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Women in Industry in the Chapei,
Hongkew and Pootung Districts
of Shanghai

1931

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Hongkew and Pootung Districts
of Shanghai

Compiled by

Chung Shou Ching and May Bagwell

Industrial Secretaries, Shanghai Y. W. C. A.

National Committee, Y. W. C. A. of China

23 Yuen Ming Yuen Road, Shanghai

Foreword

Since 1888 when the first cotton mills were introduced into China, there has been a continuous movement of women from home to factory: this movement will continue as the process of industrialization goes on. The resulting change in custom of living, the breakdown of old forms of social control, the development of new needs in the fields of education, health and recreation are problems which are a part of a whole changing situation. It is one which calls for careful study, if the shortages in the lives of women are to be found and the most important needs met.

This investigation has been undertaken by the Shanghai Y.W.C.A. Industrial Department, mainly because of the lack of definite information concerning the conditions under which women work and live, in the particular districts of the city where this organisation is promoting work among industrial women. The study has included, in so far as possible, the collecting of information concerning existing facilities in each district which were meeting the needs of women workers: and of possible ways of co-operating with the existing organizations in undertaking such program as the Association might not be able to carry alone or which might be better done by co-operative effort. The districts chosen for study were the Chapei, Hongkew and Pootung districts. The Association is also carrying on practical work in the Yangtzepoo and Western Districts: but in the Yangtzepoo district a social survey had been started by the National Research Institute and other studies were being made by Shanghai College students, from which it was thought that the information desired might be secured. In the Western District a preliminary investigation has been started by the Y.W.C.A. which will be completed in 1931. In Chapei no work has yet been started by the Association but it is hoped later to begin something there.

The study was made during November and December 1929 and January and February 1930, by the Association industrial secretaries, Miss Constance Lee studying the Pootung area, Miss



Lu Chi-ching the Chapei district and Miss Chung Shou-ching the Hongkew district. The statistical material and report of each district was prepared and written by each secretary individually. While in some respects the data offered is fragmentary it pertains to a considerable and representative group of women and conditions. The standards established by the predominant industries included in this study represent the dominating condition in these industries in the city. The investigation is also an illustration of the type of study that can be made in a community, which may help to build up the body of knowledge concerning existing conditions necessary to individuals and to governmental and other agencies interested in promoting intelligent standards for women in industry, such as will insure mental and physical health.

—*May Baywell*

Introduction

Shanghai stands first among the cities in China in the employment of women as factory workers. The importance of this group in the industrial life of this city is shown in a survey made by the Bureau of Social Affairs of the Municipality of Greater Shanghai, in which the total number of women employed in factories in the city is given as 126,785 or over 56% of the total number of workers in the city.* The largest number of the factories employing women are located in the Yangtszepoo, Pootung, Hongkew and Western Districts. In Yangtszepoo and the Western District the industry employing the largest number of women is cotton, in Chapei and Hongkew it is silk and in Pootung tobacco. The three largest and most important industries in China are cotton, silk and tobacco. The first cotton mill was introduced into China by Li Hung Chang in 1888, and by 1896 the number had increased to 13. At the present time there are 127,—61 of them being located in Shanghai and 61 more in Kiangsu province.† The growth of the silk industry, which is second in importance, both in point of view of capital invested and of workers employed, may be seen by the fact that the number of factories increased from 106 in 1924 to 175 in 1929.‡

The position of the Chinese woman factory worker is an extremely difficult one. Hours of work are long and rest days few. In a large number of factories there are only two rest days a month and the average working day is 10 or 11 hours. In many factories there is a rest day on Sunday for the day workers but the night shift works as usual. Nor is the average woman worker free from home responsibility after her day's work in the factory is done. In the gradual shifting which has followed machinization in China, women find themselves, not transplanted from home to factory, but so placed that they are

*Shanghai Industry, 1930—Bureau of Social Affairs, Greater Shanghai, published by the Chung Hua Book Co., Shanghai.

†China Economic Journal, Nov. 1930, China's Cotton Industry, Fang Fu-an.

‡China Economic Journal, Oct. 1930, A Statistical Study Of Labor and Industry In China, Maxwell S. Stewart and Fang Fu-an.

home workers and mothers and at the same time industrial workers. The mothers have to care for the children after work hours and perform other home duties, and most women and girls have to do their own laundry and help with cooking.

Although wages for women in most industries are lower for women than for men, the contribution made by women toward family support is of considerable importance. A study of the income and expenditures of twenty-one families in Shanghai made by Shanghai College students shows that in these families the average contribution of females was 53.3% of the family income. That this contribution is necessary for the family support is shown by the fact that the average earnings for male laborers in Shanghai in 1928 in thirty types of industries was \$255.96. This is less than the \$415.30 to \$498.42 which it is estimated is required to support a family of five for one year. §

That there is labor unrest among the women workers as well as the men is seen by the fact that 122,807 females were involved in strikes in 1928. In 1929 31,181 women were involved in strikes, the largest number taking part in any one dispute being in Chapei silk filatures strike. ¶ The information presented in this report shows clearly that there is sufficient cause for such disputes as have occurred, and will continue to occur, unless steps are taken to better conditions, so that workers may not have to live at the very lowest level of existence, as they are doing in large sections of the industrial districts of the city.

