affections on the neighbors' children. He has been taken in hand by his school as a decided "malnutrition case" and is fed with milk and eggs several times during the day in addition to the school lunch. But the chances are that he will never grow to manhood.

How Mrs. Westrich Earned $11 a Week

When Mrs. Westrich went to work as an usher at the Jefferson Theater, she gave her name as "Miss Julia Westrich." She was a handsome, dark-browed woman, not much past thirty, who was always on time at her work and invariably presented the trim, smart appearance required of women ushers when on duty. The jaunty frilled apron, which was a feature of the uniform, and the equally jaunty crown of imitation curls which she wore helped to give her a youthful look in spite of her stern, unsmiling expression. She had very little to say, and soon gained a reputation among her fellow-workers for "minding her own business," which recommended her strongly to the work people on the premises.

There was one thing about "Miss Julia Westrich" which might have betrayed her to the other young lady ushers if the latter had been the least observant. That was the condition of her hands. "You'd think they'd give me away, wouldn't you?" Mrs. Westrich would say to a friend in her own kitchen, holding out her hands which bore the marks of the hardest kind of domestic labor.

Their condition was partly the result of the cooking, wash-

ing, and scrubbing they had done for her own family, partly of the coarse charring by the day they had done in other people's houses, but mainly of the second occupation which Mrs. Westrich was carrying. Besides her work at the theater, she was employed as cook for the saloon on the ground floor of her tenement. Her job was to prepare the "business men's lunch" served at noon and to get a "pan of beans" ready for the evening trade. The saloon was one of the more decent sort, and the proprietor a sober German who had befriended Mrs. Westrich in other ways besides giving her a job. He rented a small apartment on the second floor as a kitchen. Here Mrs. Westrich spent her mornings frying fish, boiling potatoes, washing dishes, keeping up the fire in the range—in short, doing all the work of cook and scullery maid incidental to preparing large quantities of food in a poorly equipped tenement kitchen. Mrs. Westrich often said that the work was "too laborious" and she thought she could better herself if she could "get time to look around."

But there was certainly little time left for looking around after she had done both her daily jobs. From 7 p. m. to 11 p. m. every evening, she must be at the theater. Then there were two or more matinée afternoons in the week when she was on duty from 1 p. m. to 5 p. m. Her cook's job occupied her every morning from 8 a. m. until 12. And after putting in a week of never less than fifty-six hours of wage-earning, she had her own flat to keep on the third floor of the tenement and three children to care for.

Her work at the theater paid $5.00 a week and her cook's place $6.00 a week. The total weekly income of $11 thus pieced together was none too liberally adapted to support herself and three children under fourteen. Part of the time it had supported a family of five. When she first began working as cook and as usher, her husband was still living at home, but drinking heavily and earning almost nothing. But one day he attacked his wife in a drunken frenzy and stabbed her, so that he was sent to prison for a term of two years.

Mrs. Westrich was soon about her work again, bearing six cruel scars across her shoulder and back. She had lost time from her work and had accumulated a doctor's bill of $25. A less indomitable nature would have appealed to charity. Indeed, offers of help came to her, but she refused them. In less than four months after her husband was sent to prison, she had paid the doctor's bill and had "caught up."

The cost of so much determination is to be found in the atmosphere of the Westrich home. The children do not measure up to their mother's standards, and she deals out reproaches freely. "Jessie learns to cook in the cooking school, but she don't cook up a cup of coffee at home." Jessie for her part is a vivid young person determined to have a good time. She takes every occasion to escape the depressing friction of her home and it is fortunate for her and her mother that an active, socialized church is waiting nearby with its girls' clubs to receive her.

CONCLUDING NOTE

Our study of this group of 370 West Side women completed, we cannot do better than recur to the questions which were uppermost in the minds of the workers when the investigation was begun. Why were these women wage-earners? How many of them worked because they must and how many for other reasons? There was one inevitable conclusion which resulted from the analysis of economic conditions in their homes. It was that not one of the mothers could afford not to earn. They had become wage-earners in obedience to the most primitive of maternal instincts. Their children would have suffered seriously had they failed or refused to earn. Small as were the

wages of their unskilled occupations, the amount, as we have seen, played an important part in a family budget correspondingly small. Moreover, they were found to be doing all their own housework before and after their wage-earning hours, instead of paying others to do it for them. By overworking themselves they made their earnings clear gain for their families.

Finally, it may be asked to what extent is the West Side mother of more than local significance. Is she, or is she not, a part of a much larger trend? When we consider the tremendous increase in recent years of the number of girls and unmarried women at work, we can scarcely doubt that the wife and mother has also felt the influence of the current. The swift translation of women from the home to the field of commercial employment is being felt in varying degrees by women everywhere. The compulsion to earn which the West Side mother has felt and obeyed is a far-reaching and significant one. It presents a problem of vital importance which demands the best efforts of social welfare workers for its solution.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX

CARDS AND OUTLINES USED IN INVESTIGATIONS

THE cards and outlines used in the study of families and individuals are here given to show the method of investigation followed. The first card, No. 1, was filled out with the facts regarding nationality, religion, housing, composition of family, occupation, and wages of working members. This card bore the date of the first visit and represented the condition of the family on that particular day. It was thus a sort of cross-section of the family history.

