

A BOAT plowing through restless, icy seas to its destination in the Far North, carrying its load of hopes and fears, of men and women going home, of men and women venturing for the first time into the unbelievable grandeur, the unequalled opportunity, the changeless wonder that are Alaska — that is the setting for the opening chapters of James Oliver Curwood's new story, "The Alaskan." Ashore, the story moves over into the interior of that vast land—which we purchased for a song and have been exploiting for a generation—and we add a new domain to the ones that Curwood, by his wonderful description, has laid before us. If you liked the stories in the River Trilogy, read this new one of a different land and people, but just as full of mystery and the lure of the unexpected

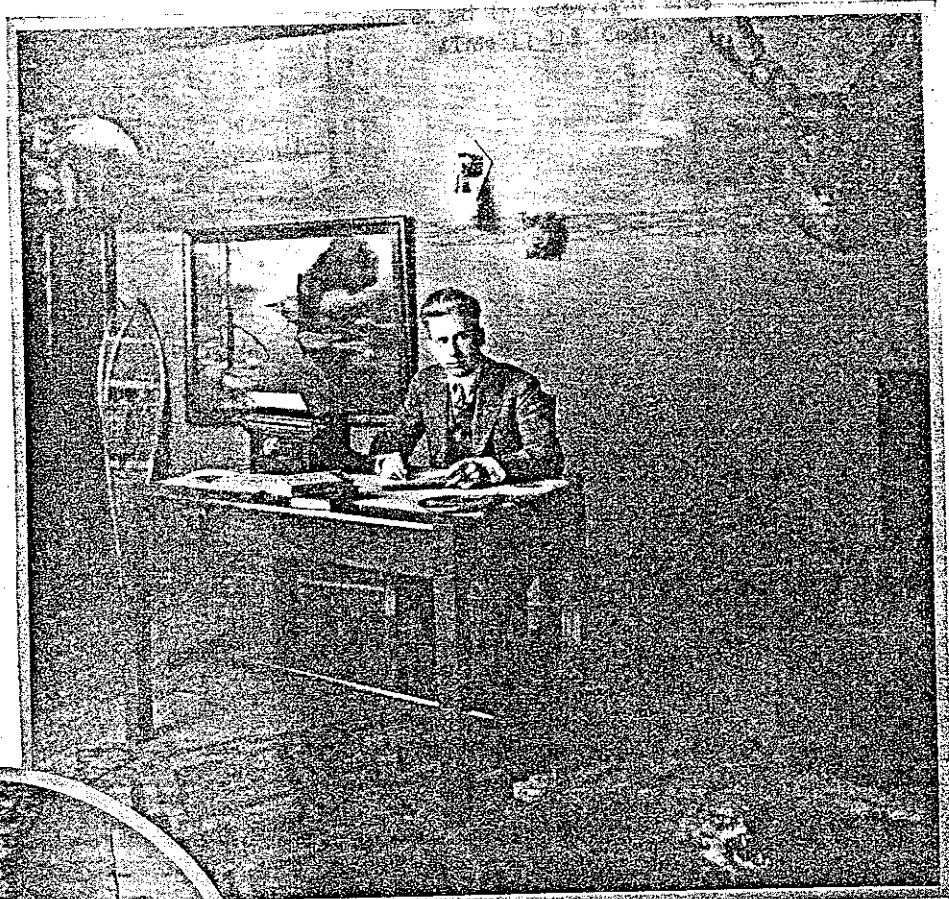
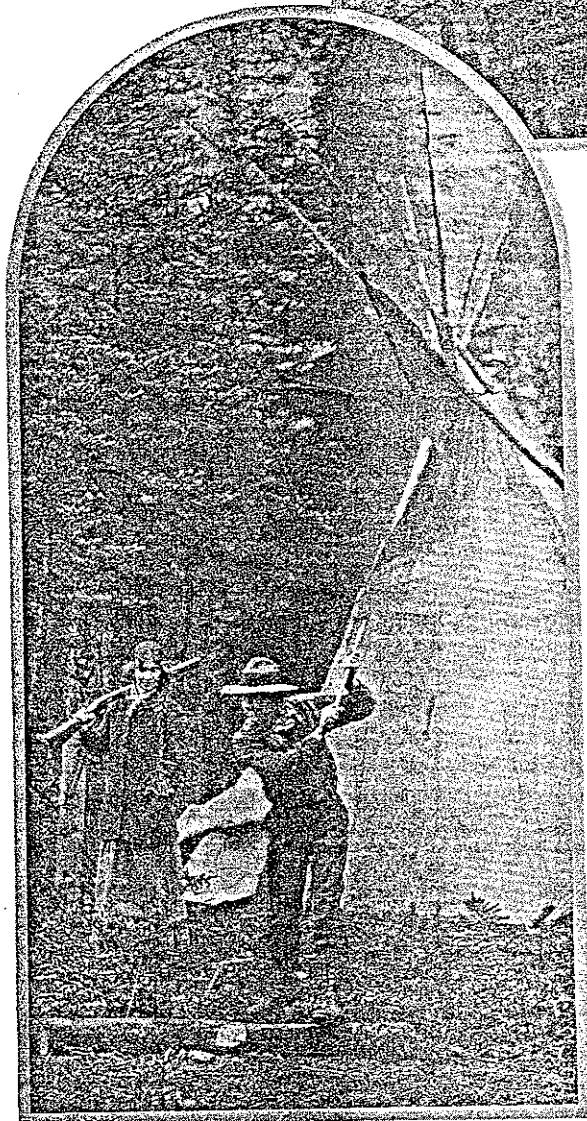


