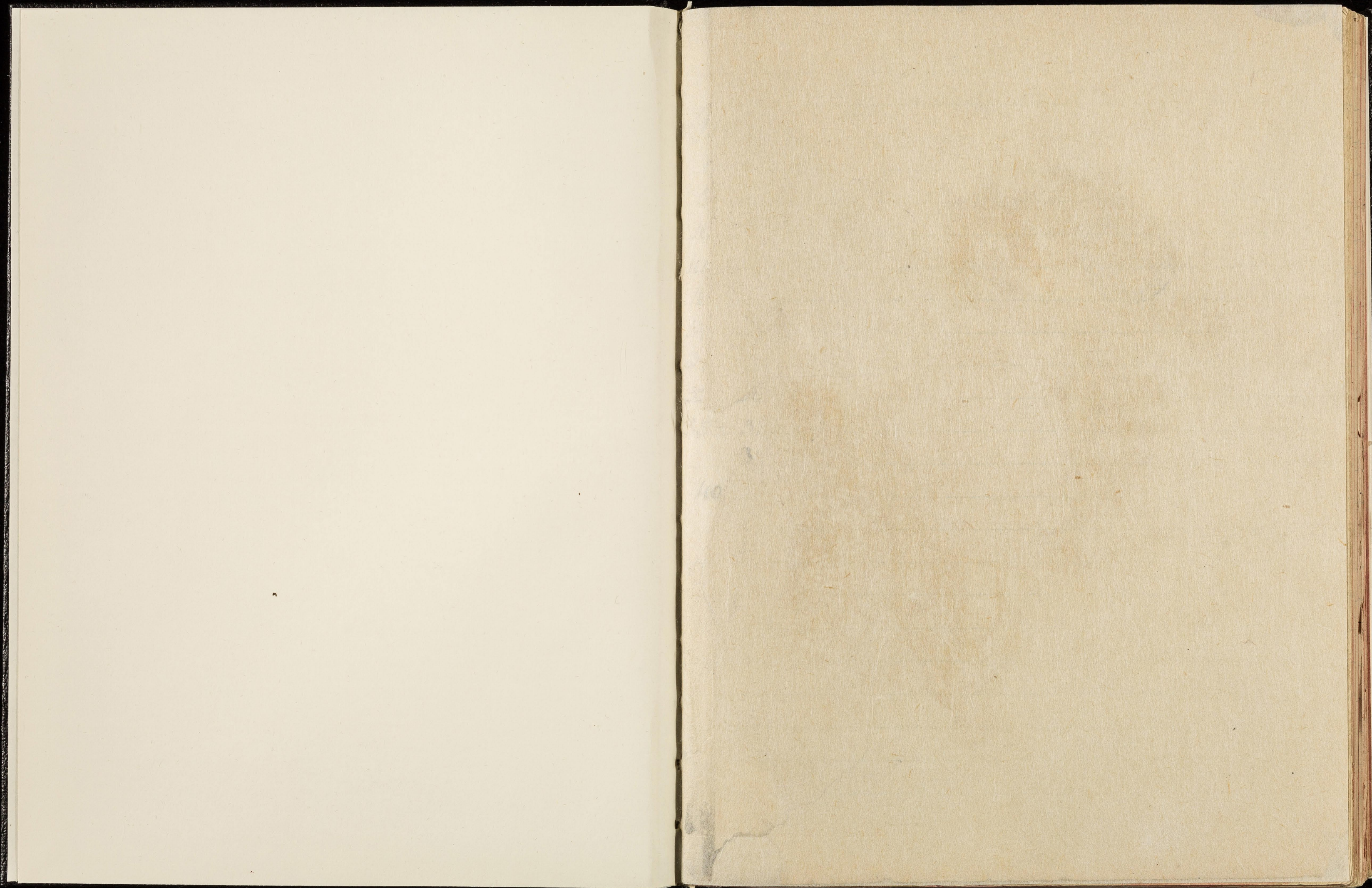


Silk + Woollen Goods  
Interviews



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Silk and Woollen Goods

VA 2

Interviews



Index

Page	
1-5	Messrs. Cook Son, Law,
6-9 <sup>A</sup>	Messrs. G. Gibben & Co
10-16 <sup>B</sup>	" Sandell, Philips & Co
14-16	" James. Platt. & Co
16-18	" Sandell. Philips & Co
19-26	" Adams & Portsmouth
27-32	" Wilbey & Co
32-34	From Household Words
35-38	Messrs. W. Peter's & Sons.
39	H. Williams
40-43	Mr Collins (carpenters)
44	Sackemaking.

Messrs COOK, Son & Law

Carpet manufacturers

12 Friday St, E.C.

Called on this firm on Jan. 16. 95

Their works are in Yorkshire,  
or they have only warehouses here.

Carpet weaving used to be a fairly  
large business in London, but Mr. Cook  
thinks it was entirely died out now.  
Does not know of a single loom going  
here.

There are still the remnants of  
a once large rug weaving industry, but  
it is dying out.

The principal portion of what is  
left belongs to

D. & B. Gladding (Saw  
introduced)  
& France R  
Bernersley.

There are also

Walter Smith

Hackney Wooms

or Tophin, Orange St. Bernersley  
probably still existing.

