

DOES THE FACTORY INCREASE IMMORALITY?

THE entrance of woman into industries was assured when the factory system of labor displaced the hand system. Harriet Martineau, on her visit to America in 1840, found but seven employments open to woman—teaching, needle-work, keeping boarders, working in cotton-mills, type-setting, work in bookbinderies, and household service. To-day there are but few lines of remunerative employment not open to her. In Massachusetts—and the statistics in Massachusetts are indicative of conditions in all advanced States—of the 394,584 persons engaged in all the great industries in 1885, 112,762 were women and 281,822 men ; and the percentages of women engaged in different industries were as follows :

INDUSTRIES.	PER CENT OF ALL WORKERS.	INDUSTRIES.	PER CENT OF ALL WORKERS.
Federal employment.....	12.	Transportation.....	.29
Professional service.....	46.26	Agriculture.....	.53
Personal service.....	40.66	Fisheries.....	.09
Trade.....	11.09	Manufacture	28.58

The Federal Commissioner of Education states that of the whole number of public-school teachers in the United States 65.5 per cent, and in Massachusetts and New Hampshire more than 90 per cent, are women. These figures show how thoroughly woman has broken out of industrial subjection into a free field.

One of the most important questions that arises is, How has woman's moral and intellectual condition been changed by her new industrial environment? To my own mind this is an entirely one-sided question, although I am free to admit that my views have undergone something of a change as official investigation has progressed. That she is intellectually better off now, there is no question. The factory has taken the lowest orders and raised them to higher planes; that is to say, while the factory has simplified labor and thus enabled a comparatively ignorant class to perform the work, it has raised this comparatively ignorant class to a higher intellectual plane, while it cannot be shown that it has caused women of higher intellectual development to degenerate from their former standard.

In the Eastern States we have seen the gradual changes in fifty years of three nationalities of factory employees. The American girl, the daughter of the farmer in New England or the Middle States, was formerly found in the textile factories. She gave place to the English girl, and the English girl in turn to the Irish operative. The Irish operative has gradually given place to the French-Canadian, and many Swedes are now taking their places at the looms and before the spinning frames. But successively each has stepped up in the scale of civilization and in the improved conditions of her environment. Irish girls are now found in our great stores—bright, keen saleswomen. The daughters of scrubwomen, having received an education in our public schools, have become ambitious to occupy places that their mothers could not occupy. These facts prove emphatically the intellectual advantages which have surrounded woman, while in the higher lines of work the opening of universities and colleges and the higher institutions of learning has enabled her to become equipped for the best professional employment. The number of colleges and other institutions to which woman has access to-day in this country alone strongly supports this position. There are now 228 colleges of the liberal arts and 198 institutions for higher instruction open to woman. Without industrial prosperity and the mental stimulation which has come through active remunerative employment, it is not too much to say that this great number could not have been reached.

With reference to moral conditions, I am inclined to think that the popular impression is that, so far as wage-workers are concerned, the morals of woman are not up to the standard under the old hand system of labor, in which she took little or no part, and that her entrance into the industrial field has lowered her moral standard ; and the statement is constantly made that low wages naturally compel women to supplement their earnings by an immoral life. I believe this view to be absolutely false, and that the workingwomen of this or any other civilized country are upon as high a plane of purity as any class in the community. I make this statement upon positive investigations which I have carried as far as it has been possible, but not so far as I hope to carry them ; and in whatever direction I have turned my studies of the moral character of women engaged in industry, the result has been the same, whether in this country, in Great Britain, or upon the continent of Europe. When I have officially stated the results of such investigations, I have from some quarters

been denounced as introducing evidence which tended to insult the very women involved, by implying that their character needed defence. Nothing has been further from my mind than this.

In 1881 I had the honor and the satisfaction of making an extended personal inquiry into the conditions surrounding factory life in this country and in Europe, and I found in that investigation that the charge that the factory promoted immorality and swelled the criminal lists was unfounded. The impression that the reverse was true first grew and gained prominence from the condition of Manchester, England, where a large cellarage population which formerly existed, but which has now almost entirely disappeared, was supposed to belong to the factory. The truth was that the cellarage population of Manchester was only to a very small degree a factory population. It belonged rather to the miserable hovel tenantry outside the factory workers which made Manchester's criminal lists in the past so large. The mistake, then, was in taking Manchester, which is not a purely factory town, as the criterion by which to judge the factory system; and from this mistake the idea became fixed in the minds of writers that the factory was responsible for immoral phases of life. It has been clearly shown by official returns from the penitentiary of Manchester that only eight out of fifty immoral women came from the factory, and twenty-nine out of fifty came from domestic service.