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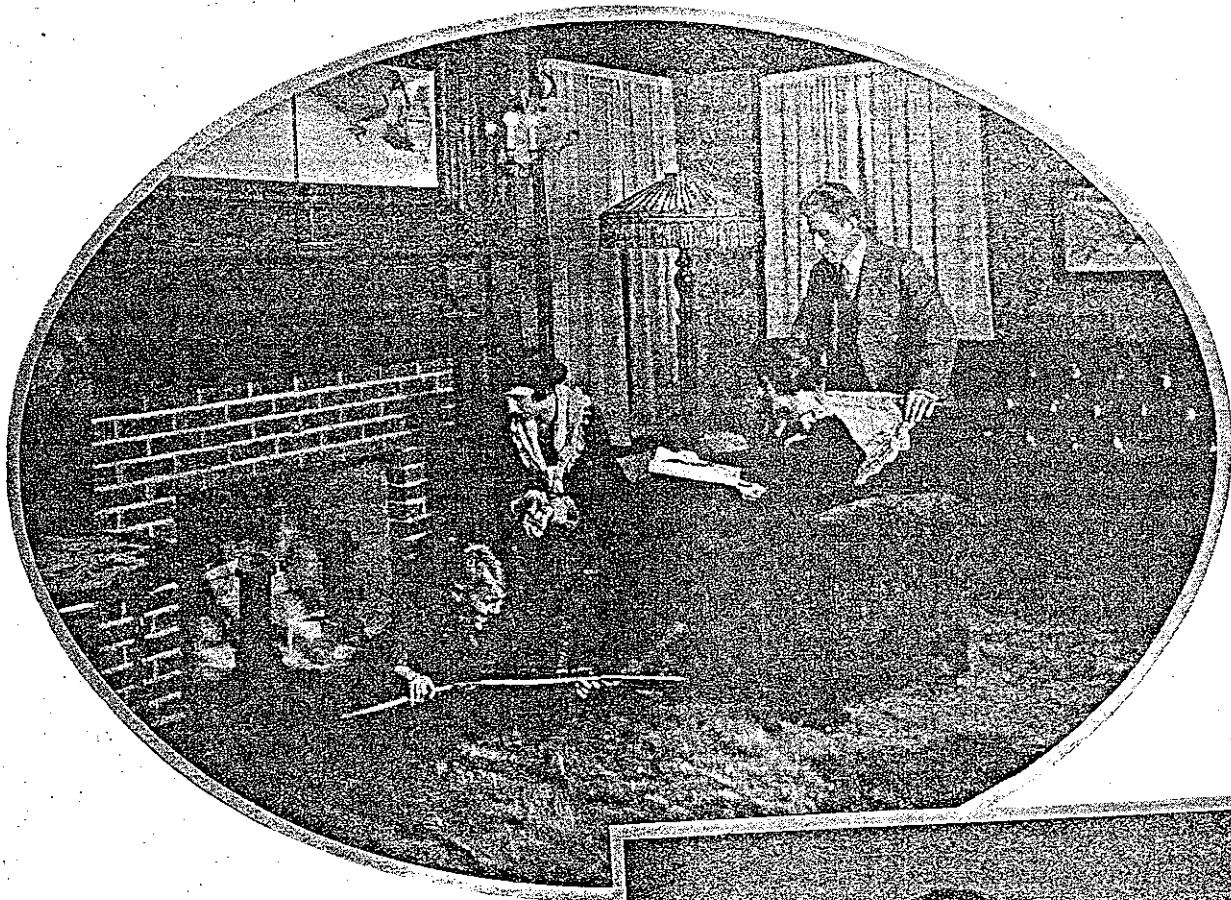


"Jim" Curwood of Owosso whose new serial, "THE ALASKAN," begins next month

By H. C. Kinsey

THE author of "The River's End," "The Valley of Silent Men," "The Flaming Forest," and "God's Country—the Trail to Happiness" is not a good advertiser. He loves Nature so sincerely, and lives in such intimate communion with it, that he has, as he naively puts it, "become a little bit estranged from a large part of the rest of humanity." He does not employ a press agent, but is content to remain silent in the little city of Owosso, Michigan, when he is not in the great outdoors, and let his work speak for itself. "After all, that is what counts," he says. "One's work is the voice that is heard most clearly and is most enduring." And Curwood's work has been heard—not only in America, but wherever the English language is spoken, and all around the world besides. In virile, red-blooded stories of romance and adventure he has carried a message of uplift and cheer and hope—all the wonder and beauty of Nature—to the farthest corners of the earth. He has proved his belief that "it is the work that counts."

