

SWEAT SHOPS SHOULD GO.

Illinois Factory Inspectors' Detailed Report
Their Analysis.

SPRINGFIELD, Ill., Feb. 26.—The annual annual report of the Factory Inspectors of Illinois for the year ended Dec. 31, 1904, has just been received here. It is a long and complete compilation of facts and a report of the work in connection with the inspection of factories, workshops, tenement-houses, and the sweat shops of Chicago, prepared by the State Inspector, Mrs. Florence Kelley, and her assistants, Mrs. Stevens.

The statistics show that during 1904 there were inspected 3,400 factories and workshops, employing 75,000 men, 24,000 women, and 2,100 children. Of these 3,400 were sweatshops employing 4,461 men, 3,521 women, and 771 children, an increase over the year ending on Dec. 31, 1903, when 2,102 men, 2,102 women, and 121 children.

Regarding the sanitary conditions the results upon garment manufacturers and their shops the report states:

It cannot be too much emphasized that the difficulties in the way of successful sanitation of tenement-house buildings are determined not so much by the exact number of the people and the existing amount of the wastes. They are here many and pure. Unwashed, ill-fed, and ill-clothed men, women and children are a constant and serious menace for all a year to obtain the ordinary amount of sanitary conditions for these vast, poorly ventilated and kept clean even approximately correct. After a year's study of the conditions the inspectors not only report with renewed emphasis the necessity that such a condition and especially the conditions, because they will be permanent, justify the use of a new kind of security. To ensure that the tolerating of manufacturing in tenement-houses to the fact of their poor health conditions would mean that the people of Chicago are incapable of working from tenement-houses. This report shows the importance of the subject in order to protect the public health. The danger which is the result of tenement-house conditions and which can be minimized or completely eliminated, but can be removed only by legislation. The danger of infection in garment shops made up by tenement-house shops having been shown to be an all-pervading and insidious disease, the extent and character of tenement-house manufacture requires a subject of vital interest to the purchaser public. It is not alone the ethics of the trade, destined for the foreign market, that is involved here. It is quite as often the far-fetched or lace-trimmed cloak or the costly evening suit.

The record of convictions against the employers and contractors for violations of the law in regard to the employment of miners is of especial interest. Among the list are to be found many prominent firms. The list of prosecutions shows that 100 convictions have been obtained during the year, and that suits are awaiting final disposition before the Supreme Court, while six warrants have been issued for further prosecution. The convictions have proved the power of the inspectors to enforce in the hands of the provisions of the law.