Such information is valuable not only for the light it throws on the problems of the city's women workers but as a picture of the industrial conditions which affect a considerable portion of the population of Shanghai. At the present time when the government is directing attention to the plans for further industrial development in the country, any evidence as to the employment policies or conditions now in force in industries has important significance both for the present and for the future development of the country.

§China Economic Journal, Nov. 1930, The Standard Of Living Of Factory Workers, H. D. Lamson.

¶Strikes and Lockouts, Greater Shanghai, Bureau of Social Affairs, Greater Shanghai, published by The Commercial Press, Shanghai.

SCOPE AND METHOD OF STUDY

The scope of this study may be shown by comparing the number of industrial women included in the investigation with the total number of women workers in the city. The number reported on in this study is 31, 506 which is about one third of the total 126, 785 women employed in the city's factories.

TABLE 1.—*Total Number of establishments reported on and total number of women and children employed therein by industry.*

Industry	Total number of establishments	Number of women	Number of Children
Cotton (Spinning and Weaving)	13	3,564	302
Silk Filatures	56	20,333	6,261
„ Weaving	5	658	27
Tobacco	7	4,653	258
Knitting	10	922	60
Other Industries	9	1,316	380
Total	100	31,446	7,288

Altogether 100 factories are reported on. The figures given were secured from the establishments included through the use of investigation cards which the firms were asked to fill out. In the majority of cases the cards were filled out on the occasion of a personal visit by the investigator, when interviews were given by the manager, and the information secured from the office. Over 90 factories were visited in this manner and permission was given in each case for the investigators to go through the factory for the purpose of observation of conditions of work, type of workers, etc.

TABLE 2.—Number of establishments reported on and number of women employed therein by industry and locality.

Industry	Chapei			Pootung			Hongkew		
	Estab-lish-ment	Women	Chil-dren	Estab-lish-ment	Women	Chil-dren	Estab-lish-ment	Women	Chil-dren
Silk Filatures	38	14,143	4,350				18	6,185	1,911
Silk Weaving	2	108	7				3	550	20
Knitting	4	243	20				6	679	40
Cotton Spinning and Weaving	4	690	—	6	2,342	300	3	532	2
Tobacco	2	160	200	2	3,693		3	800	58
Other Industries	5	740	140	2	200		2	376	—
Total	55	16,089	4,917	9	6,235	540	35	9,122	2,031

The work of investigation was facilitated by the co-operation secured from several organizations and the industries investigated. Valuable assistance was given by the Kiangsu-Chekiang Silk Cocoon Guild, Mr. Wang Ching-shan of the People's Village of the Government of Greater Shanghai, and Miss Isherwood of the Institute of Technical Training who helped in the work of investigating silk filatures. In almost every instance employers gave their courteous co-operation and the investigators were given entrance to the factories and the desired information readily supplied.

SUMMARY OF OUTSTANDING FACTS

Extent of study:—

Number of establishments reported on	100
Number of factories visited by investigators	94
Number of women employed in establishments	31,446
Number of children employed in these establishments	7,288

Distribution of women in industrial groups:—

Cotton	3,564
Silk filatures	20,333
„ weaving	658
Tobacco	4,653
Knitting	922
Other industries	1,316
Total	31,446

Hours:—

Daily hours scheduled for 28,992 women:—

A Schedule of 8 hours for	646 women
„ „ „ 9 „	212 „
„ „ „ 10 „ to 11 hours for	5,083 „
„ „ „ 11	22,991 „
„ „ „ 12	60 „

Lunch periods varying from none to 2 hours:—

20 of the women had no lunch hour
30 „ „ „ 15 minutes for lunch
2,124 „ „ „ ½ to ¾ of an hour for lunch
23,914 „ „ „ 1 of an hour for lunch
1,848 „ „ „ 1½ to 2 of an hour for lunch

Rest days:—

8,672 women were reported as having 4 days a month
1,227 „ „ „ 3 „ „ „
12,424 „ „ „ 2 „ „ „
160 „ „ „ 1 „ „ „
1,610 „ „ „ no rest day.

Wages:—

Median wage for all industries	62 cents
Median wage for three most important industries:	
Cotton	55 cents
Silk	60 cents
Tobacco	55 cents

TABLE 3.—Median Daily Wages for Women in four most important industries by locality.

