

[i]

Old Mills and Reservoir.

July 15th

Extract from Mr. Duckworth's note on
Interview with Messrs. Knight and Sons:-

The oil mill is busy in winter and slack
in summer, when oil cakes are not wanted. This
summer (1893) is an exception. There has been so
little hay that the orders for oil cakes have been
continuous. Oil is made by crushing cotton seed, then
heating it, and then pressing out the oil. On the
oil being pressed out the cakes are left, and become
oil cakes: the edges which have not been pressed
are cut off by a special machine and then
pressed again.

July 15th.

2

Retrad from Dodd's Dictionary of Manufactures
on Oil Mills:

The various seed & oils are pressed and
purified by the following means:

1. Screening: the seeds laid in a heap are
lifted by a self acting elevator and conveyed in
small baskets to a flat screen or sifter to shake
out impurities.

2. Crushing: when thus sifted the seeds
descend between two heavy iron rollers revolving in
opposite directions. Some fruits and nuts require
a rasping action instead of crushing.

3. Grinding: the crushed seeds are laid
upon a bed, and then ground by the action of
two heavy w.p. stones, which both rotate on
their axes, and revolve in a circle. Proper
adjustments insure the equal grinding of the
whole mass, which gradually becomes an oily
paste or dough.

4. Straining: if the oil is too hot
drawn the paste is placed in a vessel
heated by steam, and exposed to the action

of stones or revolving arms, which keep it
in motion.

5. Bagging: - the paste whether heated
or not is transferred to bags made of strong
cloth, and these are placed between other bags
called hairs, made of Larkspur covered with
Lather.

6. Pressing: the bags of seed are
placed in piles in such a way that the
action of the hydraulic press can be brought
to bear on them. This pressure is enormous
amounting sometimes to 300 tons. Under its
influence the oil first separates from the paste,
then passes through the cloth bags, then through
the hair bags, and then through pipes into a
cistern.

7. Stripping: after the paste has been
pressed dry by the expulsion of the oil, the
bags are stripped off from it, and then remain
a kind of board or plank of oil cake, available
to the cattle feeders. According to the kind of
seed fruit or nut, and the degree of refining
required in the oil, some of the processes

4
may be modified, or others added to the number,
but the general routine is as here indicated.

July 16th.

5
Statement of Mr. Alex. Lambert of the
Union Oil and Coke Mills:

Mr. Lambert asked me to send him a
list of questions. I append his answers

1. Various grades of labour with average
rate of wages, and maximum and minimum in
each case:

Answer:-

The workmen employed in the
manufacturing part of this industry are usually
divided into three classes, viz: Pressmen, Moulders,
and Pours.

The wages vary from a maximum of
5/6 to 4/ per diem. In addition to the hands
actually engaged in the manufacture of oil and
coke, a considerable number of men are employed
in the oil, coke and seed departments manipulating
and delivering the products manufactured; these
range from 5/- as a maximum, to 4/ per diem.
When youths can be employed the wages would reach
a minimum of 2/6. The cooperage is also generally

attached to each crushing mill. Wages for skilled hands 5/6 per diem. The above refers wholly to the wholesale trade in London. In the Country wages would be much lower as a rule.

2. Are there any deductions from wages in the shape of fines or otherwise?

Answer:-

No deductions are made from wages.

3. Do the men have to bear any special dues or to buy any and what tools or implements out of their wages?

Answer:-

There is no special dues. Tools are supplied by employers.

4. Have the men any opportunity of adding to their wages by methods legitimate or otherwise?

Answer:-

Opportunity affords the only means of adding to their wages.

5. What are the hours of labour?

Answer:-

35

The Mills are as a rule worked right and day by two shifts from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. and vice versa. The machinery being engaged to turn out so many "sets" per hour the men in addition to one hour per die for meals have a few minutes interval between each "set". This materially reduces the actual amount of labour during the hours of work.