Transferred to  
Section 48  
Tramway Bank

J. H. & J. Huddiford

Trimming & fringe makers,

32 Leonard St. E.C.

Jan. 16. 95

Saw the Principal,

There work is mainly in jet & colored bent trimmings, made by girls & women, & nearly all done with the needle. Women trimmings have almost entirely died out, & whereas they used to employ 27 male weavers, they now find it very difficult to keep one man going. On the other hand, needlework has greatly increased. They have now about 90 females at work on the premises, altho' it is the slack time, & also employ some outdoor workers, the number being increased when busy.

All the work done here is of the best kind, & includes very elaborate & beautiful designs, worth 23/- to 25/-

a yard.

Cheaper work is done on a large scale by R. Evans & Company, W. Williams & Sons, Withal (Brunswick Place), & Kerr (Bethnal Green).

Seasons. - The busy times are from Feb. to Whitsun, & from Sept. to Xmas. Mr. Muddiford complains of Factory Act interfering with them a good deal in busy times.

Character of Work. - It is all piece work, & so far as possible is shared amongst the hands.

The beading is mostly done on net, & is set off to some extent with silk or metal cord, wh. is woven or spun by the men. The men also make silk girdles for dressing gowns & children's dresses. 3 or 4 men are employed to do the spinning.

Girls are not apprenticed, but come

on & are taught the work, & earnings vary from 5/- to 15/- according to ability. The work requires a good deal of practice & knack to obtain proficiency, & the firm never willingly part with their trained hands. When they leave to get married they offer their home work if they will take it, & usually they do so. Thus some of their out-door hands are married women who worked for them as girls.

The work is nearly all for special orders, & being light, clean & delicate, naturally attracts a very respectable class of girls, many of whom are kept by their parents, & use their own earnings for dress or pocket money.

As a rule the best work is done on the firm, where it can be closely supervised, & any error in the intricate pattern immediately rectified. Commonly



work can be more safely given out.

The firm also make goods of Berlin wool, & do a certain amount of embroidery work, but there is little of this now.

Mr. Muddiman promises an introduction to J. H. Cox, baby garment maker, whose brother makes babies boots.

Jan 23. 95

G. Lubben & Co., cloth shrinkers & finishers, Rose St., Soho.

There are about 400 persons in this trade in London, nearly all being men. This firm employs 30.

Mr. D. does not think there is a yard of cloth woven in London. The cloth comes mainly from the West of England & from Yorkshire & Scotland. It is purchased by the wholesale cloth merchants, who then in some cases employ finishers on their own premises, & in other cases give it out to firms like his (Bibb's), Pearless & Son, Farr & Co. (both large firms) & others, to be finished.

Only the best kind of cloth is finished in London, inferior methods being employed in the country. London has a high reputation for this work, inasmuch

that foreign buyers of cloth in this country have it finished in London before sending it away, in preference to having it done in their own country, altho' they thereby take some risk of its being injured again in the carriage.

There are 5 processes in finishing: viz. shrinking, drying, examining, pressing & folding. The least competent men are employed in the first 2 processes, & such boys as are engaged are put to assist in this after starting by carrying the cloth about, &c. The cloth is plucked by being laid between wet sheets for a certain time, & is then hung on laths in a hot room to dry. It is then carefully examined to see if there are any flaws, & this requires considerable judgment, not only in detecting them, but in deciding whether they are such as can be

8  
passed or remedied, or whether the  
fault is of such a nature as  
to warrant the manufacturer being  
called on to make it good.

Having passed the examiner, the  
cloth is placed on large presses,  
& is then folded, this being skilled  
work.

Wages. - The average wage paid  
by this firm is 32/- a week, wh.  
Mr. D. thinks is above the usual  
rate. Shrinkers get 20/- to 24/-;  
examiners, pressers & folders about  
30/- <sup>to 36/-</sup> <sup>the highest wage.</sup> The men who set the presses get  
Hours here are 54 per week,  
being 8 to 7 from Monday to Friday,  
with  $\frac{1}{2}$  hr. for meals, & 6.30 to 2 on  
Saturdays, with  $\frac{1}{2}$  hr. breakfast or  
same for lunch. Most firms com-  
mence at 6.30 each day, but all  
work the 54 hr. week.

Time work is the rule. The

cloth goes thro' too many processes to permit of piece work.

It is a Seasonal trade, the busy time being from Oct to Dec. & May & June. At these periods it is necessary to work some overtime, for wh. the men are paid at the ordinary day rate.

In the slack time some of the larger firms will discharge 20 or 30 <sup>men</sup> at a time. He only puts off about 4 or 6, the rest going on short time when necessary.

This is a very old firm, & some of the men have worked with them a very long time. He therefore keeps them on <sup>sometimes</sup> when he has not the work for them to do.

He started a bonus scheme, giving his men extra for all the work they produced over a certain amount. It used to come to about 2/6 a week on each man's wages. When this got

know the men at other firms agitated for more wages, & it led indirectly to the starting of a Trade Union. He has now dropped this scheme & pays a higher wage as desired by the Union.

