The use of facilities for recreation, especially by the classes that work longest hours and most need them, would be tremendously increased, with results in health and physical stamina which would redound to the advantage of the whole community. There would be great benefits, too, from the increased opportunities for use of means of education, direct and indirect, which in recent years have been greatly augmented for the period after the workday has closed.

The social life of the nation, too, would benefit. The hours for companionship among members of families would have greater value, and there would be more opportunity for cultivation of all the useful and desirable activities and interests which engage our attention outside our vocations.

From such benefits as these economic advantages inevitably flow. Improved physical health and social welfare will increase the efficiency of every individual at his daily tasks. Furthermore, there would be large direct savings in expenditures for fuel and artificial light."

In order that victory over Germany may be assured to us and our Allies, it is highly desirable that we should co-operate with them in every possible way. The "Daylight Saving" plan is in operation in every country of the Allies. Our standards and methods of reckoning time should be uniform and in harmony with theirs.

The plan is no longer an experiment. It has fully demonstrated all and more than its original advocates predicted for it. It has no disadvantages or objections of any weight. It has been endorsed in this country not only by the United States Chamber of Commerce, the American Federation of Labor, but by hundreds of the leading chambers of commerce and boards of trade, including the Merchants association of New York city.

In the present emergency, it is now up to congress to hurry its passage, with the knowledge that President Wilson who has endorsed it will give his executive approval.

THE LABORER'S HIRE

BY NEVA R. DEARDORFF, PH.D.¹

Philadelphia

"A STANDARD of living consistent with American ideas"—how often we have heard the phrase and how seldom we have been given a clear concept of just what it means! In political speeches it is usually synonymous with the equally vague phrase "a full dinner-pail"; to a few it suggests an environment which is conducive to right thinking on the questions which come before the body politic for decision. These latter believe that somehow the fate of democracy is tied up with our ability to maintain such social and economic conditions

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as will make it possible for each family unit to have at least a little more than a mere physical existence. Stated in another form, this proposition resolves itself into the question of what the unskilled laborer shall be paid and how he shall be compelled to live. This class of wage earners is the key to the situation because it is the lowest paid group and because its numerical strength gives into its keeping the future of our political institutions. The superior claims of "this land of opportunity" mean very little unless the opportunities extend all the way down to the laborer's family, and the most important element contributing to such equality of opportunity is the standard of living in which the child is raised.

THE ABSOLUTE NECESSARIES OF LIFE

Two recent publications are highly stimulating to the thinking on this subject. "The Minimum Cost of Living: A Study of Families of Limited Income in New York city," by Winifred Stuart Gibbs² is the story of an attempt to teach seventy-five actual families how to spend effectively. Every one of the families had suffered some degree of ill health on account of insufficient income. Scientific minimum standards of the necessities of life were set up for each family and careful plans were made to use the available income to maintain these standards. Much patient, devoted teaching was, of course, necessary. The conservative estimate of results attained is most encouraging. The world very much needs to develop efficiency in consumption.

These minimum standards, particularly of food and clothing, will doubtless be of much assistance to those who are in charge of relief work, especially as they are expressed in commodities, calories, garments, etc., as well as in dollars and cents which are so delusive these days. The encouragement to the teaching of home economics and the advice as to how to go about it, are most valuable. These standards are not, however, to be taken by employers as "consistent with American ideas." As the author points out, they were devised to bring health and animal comfort out of under-nourishment and ill health and to serve as guides in the teaching of the first principles of home economics.

In referring to these accounts one has to bear in mind that in a sense they are incomplete for in addition to the goods purchased there were gifts of clothing, the value of which is not recorded and in some cases free rent in return for janitorial services. A better picture would perhaps have been presented if the estimated value of these things could have been included. Naturally there was no margin for the pursuit of happiness, nothing, other than the variety of the food, to mark this standard as "consistent with American ideas" which, it may be assumed, are differentiated in some way from the ideas of other occidental countries.

² New York: The Macmillan Company. \$1.

REMUNERATION FOR LABOR AND THE COST OF LIVING

The second study goes much farther. The "Report on the Increased Cost of Living for an Unskilled Laborer's Family in New York City," prepared by the bureau of personal service of the board of estimate and apportionment of New York, not only sets forth facts about living costs but also makes definite recommendations to New York city as to what it should pay its unskilled laborers. The findings in brief are: That in 1917, \$980 per year is the minimum amount upon which a workingman's family of five can maintain "a standard of living consistent with American ideas." Then, on the basis of this investigation, the *maximum* rate of pay recommended for street sweepers is fixed at \$888! It was originally recommended in 1915 that the minimum cost of living for a family of two adults and three children—then \$840—be made the maximum rate of pay for an unskilled laborer who had completed at least seven years of "meritorious service." He was to begin at \$720 when, it was assumed, his expenses would be lighter. The recent condition of the labor market has forced a revision of this scheme. It has become necessary to move the minimum rate up to \$792 and it will probably go higher. This may cut down somewhat the period of waiting for the maximum rate.

