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to their professional work, and sarcastically remarks that, in spite of all this, women are still called the "sexe faible." C. OSBORN

THE HAND-WORKING AND DOMESTIC INDUSTRIES IN GERMANY

THE principal article in the May Number of *The United States Bulletin of Labour* is a detailed account by Mr. Henry J. Harris, Ph.D., of the "Present condition of the Hand-working and Domestic Industries in Germany," based on several valuable statistical publications dealing with the subject, which have been issued in that country in recent years.

In Germany, as in many other countries, the narrowing of the sphere of the working man's activity, owing to the growth of the factory system and the specialisation of labour which it entails, has led to a desire to preserve and cultivate the system of household or shop production, which was formerly the prevailing type of industrial life. The investigations with which Dr. Harris deals have largely been undertaken with this end in view. The two questions to which his article endeavours to give an answer are first, to what extent the small system of industry still survives, and second, what is its power of competition with the rival system of production on a large scale. The consideration of the interesting moral questions involved, and of the possible effect of the two systems on the character of the worker, does not come within the scope of the article.

An important point to bear in mind, when studying industrial conditions in Germany, is the very late date at which that country attained complete freedom from the old mediæval restraints. At the close of the Napoleonic period all production was practically in the hands of the handicraft or artisan class, organised in guilds; but with the restoration of peace and the consequent revival of industrial activity, there was a steady movement for the abolition of the guild restrictions, though it was not till the end of the sixties that complete industrial freedom was attained. A chief factor in the development of the factory system was the improvement in the means of communication, but the transition to the newer form of production has been so recent that many signs of the older methods are to be found in the factories themselves, while the small system of production still holds its own to a very remarkable degree.

By the term "hand-work production," is understood that type in which the producer himself is the possessor of the means of production, in which he produces for a definite market or known body of consumers, and in which there is but slight use of machinery. The term has been roughly used to include such small shops or establishments where not more than 5 persons are employed, while establishments where not more than 50 persons are employed are classed as small factories.

Following this classification, the first group (those employed in establishments with not over 5 persons) contains 2,733,377 persons, or 34 per cent. of the industrial population; the second group (those employed in establishments with 6 to 50 persons) contains 1,902,049, persons, or 24 per cent.; the third group (those employed in establishments with over 50 persons) contains 2,907,329 persons, or 36 per cent. It should be added that these figures relate only to that portion of the population engaged in manufactures and other industries, mining and building, and are exclusive of those engaged in agriculture, fishing, trade and transportation.

The strength of the hand-producer is in the clothing and cleaning trades, where 68 per cent. of the persons engaged are in hand-work establishments. This group includes many of the industries which provide chiefly for local consumers, such as tailoring, garment-making of all kinds, shoemaking, hairdressing, and laundry work. Other groups, where the hand producer is numerous, are the artistic trades, including painters, engravers, and designers, where individual taste and skill are important factors, and the group of food and drink trades, composed mainly of butchers, bakers, and producers of perishable goods; in three other groups, wood and cut materials, leather, and metal industries, the small producer, though he still numbers over 40 per cent. of the persons engaged, is carrying on a very severe struggle with factory production, as is shown by a comparison between the statistics for 1895 and those for 1882. There is hardly any area in which factory competition has not made itself felt; at the same time the competition presents itself in different ways. Thus, in such trades as watchmaking and nailmaking, the factory system is leading to the absolute disappearance of the small producer; but in such a trade as shoemaking, the factory has taken the market for machine-made shoes, and also a share in the production of hand-made shoes, parts of which are generally bought from the factory by the small producer himself. In the thirteen years between the two census dates, there has been a decrease of 13·3 per cent. in the number of one-person hand-working establishments, but naturally this sort of establishment must be the very weakest productive unit in competition with capitalistic forms of production. The percentage of persons employed in establishments, where the employees do not exceed 5, has fallen from 47 per cent. in 1832 to 34 per cent. in 1895, but the absolute decrease in the numbers of this class has been only 2·2 per cent. Consequently, although certainly decreasing in strength as a factor in production, it can hardly be said that the hand-worker shows any signs of rapid extinction.

It has been hoped that the possibility of using motor-power on a small scale would lead to a strengthening of the hand-working class. This hope has hardly been justified. Although great progress has been made in the last ten years in the manufacture of small motors at a reasonable cost, yet hardly 1 per cent. of the small establishments, in the trades where small establishments abound, have made any use of

them. The truth is that a motor alone is of little service: it is only useful as part of a whole series of labour-saving tools and machines which are quite beyond the reach of the small producer. Thus a shoemaker may succeed in securing his sewing machine and motor, but, unless he can provide cutting and soleing machines, he gains little from the others.