Each hour work $9\frac{1}{2}$ hours exclusion of meals

6. Is overtime worked? If yes at what rate per hour?

In the Mills there is no overtime, but an extra payment is made if the number of sets is increased.

In other departments such as handling and or delivering Oil and Lard overtime is paid at rates settled by agreement; in some cases one and a half in others double ordinary rates.

7. What is usual an allowance for meals?
Are they taken ~~on~~ on or off the premises?

Answer:-

Half or less is allowed for breakfast and for dinner as a rule, but the custom varies in different mills. As a rule men take their meals off the premises, but there are usually facilities for their taking them on the works if they wish.

8. Do men get any and what holiday or holidays during the year?

Answer:-

Only foremen as a rule have regular holidays, but men can take a few days if they wish by sacrificing their wages. Such an application is rarely made. There is no bank or bank or other statutory holidays and the men have one in addition for their New Year.

9. Are there long and short seasons? If yes for what causes?

Answer:-

As a rule the winter season September to April is the busiest season, the work being slack in the summer owing to the smaller demand for feeding labor.

10. Are men laid off during slack seasons?

Answer:-

As a rule the work to be done is divided among the milk herds so that if not fully employed they may get say three days a week in slack times.

11. Do men turn out during slack times usually take to any other trade?

Answer:-

They wait for the numerous openings for unskilled labor in London docks and wharf work etc.

12. Has there been any displacement of labor by machinery?

Answer:-

Not little. In some operations labour saving
appliances can be utilized; but speaking as a whole
then the use and is unlikely to be any material
displacement of hand labour by machinery.

13. Is there any female, foreign, or
boy labour in the trade?

Answer:-

No female or foreign labour.

14. Is there any apprenticeship?

Answer:-

12 | No apprenticeship. The work
is on the border line between skilled and
unskilled, and can be learnt by an intelligent
man in a few weeks, though as in other trades
it takes time to become a skilled hand.

15. What is the effect of the trade on
health? Is there any special disease from which
the men suffer?

Answer:-

Mill hands work under favourable

11
condition of health. The Mills are worn
without being excessively heated: the oil is
considered good for pulmonary affections. Gardeners
work under the same conditions as ordinary labourers.
Certain kinds of seed used are dusty, and the
hands engaged in manipulating them suffer from
dust, but are very amenable to taking precautions
against injury.

16. Are men thrown out of work early
in life, and if yes for what cause?

Answer:-

So long as a man is able
bodied there is nothing to prevent his continuing to
work. No special strength or aptitude is necessary.

17. Do there any Union of or Association
of Masters or men? Are the relations of
Masters and men generally good?

Answer:-

There is no Union of Masters.
A Union of men exists or did exist but
appears not to be an active body. (Private.)

I am informed that quite recently a reduction of 10% was accepted (even in the old mill in London without a strike).

18. What is the position of the trade in London? Is it advancing, a standing, and for what causes?

Answer:-

There is the great centre of the cracker trade. London stands next, Liverpool third. It cannot be called an advancing trade. Heavy ~~export~~ import duties on oil on the Continent and in America check the export of the article. On the other hand feeding lakes are exported from the countries which protect the industry and thereby seriously restrict the home consumption of Feeding lakes manufactured in England.

Note. The above remarks are intended to be as general as possible, but the writer necessarily draws his information mainly from his own experience. They apply only to blended, cotton

seed, and Rape seed of which kinds of Cuckoo,
alone the writer has any experience.

July 22nd.

14

Note of Interview with Mr. S. Krocker:-

Mr. Krocker is partner in the firm of John Dunstall who are agents for the sale of oil cake.

He gave me the names of several firms who he thought might give information, but said he should probably have great difficulty in finding out much, as he thought that the relations of capital and labour in the trade were not good.

The trade generally in England is in a depressed condition, as America floods us with oil cake at an exceedingly low price.

Aug. 12th.

18

Note of Interview with Mr E. Darrell.

Mr Darrell would have communicated with us sooner had he not thought that we were connected with the Salvation Army. On finding out his mistake he kindly wrote and asked me to go to his works and lunch with him, as he had no time to see me during business hours.