The Union is weak, & some employers will not recognize it, ~~at~~ It is credited by some of the employers with being the cause of the Union starting, & is disliked by them accordingly.

The business of the cloth finisher in London is stationary, but several fresh firms of cloth merchants have taken to doing their own finishing, so that the work has really increased.

Fauddel Philips & Co.

Jan. 28. 95

Interview with Mr. Pignou, manager of Trimming factory, Australian Avenue, E.C.

There are from 25 to 30 young women & girls employed here regularly in making trimmings of various kinds - tassels, upholstery hangings, cushions & other fancy borders, art needlework mountings, furniture & millinery pom-poms, etc.

Two men are kept at work entirely in spinning <sup>silk</sup> cords for use in mountings, & in making quilts, & they also do a little work in weaving fringes.

Hours of work are from 9 till 8, with 1 hr. interval for dinner & 1/2 hr. for tea.

In the busy season the full amount of overtime allowed by law is worked. Usually the girls work 2 hrs. extra nominally, with 1/2 hr. interval, but they really keep on till 9.30 without the interval & are paid as though working till

10.

About  $\frac{1}{2}$  the girls are on time &  $\frac{1}{2}$  on piece.

Training & Wages. — girls are taken on at 14 or 15 (not apprenticed now), & start at 4/- a wk. They remain on time work for 3 or 4 years, rising to 8/- or 9/- a week, & being then proficient are put on piece work, when their earnings vary from 10/- to (in busy times) 18/- or 20/-. Sometimes the learner obtains proficiency sooner than this, & so is set on piece earlier.

The busy seasons are from the middle of Feb. to middle or end of April, & from the beginning of Sept. to the second week in Dec.

In slack times the piece hands work short time, & the day workers are allowed to leave  $\frac{1}{2}$  an hour earlier.

A few outdoor hands are employed



12  
in the busy time, but the widow workers  
are supplied first. Those working at  
home can get the help of children.

The men are not highly paid. One of  
them, on piece, can make £2 to £2.5 when  
busy, but has a good deal of lost  
time. The other men has about 26/-  
a wk.

I was shown through the workrooms.  
The girls seemed a very respectable &  
comfortable class - well & neatly dressed.

They were nearly all making millinery  
pompons (i.e., fluffy knob ornaments for bonnets  
or). They are made of "tissot" silk  
(which is the choicest & most inferior kind),  
in a great variety of shapes. The  
work seemed to be a good deal sub-  
divided. One young woman made up the  
silk into a suitable bunch <sup>or skein</sup> of threads of the  
right colour, a second tied them with  
cotton thread at regular intervals, a third

cut them midway between each knot, a  
fork comb them out, & so get rid of  
the loose fluff, & a fifth trimmed the  
ends & gave them their round shape.

This seemed all very simple, but there  
is much more difficult work in the long  
time.

The silk cord is all spun over a  
cotton body, save in case of an exceptional  
order for a cord of pure silk.

14  
Jas. Platt & Sons, wholesale cloth  
merchants, St. Martin's Lane.

Mr. Platt believes that no cloth  
is made in London.

They do their own shrinking, or  
employing 5 men for this purpose.

They have the latest machinery.  
The cloth is shrunk by means of steam.  
The machine is in the form of a long  
box, about 3 ft. high, & is traversed by  
iron pipes, through which steam is made  
to pass. The cloth is ~~folded~~<sup>hung</sup> in folds  
across these pipes & quickly becomes  
saturated. It is left in this position  
for a time varying according to quality  
of cloth, & the steam being turned off  
it very soon dries, & does not need  
to be hung up again for that purpose.  
On being taken from the machine it is  
~~fast~~<sup>soiled</sup> between sheets of cardboard, then put  
in a press, & after <sup>wards</sup> done up into rolls  
by means of a rolling machine.

Wages, or. - Hours are 48 per week,  
& wages from 25/- to 35/-

There is some overtime in the busy  
season, paid for at rate of ordinary  
time. The men get regular work  
all the year.

The effect of seasons is largely  
obviated by the firm getting their cloth in  
stock a long way in advance of  
the seasonal demand, & so working  
steadily at it.

There is no apprenticeship. Men  
employed here have had previous knowledge  
of the trade in other shops.

41

Fandel Phillips & Co.

Interview with Mr. Ballus (tracing & embroidery depts.)

About a dozen men are employed here in marking ornamental designs on various ~~fabrics~~ fancy goods, such as night dress cases, antimacassars, handkerchiefs, napkins, &c. The work is sometimes to order, as in the case of crests & monograms, but mostly for stock.

Mr. Ballus himself does the designing. The design, if a very elaborate one, is first drawn on tracing paper, & is then run over with a perforating machine, an instrument with a sharp point wh. pierces ~~the~~ the tracing with tiny holes. Simple patterns can be drawn direct with this machine, wh. substitutes the old method of pricking the design by hand with a pin. <sup>the reverse</sup> One side of the design is then carefully rubbed or dabbed <sup>over</sup> with a dry colored powder, & the pattern ~~then~~ laid on the article to be marked. A flat iron

is passed over, giving the impression to the article, & this is made fast by being pressed with a very hot iron. A large number of articles can thus be stamped from one design.