The intervention of the State has also been called for on behalf of the hand-worker, and the imperial law of 1897 had for its object the formation of trade associations, and of "chambers of hand-work," the regulation of the apprentice system, and the control of the title of master. The law can be adopted and compulsory associations formed on the petition of the majority of the hand-workers in an industry, or district, but as it only came into force in 1898, no reliable data as to its effects are yet available.

In summing up, Dr. Harris decides that the conclusion that the hand-producer is doomed to extinction is unfounded. There are many tasks in modern industry which he is necessarily unable to perform, such as the building of an ocean steamer or a locomotive. Further, in the production of goods which are capable of being delivered ready for use and can be easily classified into certain types, he is sure to be driven out sooner or later, except from the field of retailing and repairing; but, on the other hand, where articles must be taken from limited localities on account of the danger of decay or deterioration in quality, or where individual taste is important, there he may hope to compete more or less successfully with capitalistic forms of industry.

In the closing part of his article, Dr. Harris deals with another branch of the small system of production, the house-working or domestic system, equivalent to the "home-work" system in England. The personal contact between the consumer and producer, which is the distinguishing feature of "hand-production," is here absent. The undertaker or manager under this system possesses capital and a knowledge of market conditions; he employs labourers who work in their own houses, and he himself is frequently only the intermediary who brings the commodities within reach of the consumer. In many industries, particularly the clothing trade, the undertaker is thus enabled to shift the whole burden of production upon the labourer, who has to supply the place where the work is carried on, to furnish whatever machinery is required, to provide light and heat, and to fulfil any State regulations as to conditions of labour that may be in force. The undertaker need invest no capital in fixed forms, such as machinery or buildings, and need not provide for depreciation, interest, or repairs, and can stop his expenses at any moment by ceasing production. Further, under the domestic system, he generally has the advantage of dealing with his labourers individually and not in organisations. In short, in many industries, the system has become almost synonymous with overwork, underpay, and all the attendant evils, summed up by the term "sweating." The labourer's personal

freedom from factory regulations generally means nothing but a necessity to work longer hours. Such a system, is, of course, only applicable to industries where little machinery is used, where the products can be transported easily, and where women's labour is valuable.

The figures with regard to the number of workers employed in this way are not very complete or trustworthy ; but, so far as can be ascertained, in 1895 the number was 437,748, or 5·7 per cent. of the industrial population, while in 1882 the number was 476,075, or 8 per cent. of the industrial population. The largest number of these workers are employed in the textile, and the clothing and cleaning trades, but since 1882 there has been absolute decrease in the number engaged in the former group of close on 90,000, while in the latter group there has been a considerable increase in the number of workers. The geographical distribution of the domestic industries is interesting. They follow the mountains so closely that there is no range in Central Germany which does not possess some trade of this kind, weaving, clock-making, toy-making, lace-making and embroidery, and so on. Where the textile industry has been driven out, other industries have generally been substituted. On the other hand, while in the villages and in the towns generally, there has been a decrease in the number of domestic workers, in the large cities there has been a slight increase.

The evils connected with the domestic system of industry, more particularly in the cities, have led to a demand for its entire abolition ; but there is, perhaps, no type of production in which the conditions of work are less uniform. In the clothing trades the cheapness of the workers is generally their only recommendation, but even in this branch workers with skill and taste are able to compete successfully ; while in other trades, workers are to be found on every plane of efficiency and independency, up to the musical instrument makers of Saxony and the cutlers of Solingen. Further, in thinly populated areas, such as the mountain districts, where the industries generally form a subsidiary source of income, they seem likely to hold their own for many years to come ; and the complete absorption either of the hand-production or the domestic working industries in the factory, if it ever takes place, is, in Dr. Harris' opinion, certainly very far distant. C. OSBORN

THE ECONOMIC LEGISLATION OF 1902.

THE list of legislative enactments is not a long one. To take matters of imperial concern first ; by the Finance Act (2 Edward VII., c. 7) duties of 3*d.* a cwt. are imposed on wheat and other cereals, and 1½*d.* per cwt. on maize and any offals which are feeding stuffs. Income tax is charged at 1*s.* 3*d.*, and additional