

IX - Women in Industry - 3 Hours, pay and insurance

IX-3 Leon Abensour Les Vaillants 113, 114.

"Women have demonstrated that on economic questions their advice is not superfluous.

.....Largely through their efforts they have obtained from the military government of Paris a minimum wage of .55 fr. plus .60 fr. "par unite" for the underdrawers and undershirts ordered. It is largely through their indefatigable and persistent action in government circles that the laws promulgated May 22 and July 10 1915 realized the reform so long awaited -- a minimum wage for women doing their piece work at home.It required the persistent action of women-and the war -- to bring about this reform needed for three quarters of a century.

HN

IX-3 See Vorwärts, March 17 1915 - Long article on proposed scale of wages for men and women engaged in making shoes for the civil population. in IV-6

Leon Abensour
Les Vaillantes, p. 114.

Laws of May 22 and July 10, 1915 establish a minimum price for work done at home. Price is agreed upon by Councils or Committees composed of an equal number of employers and employees.

The Feministes of France wish to substitute an ideal of unity of interest instead of charity in social relations.

I.S.

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The Ida M. Taylor Collection, 1890-1944, Allegheny College Pelee Library

IX Women in Industry 3 Hours, pay, insurance

London Telegraph. December 20, 1917.

Lord d'Abernon, Chairman of the Central Control Board, Liquor Traffic, in an address at the Royal Institute of Public Health, gave ~~much~~ important evidence on the relation of the economic situation of women to the drink problem that I think you will agree with me that it should get to our people:-

Since the war the wages received by female manual workers have increased about two hundred million pounds sterling (not counting separation allowances to dependants) Up to the war, the purchasing power of labor had had a definite relation to the amount of drunkenness, but now, instead of increased drunkenness of women to correspond to this tremendous increase in their purchasing power, there had been a decline of 73% in drunkenness of women, since the war. This was not only in public drunkenness, but could be proved by hospital records, etc. to cover home use of alcohol as well. The Board had organized 250 canteens, and the ability to get there well-cooked meals at reasonable prices had had a great effect on women accustomed to bring cold food from home, or eat in uncomfortable eating-houses of the lower class. Where they were comfortable and in good company they did not want to drink.

He showed a chart that gave the statistics of proceedings against women for drunkenness in the fifty years 1867-1917: starting at 25,497, they rose to 49,625 in 1876, fell to 37,971 in 1886, rose to highwater mark in 1903, 53,303, fell again in 1910 to 36,497. In 1914 before the war it had risen to 44,304. Since then there has been a rapid decline to 38,825 in 1915, 24,913 in 1916, and in 1917, down to the seventh of October the figures were down to 1,481! During this fall from 1903 the feminine population increased nearly two millions. He said that occupation, steady wages, and an independent self-supporting career had developed the best qualities in women, had increased her self-respect and her self-control, and had been profoundly beneficial to the community. He was sure that England would not allow this to lapse into pre-war conditions.

Lady Frances Balfour said that for the first time in industrial history women were being paid a fair or a living wage. They were not yet being paid what they should be - equal wages for equal work - people would not swallow that yet - but it was coming. Women were feeding themselves better, and while some people were much exercised over their spending money for silk stockings etc. she was not at all worried for it was at least evidence of a higher ideal, than spending it on drink.

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M L B

Germania

February 23, 1918.

Large meeting of telegraph and telephone operators on Feb. 16th to consider demands for higher wages owing to increased cost of living. Present wages not enough to buy food and clothing for daily needs. Made representations to the State secretary in November and two in January, but as yet have received no answer.

HN

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 See London Telegraph Oct. 4 1917 - Meeting National
 Council of Women of Great Britain & Ireland
 - in XII - 5

Les Vaillantes, p. 114.

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The Labor Section of the Nation Council formed a Union for
 the organization of work. Twenty-one Societies became auxiliaries
 The Minister of War placed the Army orders in the work shops that
 were founded. The allowance for soldiers wives, barely enough
 in the country, was not enough in the cities. One of the sub-
 ordinate societies trained women for overseers in the work rooms.
 Profits for middle men were suppressed. The workers who
 formerly earned four cents a garment now earned eight cents.
 Some of the workers earned three fr. 50 to four francs a day.
 The conditions in the workrooms were good. Some work rooms were
 opened for untrained workers. One under the auspices of the Vie
 Feminine gave women of refinement without training 1 fr. 25 a day and
 a hot meal. In Paris work was found for 20,000 women where
 they could earn their daily bread.