The work is quickly learnt, but it requires care, skill, & delicacy, in order to make just the right amount of color & impression, so that the design is clearly & neatly produced on the goods, & is not smeared or blurred in any way. Care has also to be taken in order to keep the articles clean, & prevent dabs of color in the wrong places.

Seasons are as in the fancy trade generally, but the men make practically full time all the year here, & in the busy time get a good deal extra.

Hours are from 8.30 to 6 ordinary days, & 8.30 to 2 on Saturday, but for last 6 weeks the men have been working till 8, making 2 hrs overtime a day, for which they

are paid at the rate of one third beyond ordinary time.

Mr. B. says these terms are exceptionally good, & not at all usual in the fancy trades. There is very little of this work done in London.

The young women & girls (about 14 employed) do embroidery & sewing.

Hours & conditions of work same as for men.

Mr. B. promises wages returns.

The conditions of work appear to be healthy & favorable altogether here.

No apprenticeship. Grade learnt under usual conditions.

Interview with Messrs Adams & Portsmouth  
President & Secretary of the Mat & Matting  
Weavers Trade Society.

The Society founded 1868. has about 100 financial  
members. Entrance fee is 10/- & subscription 3/-  
a week. Benefits are 10/- a week out of work pay  
for 12 weeks, £6 at death of member & £4 wife  
in case of a strike, a levy is agreed upon.

Except in a few small shops union & non-  
-union men do not work together. Relations  
with employers are good. There is a full  
scale of prices (all work being piece) & they  
are readily acceded to by the employers.

There are two main Divisions of work

- (1) Mat making
- (2) Matting weaving.

Mats are made mainly of cocoa fibre but  
they often have a wool border, & designs  
monograms, initials etc. are usually  
worked out in wool, but sometimes with  
dyed fibre. These mats are all mens work  
& made by hand. Platted or chained mats  
are also mens work, but are made both



by hand or machine.

Matting is made of fibre yarn, & for this women are employed in pulling out warping, & winding the yarn, the actual weaving being done by men as is also the sheating & finishing off. at Goodaeres, Victoria Dock Rd. women do weaving. This house is said to be a mystery, & sweating prices are believed to prevail.

The fibre & yarn are imported from Beylon, & come over compressed tightly in bales. The fibre is first placed in a machine called a masticator or 'devil' which tears it to pieces.

<sup>Conditions of</sup> Employment - Hours of work vary in different factories, but are usually about 48 per week, work however is extremely intermittent & probably the average hours worked do not exceed 30 a week.

It being all piece work, earnings differ greatly, for, apart from the ordinary divergency of skill, speed

& steadiness a good deal depends on the nature of the material used. Prices being based on the number of 'ends' or <sup>threads</sup> used, <sup>in any given piece of work,</sup> have no reference to the quality of the fibre, & it is thus possible to earn with some kinds of material twice the amount that can be gained with other sorts. On the whole, 3<sup>s</sup> 7d for men represents a <sup>fairly</sup> good weeks work, & 1<sup>s</sup> is about the average amount per week taking the year through.

For women the usual wage is from 5d to 10d; in a few cases from 12d to 15d is earned. <sup>The rate is not much affected by seasons, but is on the whole lowest in Spring & Autumn.</sup> There are no particular seasons of work. When things are very slack a few men are discharged, but the more general practice is to share the work.

Boys are apprenticed for 3 years. They are put on piece <sup>work,</sup> & the employe <sup>deducts usually</sup> has <sup>1/4</sup> the 1/2 of their earnings.

The work is dusty, but not unhealthy & men keep at it to an advanced age. They rarely change employers.

There are 4 large firms & 4 or 5 small ones, in addition to a number of men who make & hawk mats. About 300 persons in all in the Trade in London. There used to be a considerably larger number (the Society itself had nearly 300 at one time) but the trade has declined, & many have gone out of it. The chief reason of the falling off is that it was originally a London Trade, & we used to make mats for America France, & Germany, but these countries have now learned to make their own, while Belgium competes for our home supply.

The main struggle of the Trade Union for many years has been against prison labour. Until recent years, mats were made in

Prison Labour -

The trade is one which has been largely affected by prison labour.

many English <sup>gaols</sup> prisons, & were disposed of under conditions obviously unfair to men who had to obtain a living in this way. The method usually adopted was for a manufacturer to supply the prison with the material & a man to instruct the prisoners, & then to pay a certain price for the work produced, perhaps  $\frac{1}{3}$  of what he would have had to pay for the same work if done outside.

Rediculous prices are stated to have been sometimes paid to the prison authorities by the contractors, in some cases amounting <sup>to</sup> little <sup>more</sup> than a penny a week per man. <sup>The mats were made in frames (looms not being used) & were</sup> Generally the work produced was of inferior kind, but long term prisoners sometimes got ~~some~~ very skilled & turned out good work. <sup>principally on the part of the miss trade unions,</sup> As a result of continued agitation, mat making has now been abolished in English gaols, excepting to supply the



of enforced confinement, have described themselves as mat makers ~~which~~ arranged for fresh offences.

