

Child Labor The results of a careful and direct investigation of certain unhappy conditions in our country are recorded by Mrs. John Van Vorst in a book called "The Cry of the Children."¹ Mrs. Van Vorst spent six weeks among the cotton mills in Alabama and Georgia, and then visited Maine, New Hampshire, and Massachusetts upon the same quest. She tells us that she relates only what she saw for herself. She began with a fear of sensationalism, but gradually came to the conviction that the simplest account must sound sensational. With the hope of stirring us to action that will procure some remedy for these things, which she says are contrary to every principle of civilization and Christianity, she proceeds to narrate facts. It may not be known to every one that there are at work in our country over a million and a half of children between the ages of ten and fifteen; twenty-five per cent of all the textile operators in the South are under sixteen; two thousand girls under thirteen are doing night work in Penn-

¹ *The Cry of the Children.* By Mrs. John Van Vorst. Moffat, Yard & Co., New York. \$1.25, net.

sylvania ; ninety-two thousand are employed at this age or younger in New York State. They are significantly called "hands"—poor little hands that are so busy all day and so tired at night that the brain and mind and soul have no chance to grow. The stories Mrs. Van Vorst tells are pathetic, and the situation she represents is appalling. We are waking up, and public opinion must make itself felt in the industrial world before long. England has suffered irreparable injury from the same cause—most shockingly disclosed by the physical degeneracy of the common soldiers in the Boer War—but she has waked up, and, after decades of blind greed, has stopped the slaughter of children, but only within the present generation. If child labor continues, we are deliberately manufacturing degenerates along with our cotton and glass. Senator Beveridge in a glowing Introduction declares that nothing but a National law can put an end to the evil, just as it did with lotteries and obscene literature and similar disgraces. He says we must make our indignation felt—"write to your Congressman and Senator, and have everybody you know write to his Congressman and Senator, and ask them what they are doing about this thing—ask them why they do not act. Demand an answer. You will get it if you ask hard enough and long enough."