	Chapei	Hongkew	Pootung	
	59 cts.	62½ cts.	70 cts.	56 cts.
Number of women	14,148	6,185	3,693	2,342
Industry	Silk Filatures	Silk Filatures	Tobacco	Cotton

TABLE 4.—Scheduled Daily Working Hours

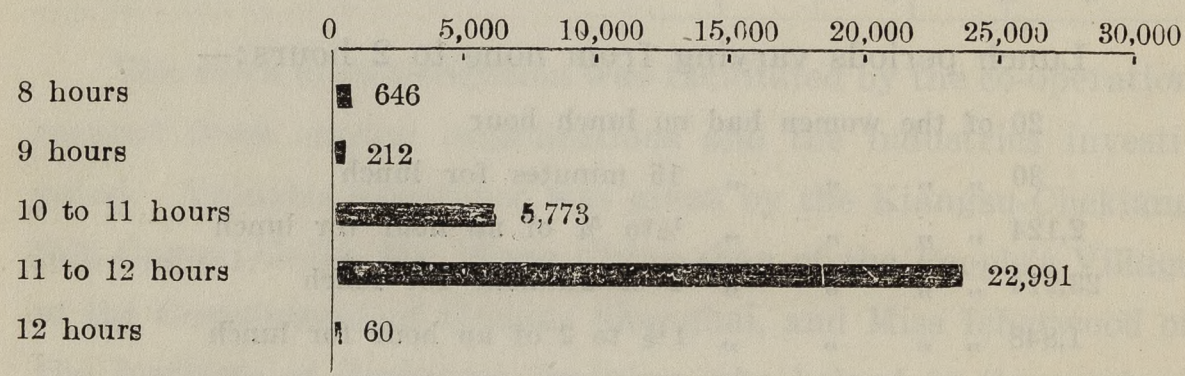
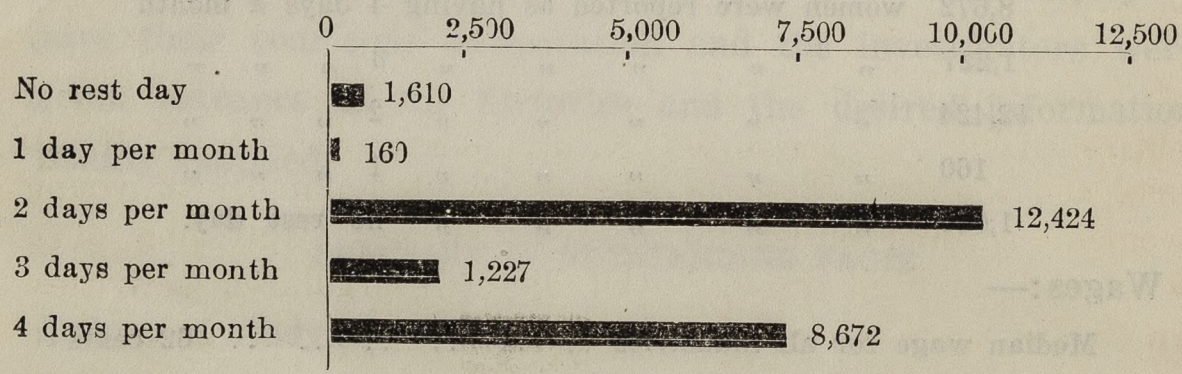


TABLE 5.—Rest Days Per Month



CONCLUSION

In brief the figures given in the above summary may be taken as an indication of existing conditions for a large number of the women workers in Shanghai, although it is by no means

a complete picture. These facts supply some information which may give a basis for decision as to where the first steps should be taken toward securing the well being of the women of the city.

The number of children found to be employed in these establishments was 7298. An eleven hour day is prevalent in 38 of the total number of factories studied. 50 of the factories reported that they gave only 2 rest days a month. The median of wages for the entire group of women reported on was 62 cents. A direct result of the low wage rates is seen in the crowded housing conditions, the extremely low standard of living and the large number of children employed. These facts call for an immediate plan for the effective enforcement of the factory laws which have already been promulgated by the Nanking government. The large amount of seasonal work and the instability of the most important industry call for a reorganization of business methods and the adoption of improved means of production on the part of employers.

Facilities for adult education among women workers provided by labor unions, the Bureau of Education and the Y.W.C.A., are insufficient for the number of women who might be reached if there is continuous propaganda for the work, and careful study given to the kind of education which women workers want and need, as a basis for selecting the kind of program to be provided.

Recreational facilities for women workers are almost entirely lacking. The Y.W.C.A. provides a place in the Hongkew and Pootung Districts where a limited number of young women can find outlet for energy and self expression of a wholesome nature through well directed organized activities. In Chapei there is no provision of any kind for this group. In none of the three districts are there city parks within reach of workers. The large Hongkew Park is too far from workers homes and the entrance fee, although small, is prohibitive to workers whose wages are barely enough for the essentials of living.

Hongkew District

CHUNG SHOU CHING

INTRODUCTION

For the purpose of making this study that part of the Northern District known as the Hongkew District has been taken. The part actually covered by the investigation extends from Dixwell Road on the West to Dalny Road on the East, and from Chen Chia Yen Road on the North to East Yuhang Road on the South. This district, ten years ago, was a district of straw huts, old style Chinese houses and open spaces filled with dirty water. The huts were built along the Soochow Creek and the occupants were either rickshaw men or pig raisers. Most of these people came from north of the river and are known as "chiang pei" people. They were hard-working but with little income, and for this reason had to manage to live on the least amount of money possible which resulted in a very low standard of living. At this time Shanghai was on the way towards developing into a large commercial and industrial centre. Manufacturers were searching for the most ideal place for the location of factories. Their choice was made on the basis of the availability of a cheap labor supply and the ease of transportation. For this reason the Hongkew District attracted many factories. Here was a cheap labor supply and Soochow Creek could furnish transportation for the products of manufacture. The growth of the district is shown by the following figures; giving the numbers of factories opened in the district each year from 1915 to 1930.