### Social habits

The <sup>most</sup> great majority of the men live near their work, & can go home to meals.

There is no special dress, <sup>but</sup> some have a piece of leather fastened on the chest to prevent the chafing of the breast beam of the looms.

Some of the shops have a sick & loan club, into which the members pay 6<sup>p</sup> per week; men may borrow sums of £1, repayable at 2/- a week with 1<sup>p</sup> in the <sup>shilling</sup> pound interest, & fines in default. Sick pay of 10/- or 12/- a week is given for 8 weeks, & half those amounts for a second 8 weeks, & £4 is paid for a member, & £2 for members wife, at death. Any surplus is shared out at Xmas, excepting 1/-

London 1847

per member. Friendly meetings are also usual for distressed fellow workmen, & with Trade Union <sup>Subscription</sup> ~~Society~~ being the outgoings to about 11- per week for purposes of this kind.

Some of the men's wives do warping, winding, etc, many of the women in these branches being married.

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The Trades Union has spent a good deal of money (£2,000 in all they reckon) in assisting provincial mat makers to resist reductions in wages.

Their efforts have not been very successful, & this outlay, coupled with the recent bad times, has greatly reduced their funds, & they are now considering means of increasing them.

March 13. 95.

Visited Factory of Willey & Co (really Drelour's)  
cocoa fibre matting manufacture. Holland. St.  
Southwark.

Process of <sup>manufacture</sup> The work is divided into two branches

viz. Matting weaving &  
Mat <sup>making</sup> manufacturing

The material of which both are <sup>manufactured</sup> made is  
imported from beyond Malabar & Cochin  
principally, Cochin sending the highest  
& finest description. It comes over packed  
tightly in bales, in the form of loose  
cocoa nut fibre & skeins <sup>of</sup> yarn (or twisted fibre)

The yarn is first dealt with by women  
who sort the skeins according to size, unwind  
them, so as to form long loose coils, & then  
prepare the yarn for the warp or wind it  
on large shuttles for the weft. It then  
goes to the weavers who are usually  
men. They spread the work on the roller  
of their loom & otherwise affix it so as  
to <sup>form</sup> provide the basis of their work & by  
throwing in the weft or shuttle from side



to side, weave it into plain matting or work it in any required pattern, which as it runs in lines only, can be done in the same loom.

In the manufacture of mats, yarn is as a rule only used for the warp, fibre being employed to form the pile & jute for the weft. The fibre first goes through a machine called a 'devil' which cleans & tears it into fine loose silky substances. Seated at his loom with a large hammock shaped sackful of fibre at his side, the weaver, with the motion of his foot on the treadle raises the top layer or shade of threads which comprise the warp, & catching up a handful or 'take' of the fibre, twists it deeply around each thread so that the ends stand upright like an unkempt <sup>hair</sup> ~~band~~ of hair, secures it with 2 or 3 throws of the shuttle, & then with a huge pair of shears trims it off evenly, & starts a fresh row, so continuing until the mat is of the proper size.

When patterns have to be made, he has a copy of the design before him, & introduces at the right point in each row the colored fibre or wool of which the pattern is formed. Where mats have a woollen border, the <sup>the operator</sup> (packs it tightly by striking it with a heavy <sup>the</sup> ~~batten~~ frame of the loom.)

wool is twisted in bops, which are afterwards cut in the centre so as to form the pile. This <sup>the cutting</sup> work is usually done by a woman, who also turns in the ends & binds the mats.

Mats which have no border, have their rough ends secured with a binding of plated yarn, which is sewn round them.

Subsequently the mats ~~can~~ pass through a shearing machine, & the finishing touches <sup>are</sup> given by hand with a pair of shears, the effect being to give a perfectly even surface to the smooth dense pile. 'Skeleton' or chain mats are of a different character. They are made of soie yarn, twisted into a curious but perfectly regular design. The artificer stands at a bench, & twists

<sup>the</sup> ~~has~~ stout threads in & out with a bent steel instrument known as a yarn needle

Mats are of many sizes, patterns & qualities ranging from the 'splendid Imperial' with elaborately worked designs, crest monogram initials or motto, ~~to the most~~ which may be seen in the hall of some great public building or costly mansion, to the most common "diamond" or little oblong bordered "apology" which does duty at the door of the dockers best parlour.

But all alike are, in proportion to their monetary value, distinguished above all textile goods for one quality, & <sup>that</sup> is, 'durability' so much is this the case that some of the operators reckon it as one of the <sup>causes</sup> reasons of the limited extent of their trade. "The worst of our work," they say, "is that it never wears out," & this is almost true of good work, which forms a large proportion of what is done in London.

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### Wages.

The books show variations in wages.

From 18/- to 38/- for men, & 5/- to 13/- for women

Men's wages. —

Weavers: 19/- - 22/- - 25/- - 30/- 33/- 35/-

Finishes & Shearers. 27/- 32/- 35/- 37/9

(One old man (weaver) earned 12/-, + another 9/-)

Women's wages: —

Weavers: 10/- 12/- 13/-

Binders & Shearers: 10/- 12/-

Pullers out: 5/- 6/-

weavers will take work on pieces & engage others to help them.