But let us return to the minimum standard of living "consistent with American ideas." The \$980 for a family of five represents a total of items every one of which has been cut to the bone, \$14 per month rent, \$9.47 per week for food, \$127.10 per year for the family's clothing, \$42 for light, heat and fuel for cooking, \$20 per year for health, \$22.88 for insurance and \$73 for sundries. This last item includes \$18 for furniture, equipment and moving expenses, \$5 for church contributions, \$5 for soap, washing and toilet materials, stamps, umbrellas and other miscellaneous items, \$5 for reading material, that is, a one-cent daily paper "with a Sunday paper almost every week" or for thirty-seven weeks, to be exact. The remaining \$40 is intended to cover recreation—vacations, occasional trips to the beach, refreshments, moving picture shows, miscellaneous amusements, Christmas and birthday presents, and anything else not provided for above. This item for sundries compares very unfavorably with Father Ryan's estimate made in 1906 of \$131.73 for the same group of expenditures. In fact, the more one examines this standard in detail, the more meager it looks; the weekly allowance of sweets, for instance, for the family of five, consists of one and three-quarters pounds of sugar, two cents' worth of syrup and two pounds of cake. A dozen jars of fruit conserve would wreck the schedule. One pound of butter has to stretch over at least 80 meals for cooking and table purposes, no other fats—other than that in the milk—are allowed. One looks in vain for ice; one feels dubious about ten cents a week for washing, toilet and cleaning supplies for five people, not to mention stamps, umbrellas and miscellaneous items.

The whole standard shows a strong tendency to overwork the scientific minimum. The housing allowance illustrates this better, perhaps, than any other single item. The strictly scientific calculation of one and one-half persons to a room is adopted. But as five people cannot be easily distributed on this basis, the laborer is given a choice of three or four rooms. He will probably be compelled to rent a flat without a bath. In that case he will have a kitchen and three rooms or a kitchen and two rooms. In the first case he cannot have a living-room without sacrificing a needed bedroom, and in the second case, even without a living-room, the conditions under which the family would have to live are below the requirements for decency. One gets a vivid picture of the laborer's home from the following description submitted by the Consolidated gas company of New York which furnished data for the fuel budget:

"Families of this class usually occupy what are known as cold water tenements, in which neither heat nor hot water is furnished by the landlord. The kitchen is the general living-room for the family, and in cold weather a wood or coal stove is used, for it not only supplies heat for cooking, but it heats the kitchen as well, and so provides at least one heated room in which the members of the family may be comfortable. The cost of coal, however, when purchased in the small quantities which these people are compelled by circumstances to buy (the bag or bucketful), makes its use desirable only when the weather requires the additional heating of the room, and at other times it is believed that the small gas stove or hot-plate is used altogether for cooking and for such small quantities of hot water as are required."

The "small quantities of hot water," the short allowance for soap and cleaning materials, the one heated room, the absence of a bath tub, the two suits of underwear allowed the man, all conspire to give one the impression that frequent bathing will not be practised by the standard family. On this point the Bureau of personal service seems to have run foul of what *is* and lost sight of what *should be*. After this description one has difficulty in conjuring up a mental picture of a sweet, clean little home for our laborer. Rather do we see him toiling up four flights of stairs, to his kitchen, reeking with mingled odors of cooking food and wet clothes, to the prison-like confinement of the entire family to one room, to a home without privacy and without repose. And yet who would be willing to say, out loud, that seven years of "meritorious" service is not worthy of more than that.

We do not wish to question that this budget would keep the breath of life in the bodies of the laborer and his dependents, but we do question the appropriateness of describing this allowance as a standard of living "consistent with American ideas" and the corporation, whether public or private, which pays such wages as a "model employer." The standard of \$980 as here established for a workingman's family is a mere animal standard of existence; for the \$50 for the expenditures which differentiate

human beings from animals is only a reasonable margin for the animal needs.

NEW YORK'S INVESTIGATION HELPS THE LABORER, THOUGH INDIRECTLY

How the laborer is to get along on ninety-two dollars a year less than the ascertained minimum is a problem which the bureau of personal service passes on to the laborer with the optimistic prophecy that the various governmental agencies and committees now at work on the problem of high cost of living "will probably bring about considerable reduction in prices and will relieve the scarcity of certain products." Just now, four months later, the outlook is by no means bright.

But the importance of this report must not be minimized on account of its seeming lack of humanity towards the unskilled laborer. Nothing could be of more service to workingmen in general than just this kind of detailed study. Nothing could bring home better to those responsible for public policy in this country the glaring fact that we are trying to have a democracy which presupposes intelligence in a group composed of units, some of whom can be intelligent and informed human beings but to most of whom life means little more than it means to savages—a struggle to satisfy the primal physical needs. Are we not child-like to be surprised at not getting entirely satisfactory results from our mixture of the oil of democratic institutions with the water of the existing economic order?

EXPERTS, ETHICS AND PUBLIC POLICY IN PUBLIC UTILITIES

BY DELOS F. WILCOX

New York City

I SHALL write about conscience, patriotism, professional honor, the main chance, and other curious and interesting subjects. Having thrown prudence to the winds, I shall ignore the danger of being called a traitor to my "class." Poor blind Samson, having taken his fling and lost his illusions, pushed away the props and brought the pagan temple down about his own ears. I cannot lay claim to Samson's length of hair, his strength or the richness of his experience in this naughty Philistine world. But here goes with my puny pen, such as it is, and let all whom it may concern take heed!

WHEN PUBLIC OFFICIALS SERVED PRIVATE INTERESTS

Certain men do certain things for money that make other people remark. Is it not true that every wave of radicalism, local or general, in this country has its origin in a sense of outrage that brains, education and