1915	3	1922	5
1916	4	1923	5
1917	4	1924	4
1918	2	1925	3
1919	2	1926	9
1920	3	1927	15
1921	4	1928	6*

The greatest increase in the number of factories has been in the last three years, the total number in the district now being 41.* It is interesting to note that only one factory is owned and controlled by foreign interests.

With the rapid growth of the number of factories in this district many shops were opened and new houses for workers were built, many of which were straw huts. Workers in building their own huts chose any available space that could be found. It was estimated by the Bureau of Social Affairs in 1927 that there were 2,468 huts in this section.

The large number of huts brought serious housing problems. There was lack of sanitation and constant danger of fire. It was due to a large fire which burned 190 huts in Chang Chun Road that the Municipal Government of Greater Shanghai built the People's Village. A hundred houses were provided to take care of the homeless, and plans are now being made for building two hundred more houses in the same section.



Houses in the People's Village,
Hongkew District

The Hongkew district is not on the whole as thickly populated as some of the other districts in the city. The roads are well paved except for the sections near the creek. There are no big stores but many small shops. The factories are rather scattered except for the filatures which are located along Soochow creek. At the time this study was made there were 24 filatures, 3 silk weaving factories, 6 knitting mills, 3 tobacco factories and 5 other kinds factories including cotton and wool knitting, and egg. The total number of women and children workers was 13,983. The population of the district is according to the Department of Public Safety 135,269 persons of which 35,939 are children.*

THE INDUSTRIES

Silk Industry—The work in which women and children are employed in silk filatures is done in three departments and

*Shanghai Industry, 1930, edited by the Bureau of Social Affairs of Greater Shanghai.

involves several processes. The first process is grading of the cocoons. The cocoons are carefully examined and sorted according to the quality and size. Defective cocoons are separated from those of good and perfect quality. After sorting they are peeled, and then distributed in the reeling department. Reeling is the third process and the most important one. Here the cocoons are rapidly stirred in boiling water so that the ends may be loosened for reeling the silk. This work is always done by children who must work at great speed and constantly dip their fingers in the boiling water all day long. The actual reeling process requires very close attention on the part of the worker. The single threads as they are drawn from the cocoon are not always uniform in thickness, and when several threads are joined together to form the final thread the imperfection is magnified and easily detectable. For this reason the system of crossing the threads one over the other is employed, so that the imperfection may be removed and a uniformly round thread produced. From six to seven cocoons are reeled at the same time to make one thread, and if a single fiber breaks, the worker in charge must at once join the thread again in order to keep the size of the thread consistent. It is important to engage only the most efficient reelers who will produce the best grade of silk with a minimum of waste. The fourth process is the examination of the skeins for gum marks and other minor defects, which must be found and removed. Lastly the silk must be weighed, sized, cleansed and packed for shipping. Employers interviewed expressed interest in improving methods of production such as by introducing central boiling but claimed that the capital could not be secured for making such improvements.

The Knitting Industry—There are six knitting mills in this district, employing women and children. They are small in size, the largest one employing only 200 women. The products are cotton stockings, cotton underwear and towels. There are three processes performed by women. The first, thread winding, is unskilled work and done by older women. The second process is the knitting in which young girls are used because of the need for good eyesight and quick movement of hands. The third process is the joining of the heel of the stocking which employs children who can be trained to work at greater speed.

Silk Weaving and Tobacco—In silk weaving the women are only engaged in silk winding, the men doing the weaving which is heavier work.

The Chinese owned tobacco factories located in the Hongkew District are typical of a large number of factories of this kind. The methods of manufacture are semi-modern, a combination of machine and hand labor being used. Women and girls are employed largely in the wrapping department. In Shanghai the tobacco industry has been a highly seasonal one, having each year certain periods when the work is slack and others when production is speeded up as much as possible, women working as long as fourteen hours a day for several months at the time.

Scope and Method of Investigation—The method which has been used in making this investigation has included the use of questionnaires which were taken to the managers of factories to be filled out. In each case a visit was made by the investigator for the purpose of interviewing the manager, visiting the factory work rooms for observation of conditions of work and securing the desired information from the factory office. Information has also been obtained from the Hongkew Joint Silk Filature Women Workers' Union, from public and private schools, the Bureau of Social Affairs and from the workers who attend the evening classes in the Y.W.C.A. Centre on Chaoufoong Road. Altogether 35 of the total 41 factories were visited and the number of women and children workers reported on is 11,153.

WORKING HOURS

“Eight years ago most of the silk filatures in Shanghai required their workers to toil fourteen and a half hours in succession” said one of the women labor leaders in the Hongkew Joint Silk Filature Women Workers' Union when she was interviewed by the investigator. Since then some improvement has been made in and at the present time the eighteen filatures reported on in this study have an average working day of 10 $\frac{7}{8}$ hours, 13 working 11 to 12 hours and 5 working 10 to 11 hours.