I found that Mr Darrell's work consisted chiefly in oil boiling and refining, and in the making of paints, enamels, and varnishes.

Wages. The wages of oil boiler varies from 30/- to 50/- a week.

Millmen who ~~run~~ attend to the paint grinding machines earn from 28/- to 35/-.

Men engaged in refining and making varnishes and paint earn from 24/- to 28/-.

Hours. Mr Darrell has reduced the

Number of hours in his factory from 56 to 50 a week and the men do not now begin work till 8 o'clock. He thinks that throughout the trade generally, the hours are about 56.

Regularity. The trade is regular throughout the year; no hands are ever discharged.

Though men are more respectable and drink less than they used to 20 years ago they do not do their work so well or nearly so fast as they used to.

Mr. Burch has instituted a Mess Room for his men, where they get an excellent dinner at a cost of 1/6 per head.

Mr. Burch says that the trade in silk and varnishes is in a prosperous condition in London, and is if anything increasing at the expense of other centres.

Sept. 17th.

Note on Interview with the Foreman of Messrs. W. and W. H. Stead of Blackwall: -

Mr. Stead, who was out of town, had left word that if I called his foreman was to see me.

There are two systems of cake making now in operation in England; under the old system more labour was required than under the new or Anglo-American system which is entirely ~~such~~ automatic and unskilled as far as the labour is concerned. At many mills both systems are in operation though the Anglo-American is becoming universal. Though fewer men are employed in the Anglo-American the wages are higher, as one man will now turn out 20 cakes in the time in which he formerly made 12.

Wages. Under the old system the wages of Pressmen averaged 24s, of Grinders 22s, and of Pans 18s.
Under the Anglo-American system the

18

Wages average 32/ for Presmen, 26/ for
Knollers, 22/ for Grinders, and 20/ for Pans,
who as a rule are lads.

Hours are 12 a day less one hour for
meals, though most mills close at 2 on Saturday,
making in all 62 hours a week.

No regular holidays are given, but men
frequently take a day off.

Regularity. From the beginning of September
to the end of April is the season, and some
men, usually the younger ones, have to be
dismissed in the slack time. Nearly all mills
keep some of their machines going in the
summer, and some of the men are employed
in cleaning the machinery etc.

Health. The work is not unhealthy, and
the foreman denies the statement of Mr. Hans
before the Labour Commission that the mills
are usually unhealthily hot. It depends entirely
he says on the construction of the mill, and

19
the facilities for ventilation. He took me into the mill, where the machinery was then at rest and shows me that it was lofty and admirably ventilated at the top.

Method of learning. It was usual under the old system to go through a year's apprenticeship but this is now unknown. Any man can be taken in from the street and taught his work in a few hours.

The Union. In 1809 some men joined the Dockers' Union, but few if any now belong to it.

The trade generally is in a bad condition, and it is impossible for English masters to compete with America, France, Russia, Italy, and Egypt, all of which make cakes. The French can deliver cake at Southampton £1 a ton cheaper than English manufacturers can supply it. This is due entirely to the greater cheapness of labour in France. The

French marts etc done for 11/ week which
in England costs 30/. It is very doubtful if
the marts will be able to carry on much longer;
those who are still prosperous make their money
chiefly by gambling in produce, and buying
in advance.

Sept. 25th.

21

Note on Interview with Mr John Knight
of the Liberton Soap Works:-

Our information being scanty I had
a further interview with Mr John Knight
who is an oil miller as well as soap maker.
Mr Knight crushes only cotton seed.

Wages Mr Knight pays as a wages
return two years ago which he says is still
substantially correct. He pays his men more
than is usual in other mills.

Hours are the same as in other mills.

Regularity. The difference between the slack
and busy season is very slight at Knight's
mill.