An extensive personal examination of the criminal records of a large number of British factory towns disclosed to me the fact that neither the ranks of the immoral nor the criminal lists were increased to so great an extent from the factory population as from other classes. A manager connected with the establishment of the Messrs. Coates, at Paisley, in Scotland, a man who had been in service more than forty years, informed me that during that whole period no one had ever gone from those works into a life of immorality. From the original entries of arrests, I was able to draw very clear conclusions, and these conclusions were in almost every case in favor of the working people, both male and female. Taking a series of years, from 1874 to 1880, inclusive, I found that the percentage of factory operatives twenty years of age and upward of the whole population in the city of Manchester was fourteen, while the percentage of arrests of factory operatives of the whole number of arrests was but nine and a half. M. Reybaud, in his investigations in France, found a constantly decreasing criminal list in a constantly increasing factory population. The conclusion is evident that if factories have a bad influence on morals,

crime should remain in proportion as the number of factory workers increases.

In Chemnitz, Saxony, the director of police informed me that in 1876 the total number of arrests was 2,884, while in 1880 it was but 2,699, of which number 2,366 were males and only 333 females, although the larger proportion of operatives were females and the operative population of Chemnitz was constantly increasing. In this country the examination of original official entries showed that in Lewiston, Me., the factory population was at the time of my inquiry 34 per cent of the whole population over ten years of age, but the percentage of arrests of factory operatives of the whole number of arrests in that city was but 8.5. For Pawtucket, R. I., whose factory population was, when I made the inquiry, over 20 per cent of the whole over ten years of age, the percentage of arrests of factory operatives of the whole number of arrests was but 11.5. The police records of Fall River, Mass., one of the largest textile cities in America, and where the records are very complete, showed that the operatives supplied 33+ per cent of the whole number of arrests, while they constituted 38+ per cent of the whole population over ten years of age; and the factory population of Lowell, which was 30+ per cent of the whole population over ten years of age in that city, furnished but 22+ per cent of the whole number of persons arrested. In the great shoe-factory city of Lynn the shoe factories furnished 28+ per cent of the whole population over ten years of age and but 24 per cent of the persons arrested.

These facts are quite representative in their character, and should dispel the impression that the bulk of the crime of manufacturing towns comes from the factory. It is true that the new system of industry, by securing a better competency, fights bad instincts with the very best weapons—the interests of those it employs. In large towns the factories have had to contend with all the nuisances which a rapid increase of population beyond the due limits of accommodation must necessarily produce. Notwithstanding the poor material with which the factory system has often to deal, the contest for civilization is progressing successfully through its influence; and when the power of moral forces is universally recognized in the conduct of industrial enterprises, the ratio of arrests among factory workers of the whole number of arrests will be very much less than it is now.

Turning more specifically now to the question of the immorality of women, it should be borne in mind that regular employment is conducive to regular living, and that regular employment does not, as a

rule, harmonize with a life of immorality and intemperance, or even of crime. The factory women of this country and of Europe will compare favorably in respect to chastity with the women of any other class. A factory girl whose character is not good usually finds herself in an atmosphere uncongenial at first, and finally so chilling that she leaves the establishment. What there is in factory employment that is not in other employments which should tend to an unchaste life it is difficult to understand. There are but few statistics relative to this question, but all my own inquiries have developed but one opinion, and that is that the factory does not necessarily lead to unchastity to an undue degree. The few statistics which I have been able to collect but emphasize this position, and happily supplement the results of the investigation just referred to.

In 1884 it was my privilege to make a very careful inquiry into the condition of the workingwomen of the city of Boston. The result was as emphatic as that reached in the investigation of 1881 involving many cities and towns in this country and in Europe. The testimony of the police of Boston was very gratifying, and was fully expressed by a captain of police when he said that people who charged the workingwomen with unchastity did not know what they were talking about. All the officers with whom the experts in this investigation conversed on the subject gave similar testimony. The conclusion of that investigation was that so far as their moral condition was concerned the workingwomen of the city of Boston were making a heroic, honest, and virtuous struggle to earn an honorable livelihood, and that it was rare that one of them could be found leading an improper life. The fact that here and there a girl forsakes the path of virtue and leads a sinful life should not be used to the detriment of the class to which she belongs, especially when her life is peculiarly exposed to temptation, as is the case with girls struggling on five dollars a week. It is exceedingly easy to be good on a sure and generous income; but it requires the strongest character to enable one to be good on an unstable income of five dollars per week.