Number of working hours daily by industry

	Industry	Silk Filatures	Silk Weaving	Knitting	Cotton	Tobacco	Others	Total
Number of hours	Number of establishments	18	3	6	3	3	2	35
9½					1			1
10		4	1	3	1		1	10
10½		1	1	1				3
11		12	1	1	1			16
11¼		1						1
Not reported on				1		3	1	4

In the silk filatures the working periods are irregular. In the busiest season workers have to continue working for seven days a week, and when the slack season comes all are left idle who cannot find some casual employment. The slack season usually comes in summer when the supply of cocoons runs short. Hours of work in the silk weaving factories average $10\frac{1}{2}$, and the work is more regular than in the filatures. In the knitting mills the working day averages $10\frac{3}{10}$ hours. The tobacco industry is highly seasonal. During the slack season the workers only have from 4 to 7 hours work a day while in the busy season they must work from 12 to 15 hours daily. In the one egg factory in the district the work is also seasonal, as many as 400 wmen being employed during the busy season and less than 100 in the slack season. Of the total 35 factories in the district, 29 work from 10 to 11 hours a day.

Rest Days—The larger modern factories stop work twice a month so that the machinery may be thoroughly cleaned and repairs made. In all of the silk filatures reported on the workers were given every other Sunday for rest. In the knitting mills the rest days fall on the 1st and 15th of the month. Only one factory reported as many as four rest days a month.

Lunch Period—Of the 35 factories reported on 23 have one hour for lunch. Three factories have a two hour period, one 45 minutes and four 30 minutes.

Night Work—The silk filatures do not in any case have night work as the handling of the fine threads can only be done by daylight. In the tobacco plants during the busy season, the working hours are extended to eight or nine p.m. The knitting and silk weaving mills have regular night shifts, the hours being from 6:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m.

WAGES

Wages in all the factories reported on are paid according to piece rates. In the 18 filatures the average wage for a skilled woman worker is $62\frac{1}{2}$ cts. and for children is 36 cts. A bonus of two extra days' pay is given to a worker who is not absent from work for two weeks time. In the silk weaving factories the average wage for skilled work is 68 cts. and for children 37 cts. In knitting it is 90 cts. for women and 38 cts. for children. The amount of bonus paid in various factories for non-absence from work for two weeks varies from 50 cts. to \$2.50. Wages in the tobacco plants are very uncertain. During the busy season a worker may be able to earn as much as \$1.00 a day while in the dull season she may earn around 60 cts.

WORKING CONDITIONS



Child worker in spinning room of silk mill

With few exceptions in the factories studied little attention has been paid to the health of the workers. Since there has been no application of government legislation regulating working conditions the factory owner is free to make any arrangements he chooses. Factory work rooms are found to be crowded with workers so that air space is insufficient. Ventilation and lighting are bad, especially in the silk filatures. In the other factories conditions are somewhat better but still there is much room for improvement. While the effect of the conditions on the health

of workers has not been studied thoroughly, there is some indication of the effect of the conditions in filatures in the statements of workers who were interviewed. Some had developed eye trouble as a result of the badly lighted rooms, where the handling of the fine threads requires very close work. The ground floor is usually more poorly lighted than the upper floors. Many of the filature workers complained of "Hongkong foot," which they said to be due to the dampness in the reeling rooms. In the summer months the steam filled rooms become unbearably hot. In some filatures there was actual provision of substitutes for taking the place of those who were overcome by the heat. It is a common sight to see a mother working in a filature with her baby asleep under the machine and a small child playing round between the machines.

The silk filature buildings showed a general appearance of dinginess. This is especially true of some of the smaller and older filatures. Floors, ceiling, staircases and even the front doors are thickly coated with dust. The silk weaving and tobacco factories present much better appearance due to the fact that buildings are newer and more modern. The knitting mills are small Chinese style houses, usually located in a narrow li. Here, too, little attention has been paid to sanitation.

Only one of the factories was found to provide a dining room for the workers, although the majority of workers ate their lunches at the factory. In no case was a rest room provided. Toilets were of most primitive type, and appeared as though they were never cleaned.

WELFARE WORK

The factories in this district do very little welfare work of any kind. In no factory was there any provision for the services of a modern physician, though one cotton factory had an arrangement with a hospital for care of special cases, and one knitting mill provided the services of a Chinese doctor for the workers during certain hours each day.

The Silk Filature Owners' Association of this district provides a clinic with a Chinese doctor in charge. Free service is furnished to silk workers. According to the doctor employed

at the clinic the workers do not believe the clinic good, and so do not attend in large numbers. The Association also provides a school for workers' children. More than three hundred children are attending the school, which has six grades and is free of charge. Formerly there was a middle school also, but it has been combined with the Tieng Tung School because of the lack of funds.

One factory was found to have a tenement house for its workers. Another had a dormitory for men workers, and a third gave old age pensions and workmen's compensation.

OTHER EDUCATIONAL, HEALTH, AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

Health—The Shanghai Municipal Council is running a small clinic in Tungchow Road where free services are available. A second clinic, formerly Dr. Shapleigh's clinic, has been taken over by the Chinese Mission to Lepers, and is being run as a lepers' clinic.