At the time of the Dockers' strike a
number of Knight's hands joined the Union
chiefly as the result of gross intimidation.
Mr Knight told his men that if they could

find another soap work or oil mill in the world when the wages were so high as his he would at once raise his wages to the same level; they were unable to do so and subsequently expressed themselves as satisfied with their position. Since then Mr Knight thinks that all the men who joined the Union have left it.

At that time wages were raised in many mills through the action of the Union, but Mr Knight believes that in most cases they have slipped back to the old level.

A great deal of the foreign competition from which the trade now suffers is the direct result of the strikes of that period; a large number of mills were built in Egypt, which now sends thousands of cakes to England.

The rate of profit is very small, and any attempt to raise wages any further would inevitably drive the trade out of the country. At the present moment however the labour market is in

a quiet condition: the majority of the men
have seen the folly of their ways. The officials
are however making great efforts to stir up
further agitation, as their living depends on
keeping the Union going.

Sept. 29th.

24

Note on Interview with Mr W. E. Page
Manager to Messrs. W. P. Dick and Co.:-

Messrs. W. P. Dick are Oil Refiners, a
trade of whom there are few representatives
in London.

Wages average for men 24/- a week.
For the most part it is quite unskilled
consisting only of filling and rolling casks
Forner, who must know something about the
process of refining, earning as much as 36/-
a week. The men on an average earn 2/-
a week from overtime.

Hours are from 6 to 6 with an hour
and half for meals.

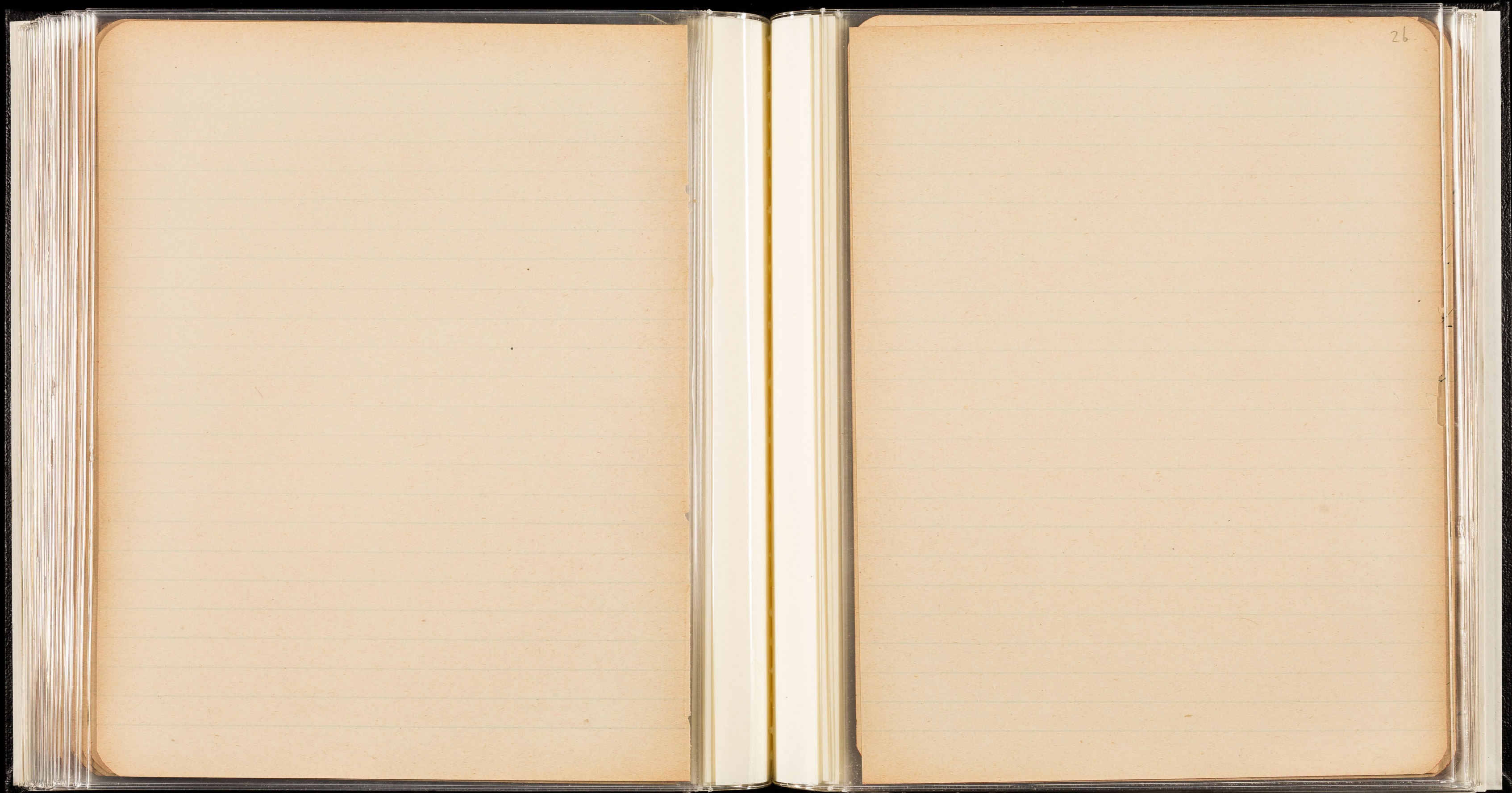
Regularity. The trade is quite regular
throughout the year; no hands are ever
discharged.