Figaro, June 4.

Early in the summer
The midinettes have been on a strike-together with all the Parisian workwomen,--for some weeks, mainly on the question of hours, for which they want an "English Week". Their conduct has been something of a trial to the politeness of Parisian men, who said that they had expected that ladies who looked so pretty and wore such pretty flowers when they went to strike, would not have used language so far from pretty. However, the politeness seems to have stood the strain, mainly because the girls were really within their rights in their demands. The strike being settled, the girls were invited to a "pelerinage" at Notre Dame where the canon addressed them in a really fine and tactful speech, asking them to place their riches at the disposal of the country, and defining their riches as first of all their youth, with its wonderful power of believing in virtue and resisting injustice (he reminded them, demurely, how ready they had been to fight what they believed injustice to themselves!) and its inexhaustible vigor. Also they were rich in the gayety for which they have always been noted, and in its counterpart - the modesty that made them keep their tears until they were quite alone. All these riches he asked them to dedicate to their country, which they could serve by spreading this spirit abroad. It was a sermon that might be of use to any brave and bright young working girl in the warring countries.

IX - 3

Kölnische Zeitung Oct. 6, 1917

The Ministry of the Interior issues a remarkable confidential letter on the help of needy families. Perhaps certain administrative and relief agencies can revise their schedules. It seems that cases are not always sufficiently investigated. This must be done most thoroughly. First of all the question must be asked whether the war-women are in a position, through personal or family circumstances to secure and hold work for themselves. Half the amount earned must invariably be left free, both on account of the need caused by the rise in prices, and as a means of encouragement. The need for increased amounts must be decided according to individual circumstances. The Minister of the Interior has decided that the local relief organization is responsible for continued support.

M.N.

IX - 3 See London Post June 18 1918

"The women in English ship yards get now twice the pay that men had before the war."

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London Times, September 6.

Letter asks Mr. Churchill to permit all women in munition work to work but eight hours a day. Then if they can and want to work longer they may, but some women, especially of the classes unaccustomed to heavy lifting, are badly injured by overwork in a 10½ day when they would be all right in an 8 hour period with the resulting time for recuperation. Then they would not have to give up entirely this patriotic service.

Women in Industry - 3. Hours, pay, and insurance

Anne Rochester "Child Labor in Warring Countries - Children's Bureau 1917"

employed in industry in Germany

In Germany Practically all industrially employed women must be insured, ~~the~~ The returns of the sickness insurance funds ~~show that~~ *show that* ~~fairly accurate idea of the~~ *their numbers* ~~increased numbers in industry~~ *about 600,000* between February 1 1915 and September 1 of that same year. This appears to be ~~about 600,000~~ *of them were employed* 120,000 *only* in Greater Berlin. In the metal industry near Dusseldorf where 913 had been employed before the war ~~there~~ were 6928 doing such work by December 1914. Besides making munitions the German women are engaged in wire factories, "pottery" foundries where iron cooking pots are made, in blast furnaces, ~~and~~ coke ovens and steel and rolling mills. "Sozial Praxis" of Aug. 12 1915 tells about one specially strong woman ~~who worked~~ *as* stoker of a furnace. *German* This was only at the beginning of the call for woman's labor. Few papers and reports have reached this side of the ocean for two years, and it is impossible to estimate the ~~numbers~~ *of women* at present employed *general* *HV*

The Children's Bureau reports a tendency toward lengthening hours of work, including night work and Sunday work, and more or less unlimited over-time as a result of war. England, France, Italy, Germany, Austria (but not Hungary) Switzerland, Holland and Russia have all done something in this direction. In 1914 in Australian province Victoria slightly lengthened the amount of over-time permitted to women and girls. But Victoria's present limit for special over-time is shorter than that fixed in peace by European nations.

Since the war women and young persons have been employed in dangerous, injurious and heavy work formerly prohibited by law. Also certain laws passed but not yet in effect have been postponed. Among these are the decree limiting the hours of labor in iron and steel industries in Germany; regulations affecting night work for young persons, hours of labor for women, and the use of white phosphorus in Italy, and the Federal Factory act on Switzerland.

This same report calls attention to the fact that the labor standards of the belligerent nations of Europe were lower in peace times than those accepted in this country, while those of the British colonies that have maintained or even advanced their labor standards since the outbreak of war, are fairly comparable with the best in the progressive states. *used*