



Smithsonian Institution

National Museum of African American History and Culture

Pamphlet: The Negro Worker Vol. 2 No. 4

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Small children of six, seven, and eight work in these factories from 12, 14 and even 16 hours each day, and work a seven-day week.

Hundreds of young girls between the ages of eight and twelve are employed to stir cocoons placed in steaming hot water, which so scalds their hands that they are covered with big white stains and are extremely painful.


The children work the same amount of hours as the adults.

Many young girls marry at an early age, and on becoming pregnant work until confinement takes place, mostly by the side of their machines.

They continue work almost immediately and then feed their children at the breast while working.

There is no protection whatever for the children in the factories, and children who sprawl about the floor are in equal danger to those who work beside the machines.

Young female children are commonly purchased and employed as domestic servants. They begin work as soon as it is physically possible to do so.


[[caption]] African children on a coffee plantation in Kenya. [[/caption]]

[[caption]] Children of the plantation owner in School. [[/caption]]

TRAINED TO PROSTITUTION

This practice is general throughout the country and obviously lends itself to great abuse, and like the other forms of child slavery causes much human misery.

Many of these children are employed in native brothels and trained into prostitution.

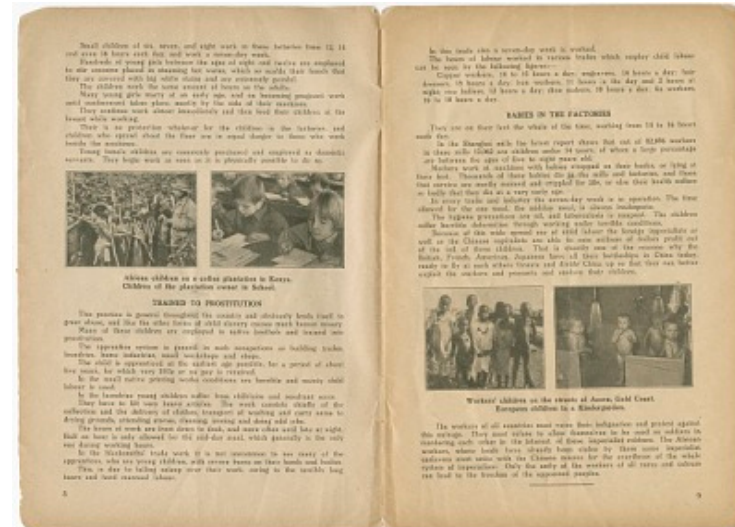
The apprentice system is general in such occupations as building trades, laundries, home industries, small workshops and shops.

The child is apprenticed at the earliest age possible, for a period of about five years, for which very little or no pay is received.

In the small native printing works conditions are horrible and mainly child labour is used.

In the laundries young children suffer from chilblains and resultant sores.

They have to lift very heavy articles. The work consists chiefly of the collection and the delivery of clothes, transport of washing and carry same to drying grounds, attending stoves, cleaning, ironing, and doing odd jobs.



The hours of work are from dawn to dusk, and more often until late at night. Half an hour is only allowed for the mid-day meal, which generally is the only one during working hours.

In the blacksmiths' trade work it is not uncommon to see many of the apprentices, who are young children, with severe burns on their hands and bodies.

This, is due to falling asleep over their work, owing to the terribly long hours and hard manual labour.

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In this trade also a seven-day week is worked.

The hours of labour worked in various trades which employ child labour can be seen by the following figures: -

Copper workers, 14 to 15 hours a day; engravers, 14 hours a day; hair dressers, 15 hours a day; iron workers, 11 hours in the day and 3 hours at night; rice hullers, 12 hours a day; shoe makers, 10 hours a day; tin workers, 16 to 18 hours a day.

BABIES IN THE FACTORIES

They are on their feet the whole of the time, working from 14 to 16 hours each day.

In the Shanghai mills the latest report shows that out of 82,696 workers in these mills 13,062 are children under 14 years, of whom a large percentage are between the ages of five to eight years old.

Mothers work at machines with babies strapped on their backs, or lying at their feet. Thousands of these babies die in the mills and factories, and those that survive are mostly maimed and crippled for life, or else their health suffers so badly that they die at a very early age.

In every trade and industry the seven-day week is in operation. This time allowed for the one meal, the midday meal, is always inadequate.

The hygiene precautions are nil, and tuberculosis is rampant. The children suffer horrible deformities through working under terrible conditions.

Because of this wide spread use of child labour the foreign imperialists as well as the Chinese capitalists are able to coin millions of dollars profit out of the toil of these children. That is exactly one of the reasons why the British, French, American, Japanese have all their battleships in China today, ready to fly at each others throats and divide China up so that they can better exploit the workers and peasants and enslave their children.

[[images]]

[[caption]] Workers' children on the streets of Accra, Gold Coast.
[[/caption]]

[[caption]] European children in a Kindergarden. [[/caption]]

The workers of all countries must voice their indignation and protest against this outrage. They must refuse to allow themselves to be used as soldiers in murdering each other in the interest of these imperialist robbers. The African workers, whose lands have already been stolen by these same imperialist enslavers must unite with the Chinese masses for the overthrow of the whole system of imperialism. Only the unity of the workers of all races and colours can lead to the freedom of the oppressed peoples.

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