Education—Besides the schools supported by employers which are mentioned above, three other kinds were found:—private schools, schools run by labor unions and government schools. There were two schools run by labor unions,—the Hongkew Joint Silk Filature Women Workers' Union school and the Hua Sung Engine Company Union school. These schools receive some support from employers. To the silk union school the employers of each filature contribute money in proportion to the number of machines in the filature, the amount being about \$15.00 to \$20.00 a month. The engine company contributes about a hundred dollars a month and the balance of expense is carried by the union. These schools provide free tuition for the children of the workers, and books and stationery are also supplied by the school. Over three hundred students are attending the engine union school. The silk union school provides a class for women workers which has an average attendance of 35 students. One thousand character books are being used in these classes.

Five private schools were visited by the investigator, two of which were free schools run by private individuals, only a small fee being charged for registration. The school has free

evening classes for women workers reaching about 50 women. The principal of this school stated that there were formerly several government schools in this district, but all except one had been closed because of lack of proper supervision. A day school for children has been opened at the People's Village, the support coming from the government of Greater Shanghai and the supervision given by the director of the village. A night school for women workers is to be started soon. Evening classes and clubs for women workers are provided for by the Y.W.C.A. at a centre on Chaoufoong Road with a good attendance the year round. The total number of women who could be accommodated in all of the evening schools would not be more than 150, which is only a small proportion of the total 11,153 workers in the district.

Recreation—There is no park available to workers in this district. One theatre was found with prices within the reach of workers. Recreational activities are included among the activities at the Y.W.C.A. club room but only a limited number of workers can be served.

LABOR UNIONS

The labor unions participated in by women workers are three in number. The Huo Hing Tobacco Company Union, the cotton knitting union, and the Joint Silk Filature Women Workers' Union. The Joint Silk Women's Union is an industrial union which includes in its membership the women



Recreational game with a Y. W. C. A. group of workers

workers from 24 silk filatures in the district. The representatives are elected by the workers in each filature to form a committee, which elects an executive council. Secretaries are paid to carry out the work of the union. The control of policies and program lies with the

general membership which meets once a year, and with the executive council in the interim between annual meetings. The work of the union is carried on under four departments, general administration, training, investigation and publicity. The executive council meets every week. The purpose of the union, as



Commercialized amusements of this type draw many workers

stated by the woman labor leader interviewed, is to study the conditions of the members and to do collective bargaining. The work which they plan to do if financial support can be had will include the encouraging of the arts, a co-operative society, recreation rooms, library and gymnasium and a school for workers. The income of the union comes from membership dues, the fee being ten coppers per person per month, and from employers' subsidy which is given in proportion to the number of machines in the filatures.

The Huo Hing Tobacco Union. This union is also organized on the committee basis. It has about two hundred women members who pay dues of 40 cts. a month per member. At present the program is quite limited.

Chapei District

LU CHI CHING

INTRODUCTION

The Chapei District is known as the silk district of Shanghai for it is here that many of the 104 silk filatures of the city are located. The district lies entirely in Chinese territory and the industries are mostly Chinese owned and controlled. The outlay of capital is not usually large as most of the factories are small and do not carry on production on a large scale. For the past few years the mills have almost all shut down for several months during the summer due to shortage of cocoons, thus throwing thousands of women workers out of work.

SCOPE AND METHOD OF INVESTIGATION

There are 88 factories in the Chapei district, 55 silk filatures, 6 silk weaving factories, 7 cotton weaving and knitting factories and 10 others including match, printing, toilet supplies, tobacco and rubber. Of the 88 establishments 55 were visited by the investigator, 35 silk filatures, 10 weaving and knitting factories and 7 others.

Number of establishments reported on and number of women and children employed therein

Industry	Number of factories	Number of women	Number of children	Total number of female workers
Silk filatures	38	14,148	4,350	18,498
„ weaving	2	108	7	115
Cotton weaving	4	690	—	690
Knitting	4	243	20	263
Others	7	900	240	1,140
Total	55	16,089	4,617	20,706

The difficulty often met with in trying to secure admittance to factories was obviated by the assistance given by the Kiangsu-Chekiang Silk Cocoon Guild from whom a card of introduction

was secured. In this way admittance was courteously given to the investigator in every case. A letter from the General Federation of Labor Unions of Greater Shanghai gave entrance to the labor unions in the district. Information regarding housing and living conditions was gathered from personal talks with workers, a number of whom were visited in their homes. The Bureau of Education and the Bureau of Social Affairs of the Municipality of Greater Shanghai have also given valuable information and advice to the investigator.

HOURS OF WORK

Working hours—In 24 of the silk filatures were 11 a day, 10 others having a 10 hour day and 2 a 10³/₄ hour day. Of the other factories 10 had a 10 hour day, 4 an 8 hour day and 2 a 11 hour day. One cotton factory had a 12 hour day.

Rest Days—Of the silk filatures 20 had 2 days a month rest, 3 reported 3 days a month and 9 reported 4 days a month. Of the other factories 3 had no rest day, 2 had one, 5 had 2 days, 1 had 3, and 5 had 4 days. Holidays are observed on the occasion of national holidays and important festivals.