It was soon found, however, that personal characteristics and aptitudes did not lend themselves to being recorded by checks and signs on the usual statistical cards. Hence outlines (A and B) were used for a fuller narrative statement of family and individual histories. These classified narratives contained a statement of the previous social history of the family and such other facts as budget health and family morale.

The family record was filled out in practically every case. The individual record was made out only for the person whose history was at that time under consideration in connection with a particular inquiry. For the young wage-earners of the family a special industrial card (No. 2) was used.

Card No. 1

1911 **Approach** **Address** **Name**

F. Yrs. Married

Birthplace Nationality Yrs in U.S. In N.Y. In Dist Religion and Church Lang. of Home

M.

Tent: No. Stories Ap'ts to Fl. No. Rooms No. Dark No. Illegally Dark Rent

Members Household	Name	Age	Employer			Kind of Work or School & Grade	Full Week's Earnings	Contribution to Family	Cas or Wks Unemplyd Past Year	Insurance	Social Agency
			Name	Nature of Business	Address						

Card No. 2

Date of Birth **Address** **Name**

School
Name | Age & Grade at Leaving | Age, beginning work | Empl. Certif. obtained

Night School
Name | Time Attended | Elem. or High

Business or Trade Training

No.	Dates	Yrs. and mos. empl.	Name of School / Employer: Name	Employer: Address	Length of Training / Nature of Business	Courses Taken: Kind of Work.	Weekly Earnings	Hours Daily	Hours Saturday	Overtime

OUTLINE FOR HOME VISITING

A. FAMILY HISTORY:

1. *Social History of Family:*
   - Such items as reasons for moving to district.
   - Length of marriage, divorce, desertion, and irregular relations.
   - Deaths and misfortunes and their effects.
   - Criminal record of any member of family.
   - Affiliations with church, Sunday school, club, lodge, political party, benefit society, union, settlement, relief agency, or day nursery.

2. *Budget:*
   - Explanations and additions to face card items as to length of employment, interruptions to or temporary nature of employment, for chief wage-earners.
   - Other sources of income.
   - Insurance, savings.
   - Estimate income for year and indicate position of family according to Chapin standard.

3. *Health:*
   - Indications of tuberculosis, insanity, imbecility, alcoholism.
   - Medical care.

4. *Housing:*
   - Type, lighting, state of repair.
   - Arrangement of rooms and description of each room seen as to its light, order, cleanliness, and furnishings.
   - Insanitary features.

5. *Atmosphere of Home:*
   - General character of parents and other members of household.
   - Discipline in home, plans and ambitions for children (attitude toward schooling and occupation).
   - Good and bad influences in home.
   - Degree of assimilation in foreign-born families.

B. INDIVIDUAL HISTORY:

1. *Personal Characteristics:*
   Peculiarities and aptitudes; home relations (A-5 as applied to individual).

2. *Health:*
   Diseases, defects from birth, curvature, muscular nervousness, defective vision and teeth, anemia, nose breathing, mental defectiveness, skin eruptions, frequency of minor illnesses, strength and endurance, smoking.

   Treatment:
   Visits by school nurse, clinics, and so forth.

3. *Education:*
   Day nursery, kindergarten, or schools attended, age of entering, length of time attended, grade, standing, attendance, and age at leaving school. Manual or trade training. Value of educational influences. Child's attitude toward school, kindergarten, or day nursery.

4. *Recreation and Leisure* (that is, hours after school or after regular occupation):
   Companions, gangs.
   Street amusements: games, railroads, and wharves.
   Directed play: playgrounds, school athletics, settlement clubs, and so forth.
   Commercial agencies: theaters, dance halls, candy stores, and so forth.

5. *Industrial History:*
   a. First occupation, process, position, how secured, how long held, reason for changing. Same data for each subsequent position. Note advance and increasing efficiency or stationary value of labor. Effect on health, accidents. Industrial ambition and ideas of advancement.

b. Present occupation. Hours of work. Opening hour, closing hour, length of meal times. Variations in hours on different days of the week, if any. Sunday work. Overtime: days, week. Regularity of work, slack and busy seasons. Period of unemployment. Irregular employment.

Wages: System of payment, time or piece, piece rates. Total weekly earnings—minimum and maximum—for slack, busy, and normal seasons. Overtime pay: rate in relation to regular rate of pay. Provision of meals during busy season. Bonuses. System of opportuning. Any other method of adding to wages. Holidays with or without pay. Vacation with pay, if any.

c. Housekeeping: sewing, cooking, cleaning, washing, ironing.

To have filled out all the above cards and outlines after a single visit would obviously have been impossible. Our records were the result of a personal acquaintance that extended over a considerable period of time, often many months, and sometimes a year or more.

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