

More than 18 per cent. of the children did more than three hours' work on the farm; 24 per cent. had less than ten hours' sleep. Ten per cent. of the children of share milkers never drank milk. Twenty-six per cent. of these children showed retarded school progress.

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS.

Housing.—Over 60 per cent. lived in houses of five rooms or more; about ten per cent. dwelt in tents, garages, or shacks; the remainder in houses of less than five rooms.

With reference to the housing in the coal-mining group, though rooms were small, ventilation and cleanliness were well carried out and sunshine penetrated the rooms. About 10 per cent. suffered from damp from flooding of the river.

Among timber-mill workers housing-conditions were worse. Though many lived in houses with six rooms or more, these were small and in some cases damp. The homes of 26 per cent. were dirty. In some cases too little sunlight could reach the rooms, in others the roof leaked, and in others flood-water penetrated the floors.

The houses of farmers in thriving communities do not call for remark, but a good deal could be said about housing in the share-milking group. Thirty per cent. of the houses were dirty and 15 per cent. had damp rooms. Ventilation was poor in 30 per cent. In many instances houses were in low-lying and damp situations, and mud was a conspicuous feature.

Nearly all were supplied by tank-water, and no doubt in dry seasons a scarcity would prevail.

Housing in the way-backs was good on the whole, though some of the very poorest houses we came across were in this group. For example, in one settlement three of the houses visited were rough shacks of slabs of four and five rooms. The rooms were all small, and roughly lined, news-sheets acted as wallpaper. Windows were small and few, and an air of stuffiness prevailed. All had big open fireplaces and plenty of firing. In two families the boys, four and three in number, slept two in a bunk in outside sheds. Blankets were in short supply, and sacks, &c., were used to supply the deficiency. In one the girls slept in a small dark closet partitioned off from the parents' room, without a window to supply light or air.

Clothing.—As a rule, this was sufficient in all groups. In a few instances in the backblocks the supply was inadequate. In all groups there were a few cases of overclothing.

Footwear.—In the coal-mining and timber-mill groups boots and stockings were worn by most of the children—90 per cent. A, and 60 per cent. B. In the farming groups it was the exception to wear boots and stockings, even among the well-to-do; these were worn only in the very cold weather.

In all groups, in wet weather, the children either came to school barefoot, or changed wet footwear on reaching the classroom, or stayed at home. The rule among teachers was that wet boots and stockings were removed and placed near a fire or stove in the classroom to dry. I am afraid that this applied only to thoroughly soaked footwear, and that the wearing of damp footwear during school-hours is not uncommon. The inadequate means of drying such wet garments in the schools is very marked, and is worthy of consideration as one of the possible causes of rheumatism and cardiac complaints, &c.

Nutrition.—Over 14 per cent. of all the children of all groups were under-weight for height and age. Ten per cent. divergence from average weight was allowed before the child was considered under-weight. Clinically 30 per cent. represents the proportion of subnormal nutrition. The farming groups showed definite superiority over other two as judged by weight for height and age standard. Numerous instances were met where this weight for height standard alone gave a false idea of nutrition.

The amount of work done by the mother out-of-doors is a powerful factor in influencing the standard of personal and home cleanliness and efficiency. It is to be noted, however, that only two cases of scabies and two of pediculosis were found in the total number examined. Though few acknowledge to sleeping with closed windows, from observation it appeared improbable that windows were opened frequently, especially on cold, foggy, or rainy nights. Less than one-third of the children slept in separate beds. Most sleep two in a bed. In several cases it was noted that sleeping-accommodation was cramped, ill-ventilated, and the supply of blankets inadequate. Most of the children slept in night-clothes, but a small proportion slept in their day-clothes.

Other Physical Defects.—There was an average degree of physical defect in the children. The work of the dental clinics was evidenced by many fillings and extractions.

Recreation.—On the whole, evidence is collected from parents and goes to show that the majority of children do not spend as much time at cinematographs as might be expected. In two town groups where picture-shows are an institution 20 per cent. and 10 per cent. attended once a week.

School Progress.—This was retarded in children of coal-miners, 12 per cent.; timber-mill workers, 14 per cent.; farmers in thriving areas, 21 per cent.; in remote farming-areas, 11.5 per cent.; share milkers, 26 per cent.

Three years in excess of the average for the class was the standard for retardation adopted. Various factors help to account for retarded school progress, such as work done before and after school-hours. Racial heredity, maternal overwork, migration from school to school, shortened school attendance from various causes, including sickness.

In the third group (thriving farming communities), with 21 per cent. retardates, 25 per cent. had less than ten hours' sleep; 19 per cent. had more than three hours' work. In the fifth group (share milkers), with 26 per cent. retardates, 24 per cent. had less than ten hours' sleep; 18 per cent. had more than three hours' work. As remarked above, the amount of work done outside school-hours would appear to have more effect on school progress than on nutrition.