Lunch Period—The majority of factories in this district give one hour for the lunch period. 31 silk filatures, and 11 other factories reported a one hour period. Two factories reported no definite time and the others reported periods varying from 1/2 hour to 2 hours.

WAGES

The average wage for the skilled woman worker in silk filatures was 59 cts. and for children it was 35 cts. In other industries the average wage for women varied from 35 cts. in silk weaving to 90 cts. in tobacco, and for children it was from 20 cts. to 30 cts. In the silk filatures a bonus of four days' wages is paid to those workers who have not been absent from work during the month. In the match factories the male workers have the privilege of sharing in the bonus plan for good work, but not female workers.

WORKING CONDITIONS

The silk filature buildings are almost all of the same type, being built of grey brick. They are mostly old buildings and the general appearance is one of delapidation. Wooden stair-

ways lead from the open court yard to the second floors. There is usually one wooden stairway which makes the building a virtual deathtrap in case of fire. Children who are employed in stirring the cocoons must dip their fingers in the boiling water continuously, and the hands become white and very tender. Many of them are as young as seven or eight years. The rooms where the cocoons are boiled and reeled is always full of steam; windows are not opened on account of the delicacy of the threads, which may be spoiled if a breeze blows in. The workers are closely supervised by foremen and forewomen, the larger number being foremen. The foreman carries a long stick or cane with which he hits the children on the head or shoulders when he thinks attention is not being given to the work. In this room too, many of the women have babies and small children with them, the babies being placed on the floor under the machines and the children of from two to six running around between the machines. Women's attention wanders from their work while caring for the babies, feeding them with rice water or holding them and trying to get them to sleep. Many of the workers eat right at their machines. They do some sewing if the machines are stopped.

The printing factory visited was the Commercial Press, which is said to have the best working conditions of any factory in the city. The women workers are employed in the binding department where the work is rather light and clean. The cotton and knitting factories are in mostly Chinese style buildings. Provision for sanitation is not made and though the lighting is very good, the ventilation is insufficient.

WELFARE WORK

Only a few factories were found to be doing any welfare work. The Commercial Press provides a night school for workers, a day school for workers' children, a club, a day nursery and gives a death benefit. This factory also gives six weeks' leave with pay in maternity cases, and an old age pension. It is estimated that about \$16,000 was been given in compensation and bonus to female workers during the year 1929. One silk weaving factory and two cotton weaving factories in the district allow \$5.00 in maternity cases, one tobacco factory allows \$16.00

and another tobacco factory allows six weeks with pay. Two knitting factories have an arrangement with hospitals for the care of emergency cases, and a plan for regular visits to the factories by physicians who are employed for this purpose. One of them allows one month with pay in maternity cases and one allows a death benefit of \$30.00.

There is a clinic provided by the Silk Filature Owners' Association. A Chinese practitioner is on duty in the forenoons and a Western practitioner in the afternoons. The number of patients served daily is from 15 to 60. This number is greatest during the summer months. Diseases treated are largely diseases of the eyes, skin, and feet. The Western physician stated that the cause of many of these troubles was the great amount of moisture in the rooms where the women work.

In the same building the Silk Filature Owners' Association supports a school for workers' children. The school is for boys only. At the time of visitation by the investigator the attendance was about 80. Information was given by one of the teachers that only about 30% of the children were workers' children, the others being recommended for admittance by the owners. A night school for teaching English was provided at one time for the workers, but this was closed after one year because of the lack of interest on the part of workers and the shortage of funds. The annual expenditure for the entire program carried on in this building, including school, clinic and the provisions of coffins in cases of death, is about \$7,000.00.

OTHER HEALTH, EDUCATIONAL, AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

Five mass education schools have been established by the Bureau of Education of the Special District of Greater Shanghai, two of them being workers' schools but according to the information received at the school only a few women attend.

Besides the health services provided by workers and factory owners, the Bureau of Public Health has annually launched campaigns against cholera, plague and smallpox. Eight health centres are located near the Paoshan Road district for the purpose of giving free inoculations and vaccinations.

Nurses for the Bureau are sent to different factories by request. There are two children's clinics in Chapei, one supported by the Y's Men's Club and the other by the National Child Welfare Association. The latter organization also runs an orphanage for children.

LABOR UNIONS

Labor unions in the Chapei District for the most part include members of both sexes. Women elect their own representatives and the men elect theirs, one representative being chosen to every ten workers. These representatives form a committee which elects the members of the executive council. The executive council is responsible for the activities of the union. Under the executive council is a group of paid secretaries. The four departments are organization, propaganda, training and administration. Weekly meetings are held by the executive council, and meetings of representatives once a year. Financial support is obtained from two sources. The first is from the dues of the members, each member paying from ten to twenty cents a month. The cotton weaving union collects regularly \$225.00 a month, male workers paying twenty cents and female ten cents a month. The silk filature union has \$150.00 a month from workers' dues, each worker contributing twenty cents a month. The Commercial Press Union receives \$370.00 a month from workers' dues. The second source of support is from subsidies granted by employers. The amount of subsidy from the silk filatures is proportional to the number of machines in the filatures. The amount of subsidy granted by the various factories varies in amount from \$15.00 to \$20.00 a month. Some unions receive no subsidy at all.