### Seasons.

Busy in Spring & Autumn; slack in Summer particularly at holiday times.

Work shared in slack times. One or two discharged when very slack, & they get out of work pay from their Societies

### Training

3 years apprenticeship 1. apprentice to 10 men allowed. Have fewer than that here.

Health

A good Trade. Many old men at work.

Other large firms are:—  
Maddins Bow High Street.  
Goodaeres. Victoria Dock Road (nearly all women — much cheap work.)

From Household Words.—

So a native of Ceylon the cocoa-nut Palm . . . . . associates itself with nearly every want & convenience of his life. It might tempt him to assert that if he were placed upon the earth with nothing else whatever to minister to his necessities than the cocoa nut tree, he could pass his existence in happiness & content.

When a bugaboo villager has filled one of these trees after it has ceased bearing (say in its twentieth year, with its trunk) he builds his hut & his bullock-

—stall, which he thatches with its leaves. His bolts & bars are slips of the bark; by which he also suspends the small shelf which holds the stock of home-made utensils & vessels. He fences his little plot of chillies tobacco, & fine grain with the leaf stalks. The infant is swung to sleep in a rude net of coir string made from the husk of the fruit: its meal of rice & scraped coconut is boiled over a fire of cocoa-nut shells & husks, & is eaten off a dish formed of the plaited green leaves of the tree, with a spoon cut out of the nut shell. When he goes a-fishing by torch-light his net is of cocoa nut fibre: the torch, or chule, is a bundle of dried coconut leaves & flower stalks — the little canoe is a trunk of the cocoa palm tree, hollowed by his own hands. He carries home his net & his string of fish on a yoke, or pingo formed of a cocoa nut stalk. When he is thirsty he drinks of the fresh juice of the young nut when he is hungry he eats its soft kernel

If he has a mind to be merry he sips a glass of arrack, distilled from the fermented juice of the palm, & dances to music of rude cocoa nut castanets; if he be weary he quaffs "buddy" or the unfermented juice & he flavours his curry with vinegar made from this toddy. Should he be sick his body will be rubbed with cocoa-nut oil; he sweetens his coffee with jaggery, or cocoa-nut sugar, & softens it with coconut milk; it is sipped by the light of a lamp constructed from a cocoa nut shell, & fed by cocoa-nut oil His doors, his windows, his shelves, his chairs the water gutter under the leaves, are all made from the wood of the tree. His spoon his forks, his basins, his mugs, his salt-sellers, his jars, his child's money box, are all constructed from the shell of the nut. Over his couch when born, & over his grave when buried, a bunch of cocoa-nut blossoms is hung, to charm away evil spirits.

GRA  
April 3/95.

35  
Mr A. B. Peters, Messrs W. Peters & Sons  
Canvas, Sack, Rick cloth & Tarpaulin Makers  
44 Tenter Street South, Goodman's Fields. E.

No canvas or sacking is made within the London district. There is a Jute Factory at Stratford (Messrs W. Ritchie & Son Carpenters' Road)

The canvas work consists of the manufacture of sacks and bags for a variety of purposes — coal sacks, corn sacks, seed and flour sacks. Tarpaulins and rickcloths also form a branch of the trade; they are made from flax & jute. The manufacture of tents and marquees requires more skill than those previously enumerated and is more highly paid.

Messrs Peters' special line is tarpaulins & rickcloths.

The work is almost entirely done by women. They do all the sewing of sacks, tarpaulins and tents. Men are employ to dress e.g. waterproof the tarpaulins altho' in some cases women do this work also.

There are various methods of dressing the tarpaulins — that employed by Messrs Peters is called Oil dressing.



In the sewing of sacks and bags, the machine is superseding the handworkers and in time these women will be ousted. Besides the natural tendency to adopt machinery there are two other causes assisting this movement. In the first place the women are being forced to live farther off owing to the absorption of the inner districts by manufacturers; secondly, landlords will not allow nails to be fastened in the doorposts. This applies in all blocks of buildings and ~~also~~ is extending amongst private houses.

The women stand to do the work; one corner of the sack is fastened by a cord to the nail fixed about as high as the worker's head. The side <sup>of the bag</sup> is held in the left hand & the woman, sewing over & over the edges, bends the upper part of the body forward at each stitch. When sewing the woman has a metal plate tied <sup>in</sup> the palm of her hand & known as a 'palm'. On the upper surface it is crossed by ridges at right angles to each other with depressions between. With this the needle is passed through the canvas the ridges preventing it slipping

into the hand during the operation.

The work is all piece; both hand and machine. In the hand work the women are paid by what is called a 'turn' the price being 8<sup>d</sup> per turn, the number of sacks in a turn varying according to the size. A medium worker can do two turns during the day and a fast worker three. A turn will take from 3 to 5 hours. Generally reckons as about 2<sup>d</sup> per hour.

Married women or widows do this work. The married women are wives of irregularly employed men such as coalies, dock labourers.