Health There is nothing unhealthy in

the trade, and men often look on to a great age. Messrs. Dick have one man who has been at the work for 55 years

The men have never belonged to any Union and seem to be quite contented with their lot. There has never been any trouble between masters and men in the trade.

The chief business of the oil refiners is in ~~making~~ refining oils for lubricating machinery, and ~~with~~ this foreign competition has not yet seriously interfered. The refining of lighting oils has however been almost killed in England by the Standard Oil Trust of America.



26

Interview with Messrs. Hooper and Co.
of High St, Stratford:-

Men - 4 Jam boilers. Foremen in
the Jam room, women carrying etc. under them.
2 sub boilers - same class of skill.
11 packing and corner. Fixed wages 45/-, 55/-, 50/-.

Women Piece workers - ~~same~~ 30 earn 15/-
11 earn 18/- - Day workers - 10 at 10/-
and 10 at 8/-, the latter merely carrying boxes
etc. from filling rooms to carts etc. Others
engaged at filling, labelling, varnishing tins
for export etc.

The export jam is all in tins except when
parochets take the risk.

Payment by piece work found more
convenient than regular wage because there is
no dispute about raising the wages. If a
complaint as to earnings should arise the
complainant is told that she should work
quicker and so earn more. The 12/- to 15/-
are "young ladies" the 8/- to 10/- are

"Jatkend"

Packing made of fine strips of wood nearly double the cost of straw and yet ~~not~~ cheaper in the end.

Jam Making - Fruit in tins. S. of apricots from France, Spain, Portugal and Italy also the Balearic Isles - used to come from California too, but cost more and considered not worth the difference. These apricots have been merely boiled and sent out in tins. They are placed in the boiling pans, heated by steam and sugar added. In the soft fruit season crowds of women employed picking stalks for whole fruit jams. For ordinary jam a machine is used to separate stalks and stones from the softer substance.

Pickling. Better pay than jam making because shorter work, especially in winter when vegetables, which have to be kept out in cold, are handled with vinegar which stings the chapped hands. Filling bottles with mixed

pickles is better paid than filling bottles with onions or cabbage. The mixed pickles have to be artistically arranged with same proportions of each kind in the mixed bottles. Onions are most expensive to pickle - consequently in a bottle of pickles ~~an~~ every onion is always visible from the outside though perhaps a cabbage may fill up the middle - an onion is never allowed to enjoy oblivion.

Busy all year round because export trade to the Cape and Australia in English summer.

Sheet making - in pans over fire, the steam process used in jam making is not powerful enough for sheets. Busiest time in winter. When hot weather begins youngsters prefer to spend their pence on sherbet and drinks.

