

have any new dress the whole year. My sister is younger than me. She works at neckties and makes \$9. We two keep the family.

"Fun, any fun I have is walking once in awhile. We don't go out nights. Mother won't let us. She makes us go to bed so we can get up early. We're always up at 6.

"I'd a good deal rather be a boy, because boys have a better time. They can keep their money if they want to, but girls have to give up all they make.

"No, I don't read the papers and I don't go to church either. Haven't anything to wear. Most of the time I stay home and sew. My mother goes to church."

At the factory of the U. S. company, West Lake street, I took a machine and tried to stitch shoe linings by steam power. I didn't get on well. The girls were very good to me. One put my machine in order and the way she handled it amazed me. She could not have been a day over 16, but she pulled off the belt, took out the shuttle, threw the whole top over on its side, and examined into the very bowels of the little engine, using first a screw-driver, then the tension gage, and after tightening and loosening alternately, she oiled the whole thing, cleaned it and set it up again. For more than thirty minutes she worked on a piece of morocco before getting the right tension, bravely persisting, however, till all was right, when she gave me a lesson and went back to her own work. The steam was too much for me. I couldn't manage it. It kept running off the seam, and I pressed my knee against the starting wheel to make it go slow until the buckle on my garter got red hot. Kate's sister sat across the aisle making button-holes, and seeing my helplessness, came over and gave me another lesson.

"Take it slow," she said, "like this," flying down the heel seam like a flash of lightning. "Don't worry, you'll learn. I learned myself. You must press the wheel real hard with your leg and then it will go slow."

I thanked her, and for an hour pressed the wheels on the outer side of my right fore-leg which tore the cloth, raveling the edge, and getting very much disgusted with my clumsiness. Just as I was beginning to admire the grateful taciturnity and generous forbearance of Foreman S. he told me I had "better get out," but I begged for tolerance, and sewed away on a pair of rags for another hour. A second time I was told to quit, and again I begged for mercy, but when the wheel in the region of my knee began to burn, I threw down the few pairs of lining I had succeeded in stitching and retired.

The shop where I had my struggle with the steam-power was cut off from the rest of a factory by a partition. Along the windows looking south were the machines, making two rows or aisles, and set so closely together that they almost touched. At each was a girl whose powers of endurance were seemingly no different from the machine operated. Some young girls sat at a cross table finishing buttonholes, for which they were paid \$3 and \$4 a week. Men stood at side tables cutting out shoe and slipper uppers, and behind the machines were young boys of 12, 13 and 14 years, cutting linings. Younger boys were employed in an adjoining department pasting sole-lining in the newly-made shoes, and scores of men were engaged soling, heeling, shaping, and polishing. The walls and ceilings were paneled with soot; oil dripped from the rumbling machinery overhead, and the floors were as black as ink. Although I saw no evidence of rigid discipline, every man, boy, and girl labored with more than conscientious zeal. The labor was servile. Convicts could not have been more industrious with the prison lash curling about them. Work began at 7 o'clock, and while I was wrestling with the steam I saw a number of girls stop work and eat part of their lunch.

Notwithstanding the patient fidelity and untiring industry of these people, their neglect is a disgrace to the manufacturers of Chicago. The closet in which I hung my hat was so dark