The machine workers are younger, mostly girls earning 12<sup>d</sup> to 12<sup>d</sup>/<sub>6</sub> a week. Being a new industry, the girls have had to be trained for it. [The girls I saw at work were a rather rough lot; probably daughters of the women engaged in the <sup>hand</sup> sack making] Tarpanlin making is rather better paid & requires more skill. Pay 2<sup>d</sup> for a tarpaulin 8 ft by 7.

The sewing machines used in these trade is a special kind; rather heavier than those used by tailors but not so strong as those used for leather. They sew the edges over in the same way as the women do by hand.

Seasons. Tarpanlins & trickcloths are busy in the summer owing to demand for farmers; sacks in the autumn when the crops are to be gathered. The demand for labour varies greatly. In the summer they have had 150 women at work on one day; now have only 17.

Second hand Trade. There is a growing trade in this line, owing to the increasing import of flour from America. The sacks are collected from bakers by costers & others. They are then cleaned and darned. <sup>They</sup> These ~~sacks~~ <sup>sacks</sup> ~~come in~~ <sup>are used</sup> for many purposes, <sup>for</sup> potatoes and other produce, as well as for repacking flour. Attempts have been made to adopt machinery to darn these sacks but hitherto without success.

Mr H. Williams

Messrs B. Edgington & Co. 2 Duke St. London Bridge.

Saw Mr W. He was very suspicious and did not see why he should give any information. We should go to the Government contractors; they were the sweaters. In the course of a fruitless attempt to remove his suspicions I gathered the following items.

The trade is very much cut up. About 25 to 30 years ago, Edgington had the trade pretty much in their own hands. It was not the case now; there were some 30 or 40 <sup>firms</sup> engaged in it. Some parts of the trade they did not care to touch. Lents & Marquess were the best part of the work. The Government contractors employed a great many more people than they did. Their work people were very well treated; it was the other firms that sweated their workers so their experience was no criterion of the trade. All the firms had their own method. [In all the trades in which ~~scarcely~~ low wages are prevalent the reluctance to give information is similar]

Mr. Collins, supt of Tarparline Department  
& S. W. Rly. The dept employs 6 men, 30 women  
& 40 lads.

Process. The canvas used for the tarparline  
comes in lengths of 100 ft by 2 or 3 ft wide  
from Aberdeen. The best canvas is made  
of flax; inferior canvas is of jute, or a  
mixture of flax & jute.

The canvas is cut in suitable lengths  
(8 pieces to form one tarparline sheet), &  
given out to women, who work at home.  
They sew the strips together, hem the edges,  
& sew in the rings through which the rods  
are passed. The women use a palm, instead  
of a thimble. This palm is a metal disc  
inserted in a leather band, which is  
secured round the hand. On being returned  
the sheet is stretched on a frame called  
a jiggon, & after having been examined  
receives its first coat of oil dressing.  
It is then folded, & left for some hours  
in order that the dressing may spread  
itself equally over all parts of the sheet

It is then hung up to dry. Subsequently it receives 3 more coats of the dressing, being hung up to dry between each process.

The dressing is done by men, who have the sheet stretched before them on the floor, spread the composition with a wide long-haired brush, the dressing being placed in a large pail at their right hand, into which the brush is dipped. The most skilled part of the work is preparing the composition. Linseed oil is the chief ingredient.

The cords, by which the tarpauline is secured are afterwards put in by boys.

The preparation of the canvas was originally sailmakers work, but as the result of home work got into the hands of women.

Wages etc. The women are paid 5/- per sheet; some do one, some two a week. They are not allowed more than 2 a week.

The women are nearly all the widows of former employees, & for this reason no machinery is used.

The men work in pairs on pieces, & their average wage through the year is 30/- to 35/- a week, besides which they get uniforms & other privileges.

They are much better paid than in private firms.

The Boys start at 13 years of age & 7/- a week rising to 15/- or 17/- before being put to the dressing. Boys are largely employed in repair work, sewing up the defects in the sheet before it is redressed. In this work they sit down on the sheet, which is spread out on the floor.

Hours about 54 per week

The work of the men is hard, but healthy & employment here very regular.

General Trade in London - Mr. Collins has been at the trade 40 years, but always on this railway, so knows little of the General Trade. He believes however,

it is very much set up. wages low, & condition not good. the machine is largely used, & sometimes is worked by him.

In making marquess & tents the cutter-out is the skilled hand, & is usually well paid. The sewing is done by both men & women.

Rickeloths are not usually dressed Grassons the busy time depends largely on the weather. Wet would of course produce increased demand. In frosty weather the dressers cannot work unless there is artificial heat.



Information supplied from Toyber Hall.

Sackmaking is usually time work in factory  
Piece work in home. It is mostly homework  
but there is a good deal in factory, including  
all when machinery is employed. The work  
is given out direct from the Manufacturer - No  
middlemen distributors of work. It is largely  
an employment of married women but women  
& girls of all ages are employed.

Wages in factory are 2/- a day. Home work  
preferred by some because of convenience in  
choosing time & if desired, working  
longer days, but rates of earnings on home  
piece-work do not seem to differ from the  
factory day, if same number of hours are  
worked.