Bottles made in France and Belgium. Large bottles made in England because freight smashes them. Curious superstition that mappesia must be in the bottles, no reason for it.

it except people won't buy it if in any other bottle.

Lime Juice and Lemon Juice - former is bright and latter cloudy. Sometimes people ask that lemon juice should be clear. Its matter of fact the juice of a lemon is bound to be cloudy. Hence some make adverbs "Our lemon juice is not bright". Another adverb "Our lemon juice is the only bright juice in the trade".

Interview with Messrs. Hazard Bros.
Kearney Road:

Busy Season. Feb. March and April for
pickling, canning etc. Same number of hands
generally all the year round. In slack season
work easier in busy season a little extra
paid. The workers prefer to work rather
harder rather than risk the competition which
extra hands might excite.

Men 17 including laborers (15)
earning from 10/ to 25/. Those at 10/ to
20/ are more lads, one receiver and delivery
of goods, 1 foreman, a cooper and
superintendent of brining.

Pickling. The vegetables are washed
and then placed in casks of salt and water,
the process of brining which is carried on at
the Salamander works near the river. After
this the vegetables are placed in vinegar, then
washed and cut up, and again sprinkled with

nicer. They are then ready for bottling.

Women. The regular wages for piec work among the picklers. 5 girls employed at piec work filling packets of baking powder and acidity powder.

30 fillers, finishers, and sauce finishers at 10/ to 12/.

Pickle filling requires most skill and slight difference in wage among them owing to length of service.

21 at 7/ to 9/ washing jars and cutting up.

1 forewoman at 13/.

2 girls at 5/ tying up parcels or on errands.

Boys. 12 at 5/ to 15/.

A large trade in penny bottles of curry powder, ketchup, glycerine etc.

Some thousands of gross of these penny bottles sent out in a year. Just under 3/4 is paid for a 1/2 bottle to the maker.

23

In the picking Department or rather the finishing room I noticed they were labelling the bottles with a Salvation Army label. The Army Store in Cluckwell Road obtain their pickles from here, and insist on their labels being affixed. Asked if H. Bos did not object to having their pickles so labelled they replied it was a matter of opinion and to keep their custom with the Army they were willing to put on any labels they pleased.

Curious development among the women is their habit of borrowing. One pay day the foreman the Boss paid the wages and noticed groups of the women outside and other women not being workers. Discovered that the strangers had come to collect their loans and had been lending largely at 2% int in the 1/1. The Boss to check this offered to lend small sums only charging 1% in the 1/1, and the workers borrowed in all some £10, 19 of them immediately taking advantage of the offer. As soon as the capital sums had been

repaid the interest they had paid meanwhile was restored to them, but upon receiving this they immediately started another loan of 5/ or 6/ as if they would not allow themselves to be free from debt. This habit of borrowing seems to be mostly among the married women. The Poor rate continues this lending scheme in order to save the labor from the professional money lender, but he returns them the interest they have paid when he thinks it may come in useful to them.

Interview with Cross and Blackwell:

Pickers. Went over factory or rather certain rooms with foreman - very critical. Saw women picking - the finishing room mostly - also the room where the stoppers are made for pickle bottles. These stoppers were made by six or seven women each working a different process for her portion of the manufacture. Young Mr. Blackwell told me that all were employed at regular wages, and the higher wages in the slack season is due to fact that best hands are retained.

R. D. most unsatisfactory interview. They evidently intended that I should see and learn as little as possible. Mr. D. just back from his holiday, and unable to give any valuable information.

see Index on last photo

Index

- Page 1. Interview with J. Knight
" 2. Extract from Todd's Dictionary.
" 5. Statement of Mr. Alan Lambert.
" 14. Interview with Mr. E. Crocker.
" 15. " Mr. E. Darnell.
" 17. " Freeman to Messrs. Stead.
" 21. " Mr. J. Knight
" 24. " Mr. W. E. Page.