Another official investigation proves these general statements to be true. In 1888 I again had the opportunity to make some extended inquiries into the character, surroundings, and conditions of workingwomen. This was done for twenty-two of the large cities of the United States; and under this investigation information was secured relating to 3,866 fallen women. The results showed that a large proportion of them, namely, 1,155, or nearly 30 per cent, came from house-

work and hotel work ; the next largest, so far as occupation is concerned, was 505 from the ranks of seamstresses, dressmakers, and employees of cloak and shirt factories ; while 1,236, or 31.97 per cent of the whole number, came directly from their homes.¹ Nor did the investigation show that the employers of labor were guilty of reducing their employees to the condition of unchastity, as is often alleged. It is only in the rarest cases that one meets with a whisper that this is the case ; and these whispers, followed to their source, have rarely, in either of the investigations named, disclosed any facts which would lead to the conclusion that employers make bargains based on the loss of character of their employees. All such impressions originate in the idea that girls cannot dress well upon the small wages they receive, but must necessarily lead immoral lives to receive pecuniary assistance.

All the testimony, however, that I have ever been able to collect upon this point is against such an idea ; but I am sorry to say that it prevails to a very great degree, and the statement is constantly met with. Testimony of capable and honest women—of heads of departments in great stores and millinery establishments and shops, forewomen of shops, and matrons of homes, and of all those best informed and in the best position to give testimony on this point—is that the workingwomen are as respectable, as moral, and as virtuous as any class of women in the country. Of course there are exceptions in this class, as in all ; but the grand fact must stand out plainly that industry cannot be burdened with a charge that falls in other directions, so far as the charge has any basis upon which it can rest.

I used to think that industrial pursuits engaged in by woman might cause her some degradation, or at least bring to her a loss of respect, which is always disastrous in any sense ; but I have become convinced that a loss of respect does not occur from the co-employment of the sexes ; and the fact that the co-education of the sexes in so many colleges and institutions of higher instruction has been carried on with such great advantage and without any of the evil consequences which were anticipated, is strong collateral evidence that the mingling of the sexes, either in industry or education, does not work harm to society, but on the contrary brings great good and secures that very respect which is essential to honorable social and family life.

¹ The foregoing statistics, as quoted, are taken : 1. From a "Report on the Factory System," in the Census Reports of 1880. 2. From the "Fifteenth Annual Report of the Massachusetts Bureau of Statistics of Labor." 3. From the "Fourth Annual Report of the United States Commissioner of Labor."

I am not troubled, therefore, about the integrity of the family and the purity of social life, nor the security and perpetuity of religious institutions, on account of the entrance of woman into a wide industrial and educational field; for it seems to me undeniable that the inevitable result will be increased respect for woman in every direction, because independence and capacity always bring respect; and, again, if it be considered degrading to earn one's living in productive enterprises by wages paid for manual toil, it is relatively degrading to earn it in the professions or in semi-professional employment.

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THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE AMERICAN CATHEDRAL.

THE American traveller visits cathedrals in the old world with frequent enthusiasm and often with sincere and profound veneration. Indeed, it is probable that the larger proportion of people who make such pilgrimages, whether in England or on the Continent, is made up of Americans. But the great majority of these find in cathedrals as their chief charm a picturesque antiquity; and of Americans who have never seen a cathedral a still larger majority regard them as venerable but useless anachronisms. They do not expect to see them reproduced in their own land, and they still less desire it. They remember them as associated, in the history of the past, in more than one instance with grave abuses, and they think of them as costly and unfruitful nests for pompous and indolent ecclesiastics. Among modern novelists, Mr. Anthony Trollope has found in the cathedral and its staff a fine opportunity for amiable satire; and the misuse or perversion of a great institution has thus come to be widely accepted as identical with the thing itself.

1. And so, when some one, touched by the spell of some stately and splendid minster, asks, in a moment of enkindled feeling, "Why cannot one whose lot is cast in the Western hemisphere have the cathedral?" one answer, and that often the first that one hears, is that "cathedrals belong to the past." The religion, we are told, of the times that built cathedrals was a religion of much ignorance, of almost boundless superstition, of large leisure, and usually of a very elementary stage of civilized society. There was little teaching, because the great mass of the people was too ignorant to receive it. There was a very childish faith on the one hand, and there was enormous assumption of authority on the other. So incapable was the ordinary man or woman of being impressed otherwise than pictorially, that in ages when learning was the possession of the few, when printing had not been discovered, when books were the privilege of the rich, religion inevitably took on a dramatic or spectacular form, to which the vastness, the mystery, and the stateliness of the cathedral especially lent it-