

## PART VII

### THE WORKERS

#### PERSONAL INFORMATION

Although facts have been accumulated which show that many of the popular concepts about women and their work are erroneous, women's employment in industry is hedged by numerous prejudices based on traditional and habitual modes of thinking. Just as it is customary for the production manager to analyze the product of his factory to discover ways of improving it, so those desirous of bettering human relationships in industry should study the make-up and responsibilities of the workers. A survey covering only wages and hours does not afford the human touch which is an indispensable factor in any social study. Human aspects, such as nativity, age, marital status, living condition, and industrial experience, all are a part of the worker's background affecting her social and economic condition. To procure this personal information, brief interviews were held with a representative number of women in all the industries included in the study. Altogether, questionnaires were filled out for 2,519 women employed in the regular industries and for 736 white women in the canneries,<sup>1</sup> and while it is difficult to reduce to concrete figures facts about human beings, with all their complexities and variabilities, tables have been compiled which are at least suggestive of the outstanding characteristics of women employed in Delaware industries.

#### Nativity.

Immigrant workers, ignorant of industrial conditions and anxious to secure work, often will accept any employment offered them regardless of hours and conditions. Where there are large numbers of foreign born, special labor problems may arise, but in Delaware the proportion is so small that immigrant labor is of minor significance. According to the last census, 8.9 per cent of the population of the State was of foreign birth.<sup>2</sup> Table XVIII shows that, of the white women interviewed, 90.8 per cent were native born and 9.2 per cent foreign born. There was little diversity of nationality, as immigration from Poland and Italy made up about three-fourths (76.6 per cent) of the distribution. The proportion of foreign born varied considerably in the different industries; leather with 26 per cent, cigars

<sup>1</sup>In addition the ages of 431 negro women in the canneries were reported.

<sup>2</sup>U. S. Bureau of the Census. Fourteenth census: 1920. v. 3, Population, 1920. p. 172, Table 9.