On questioning both union leaders and union members, the investigator found little indication that women workers were taking any active part in union activities, or that they had any real understanding of union organization and work. This may be explained largely by the fact that there is a general lack of education among the women, and the fact that the women, burdened with home responsibilities in addition to their work in the factory, have little time for attending union meetings. Consequently very few of them actually take part in the work which the union may do to improve their own status.

HOUSING AND LIVING CONDITIONS

The housing problem is most acute in the Chapei district. On account of the low wage and high rentals prevailing in Shanghai, general congestion is found everywhere, and nowhere in the city is this more true than in Chapei. The investigator found that in general the houses in which workers live are of four types:

1. The ordinary type of Chinese house with two floors, such as are found along Chang An and Heng Foong Roads. The rental for this type of house is from \$9.00 to \$14.00 a month. Each house is occupied by three or four families.
2. A sort of bungalow type of house with no upper floor. The construction is of poor materials. Rentals for these houses are \$2.00 to \$3.50 a month. Two or three families live in each house: most of the women are silk filature workers, while the men are rickshaw pullers.
3. The third type of house is the hut with a single room, poorly lighted and ventilated. The one room serves the family for all purposes. These huts are situated in large numbers near the silk filatures.
4. Workers' tenements are found in two of the cotton weaving factories. They rent for \$3.00 a house, and here also two or three families live in each house.

Pootung

LEE YUAN CHEN

The district of Pootung lies on the East side of the Whangpoo River. The industrial section is located near the river, and stores, shops and workers' homes are a little farther away. Beyond is the open country. The section which has been selected for study is that part which classed by the Police Department as the third district. It covers an area of 45 li and has a population of 170,922 of which 118,001 are women and 152,921 are men.* This section has more workers than the other sections of Pootung. The workers' homes are Chinese style houses or straw huts. Usually there is an open space around the house for raising vegetables. A large number of the women workers live in a section which was formerly a country village, which lies beyond the business section near to the Y.M.C.A. Model Village. Many workers who live in Pootung come across the river daily to work on the Shanghai side. The trip is made in the row boats which ply back and forth and for which they pay a few coppers each way. In bad weather the trip is very disagreeable and not infrequently a row boat is hit by a larger boat, upsetting it and drowning some of the passengers.

The Industries—There are over 20 factories in this section of Pootung but only 10 of them employ women workers. The factories employing the largest number of women are the British American Tobacco Co. and the Japan-China Spinning and Weaving mills. Other factories employing women are smaller ones including four knitting mills, a paper factory and a match factory. In the tobacco factory the work is somewhat seasonal, the working hours being extended to 8:00 p.m. for several months during the winter in the busy season, while later in the year the work is short for a considerable period of time. In the match factory working conditions are not as good as in the tobacco factory. The rooms are dark. Babies may be seen asleep near the mother's work table and many small children are employed in wrapping the matches. One little child of six

*Figures obtained from Pootung Police Department.

years was seen by the investigator standing at the table by her mother wrapping the packages of matches, her body swaying back and forth as she worked and her tiny hands moving with almost incredible speed.

HEALTH, EDUCATIONAL AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

There are eight primary schools in Pootung and one middle school just recently opened. All are private schools and charge



*Workers learning to write—
Y.W.C.A. evening classes*

a fee which is paid by the term. At the Y. M. C. A. Model Village there is provided a day school for children, and the Y. W. C. A. provides clubs and classes for women workers. The only means of recreation, commercialized or other, are the public tea houses where there is story telling and singing, a theatre where movies are shown and plays given, the Y. M. C. A. playground and

movies and the Y.W.C.A. activities for women workers. There is one private hospital in Pootung which is open to workers, about ten coppers being charged as a registration fee.



Y.W.C.A. workers' discussion group

LABOR UNIONS

The labor unions in Pootung participated in by women are three in number, the B.A.T. union, the Japan-China Cotton Mill Workers' Union and the match company union. The B.A.T. Union is the stronger and more active one. Dues for the members are 20 cts. a month. The union is organized on the committee plan. The committee is made up of representatives elected from each department in the factory, the number of representatives being in proportion to the number of workers in the department. An executive council is chosen from the committee, and secretaries are employed to carry out the work of the union. There is an annual meeting at which the officers are elected. The B.A.T. Union provides a club room and a school for workers' children. An evening class for women workers was provided, but has been discontinued because of lack of interest. The woman labor leader attributed the failure of the class to the fact that the women workers lived rather far from the union headquarters. From this leader it was also learned that few women and girls use the club room at the union headquarters, and that although the women representatives attend the meetings they take little active part. The Japan-China Co. Union is now closed due to the loss of support after the failure of a strike which took place recently. They also had a free school for workers' children, but it had to be closed a too.

The match company union has been closed but is now open again. From the union headquarters it was learned that in this union also women failed to take active part in union activities.



Map of the Hongkew District studied, showing factories, schools and places of recreation.
 It is obvious that there is a large field for the work of voluntary organisations
 concerned with the well-being of women workers.