WILEY

Review

Author(s): B. L. H.

Review by: B. L. H.

Source: *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society*, Vol. 70, No. 2 (Jun., 1907), pp. 346-347

Published by: Wiley for the Royal Statistical Society

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2339676>

Accessed: 27-06-2016 09:45 UTC

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of the Terms & Conditions of Use, available at

<http://about.jstor.org/terms>

JSTOR is a not-for-profit service that helps scholars, researchers, and students discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content in a trusted digital archive. We use information technology and tools to increase productivity and facilitate new forms of scholarship. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

Wiley, Royal Statistical Society are collaborating with JSTOR to digitize, preserve and extend access to *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society*

10.—*Child Labor in the United States.* No. 69 of the Bulletin of the Labor Department of the U.S.A. Census Bureau, Washington, 1907.

Not only literature and pamphlets of a kind dubbed “sensational,” but the reports of scientific academies have recently shown that the conditions under which children are employed for money in the United States constitute a serious peril for the future of society in that great nation. The Census Bureau was therefore requested to compile a statistical account of the extent of child-employment and its distribution according to age, sex, and occupation. The report shows that 1,750,000 children between 10 and 15 years were returned at the twelfth census as having a gainful occupation. It is not, however, to be supposed that these are all working in factory, mine or sweat-shop, for 1,060,000 are engaged in agricultural pursuits, two-thirds of the total child-breadwinners being employed on the farm, and most of these children being members of farmers’ families. It is also pointed out, as some qualification of the evil, that when grouped according to age, the percentage of children occupied is highest in the higher ages, being only 8·1 at 10 years old, and 31·6 at 15. Almost one-third of the child-workers are thus 15 years old, and more than one-half are 14 or 15. Of the younger children, aged 10 to 13 years, 186,000 are engaged in occupations other than agricultural, very nearly the same number, by the way, as the workers aged 10 and under 14 in England and Wales. (*Labour Abstract*, 1902-04, p. 208.) The difference in the distribution according to occupation in the two countries is worth notice. Textiles occupy in the United States 27,000 children under 14, about half the number so employed in England. On the other hand, it is somewhat surprising to find nearly 50,000 servants, waiters and waitresses of that age-group in the States as against 25,000 here (p. 8.)

A very interesting table on p. 11 shows the percentage of bread-winning children of different races:—

Percentages of Children, 10 to 15, who are Breadwinners.

	All Occupations.	Agricultural	All Others.
Native white, both parents native	15·1	10·2	4·9
” one or both parents foreign-born	12·4	3·2	9·2
Foreign-born white	24·8	2·9	21·9
Negro	40·0	31·5	8·5

As might be expected, the highest percentage occurs among the negro race, and the foreign-born white children, being mostly those of immigrant alien families, with a standard of life lower than the white natives’, but higher than the negroes’, occupy an intermediate position. The families in which the parents are native Americans no doubt represent a higher level of prosperity than the immigrants. There is a slight apparent discrepancy between this theory and the above figures, which show that the native white children of native

parents are relatively more numerously occupied than those of families more recently arrived, in which the children, but not the parents, or not both parents, are native born. The explanation given is (p. 12) that the immigrant population is almost exclusively urban, while the native population is largely rural and agricultural. In the industrial occupations chiefly carried on in cities, in which the objection to child labour is greatest, the percentage occupied is lowest among the families which have been longest settled in America and presumably attained a higher social level than have the more recent arrivals. When we come to consider the manufacturing industries in greater detail, it appears that, "to a greater extent than any other manufacturing or mechanical industry, the cotton mill furnishes employment to children" (p. 42). Some of the evil effects of child labour are strikingly illustrated by the fact also brought out, (p. 39), that the greatest degree of illiteracy is that which is shown for the children in cotton mills. In the Northern States, in most of which there is some degree of State inspection and control of factories, both the number and percentage of children in cotton mills is, as might be expected, less than in the South, where industry is still mostly unregulated, and in some districts disgraced by terrible abuses of long hours and insanitary conditions of work. It is significant in this connection to note that the greater number and proportion of children employed is associated with a smaller total of workers.

Cotton Operatives.

	All Over 10.	10 to 15 Years.	
		Number.	Per Cent.
United States of America	246,391	44,427	18.0
Northern and Western States	147,724	16,404	11.1
Southern States.....	96,467	28,023	29.0

Mr. North appears to have proved his case that child-employment in injurious and exhausting occupations is relatively of less extent than was supposed. There are, however, among children under 14, besides textile-workers, 1,400 glass-workers, 49,000 labourers not specified, nearly 10,000 messengers (an occupation known to be very demoralising and exhausting for children), nearly 2,500 metal-workers, and 9,000 miners. The numbers are considerable enough to constitute a serious problem in the absence of effective control and inspection by some external authority. B.L.H.

11.—*Life and Labour in Germany.* With an Appendix: *Infirmity and Old Age Pensions in Germany.* Reports of the Gainsborough Commission. London: Simpkin, Marshall, Hamilton, Kent and Co., 1907. Price 2s. net.

It appears that Germany is behind England at any rate in one respect, that is, in the official study of wages, hours of labour,