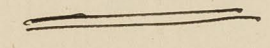
Hours in factory are from 8. to 6.

Seasons Goods made are of various kinds  
e.g. burl sacks; burl sacks; seed bags; Amson by  
money bags; Sails & tarpaulins. (On the last, men  
are often employed). Seasons vary with  
commodity e.g. for sacks, Summer is the

busiest time, for seed bags the winter.  
 Work is very irregular. Trade is picked up  
 & women often keep to one article, but it  
 is easy to do most of the hands ~~(to 7)~~ The  
 chief difference ~~is~~ the 'palm' or the thimble is used.

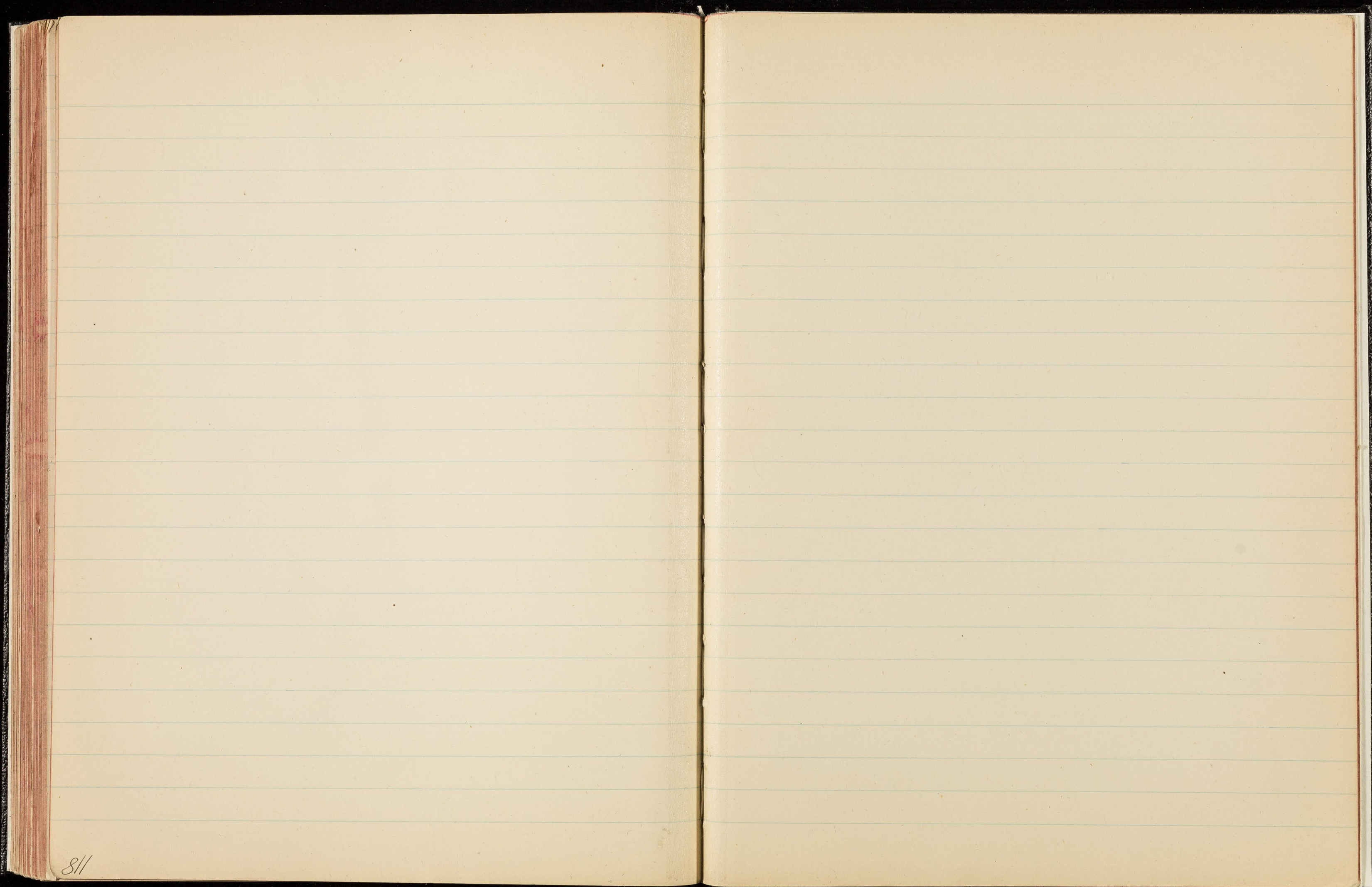
Employers find time, workers find needles  
 & "palm" (the palm is used for all heavy work  
 it is a disc fastened on to the center of the  
 hand, & is used instead of a thimble.

Men do the tarring & lettering of sacks etc



Journal time for each day the winter  
 work is very irregular. Books are packed up  
 I know after keep to one article but it  
 is easy to be bored of the work (I hope the  
 chief differs the palm in the thick and  
 English for time, which just will  
 I palm (the palm is used for all heavy work  
 it is a nice feature as to the work of the  
 hand is in work and work of a thumb  
 Now in the time of a thumb of work





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