That Curwood's God is Nature, that in his books he preaches consistently the beauty and glory of his creed, and that many thousands of his millions of reader have found greater contentment and happiness because of the philosophy, optimism, and purity of his writings the reading public quite generally knows. But of the home life of this tremendously successful novelist, whose books are now read by millions, and are published



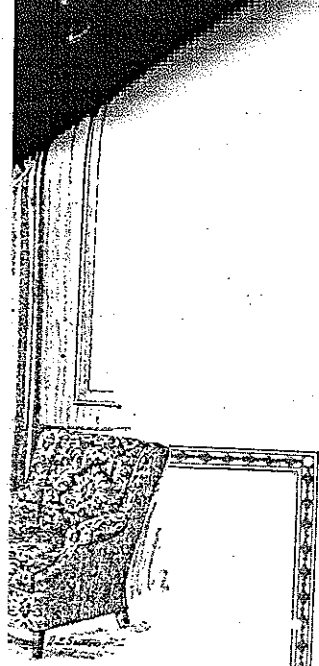
in eight different languages, it knows but little. In fact, not so very long ago, only a narrow local environment had ever heard of Owosso, Michigan, Curwood's home town. Now letters come to it from the author's admirers all over the world. Latest among these is William, formerly Crown Prince of Germany, who in his exile finds cheer and comfort in exchanging confidences with the man who lives in this little city on the Shiawassee River, Shiawassee County, Michigan. The writer of these lines, until his closer acquaintance with Owosso, had often wondered what sort of a place a man like Curwood would live in. And the novelist, on his occasional visits to New York, was never very communicative.

"Come out and see," he would say. "I think it is the nicest place in the world. I was born there, and I hope to die there. Of course, my love for it doesn't make me blind to its defects. We have our poor, pathetic, little smart set, our misguided flappers, and a wee bit of the salt-and-pepper of life—and we make coffins for half the world. I tell you these things because it would take too long to tell you all the good things about my home town. I think the nicest thing is that we're not afraid to let the geese go barefoot round about where we live. Come out and see us!"

So we went, and after we got there, we will confess that we wanted to stay. James Oliver Curwood—famous nature writer, though he is—ceased to be James Oliver Curwood. He became, all at once, "Jim" and "Jimmy." We discovered that by walking down town with him. Everywhere it was "Hello, Jim." and "Hello, Jimmy." Men on wagons called him that, and he stopped to chat with them. It was the same in a garage, where a mechanic lay flat on his back under a car, and from the grease talked with him about a dog. It was the same in the bank. But I noticed that half a dozen little children we met called him "Mr. Curwood," and all of them were happy when he spoke to them. There was something beautiful in that respect of childhood—and something equally fine in the chummy familiarity of the elders. (Continued on page 142)



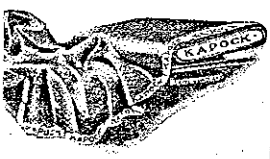
THE pictures on these pages represent, first, the Curwood whom the great reading public knows—Curwood, the writer and woodsman—and then the Curwood that his home town knows—"Daddy" Curwood, "Jim" Curwood. In the first picture he is at his desk in a corner of his gun-room; below, he is preparing for a night in the woods with Mrs. Curwood; next, he is shown "in the bosom of his family"; and last of all, he is just James Oliver Curwood, a million of whose books are owned by enthusiastic admirers



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It going, and I want to stand right beside you and help you operate it as the chief part of your job."

But George Judson had suddenly a very peculiar expression on his face, and his eyes were lowered to a crumpled slip of paper in his hand. "I—I haven't got any job," he recalled confusedly. "They just elected a new board of directors over my head."

"Over your head?" inquired his wife in surprise. "But didn't Simon—?"

"Yes, Simon did. But," and George stared sheepishly at that wrinkled slip of paper in his hand, "but—Junior came in, and—and I forgot everything and rushed to you."

"You old dear!" she cried enthusiastically and threw her arms about him. "That shows I was right to come home. You do love me more than your old factory, don't you?"

"Don't I? I always did," insisted George. "But what can you do then—about the factory plan?" Fay inquired, perplexed and feeling that a very real calamity had happened.

"More hell-paving!" ejaculated George with a rueful smile. "By now I'm ousted, and although we still hold the majority stock, we couldn't vote it till the next annual meeting. Tell you," he said. "You were always wanting me to take a vacation. I'll take a vacation for a year, and we'll get acquainted all over again."

"Won't that be thrilling!" cried Fay eagerly. "We won't idle, George, on our vacation. We'll go to Europe and work for Mr. Hoover's commission, or we'll settle right down here in Detroit and do something that ought to be done and never has been done before—or—Just a minute, dear! There's the telephone."

She stepped to the extension instrument with an expression of annoyance clouding her features, for this was no time for talk with any outsider, but as she held the receiver to her ear, her face gradually underwent a radiant change.

"What?" she insisted eagerly. "Say that again, Mr. Williams. I want to get it perfectly straight."

George crowded close to her. "What is it?" he demanded. "What does John Williams want?"

Fay hushed him with her eyes. Then she turned abruptly toward him and laughed the happy laugh of a girl, while the telephone instrument sagged unnoticed in her hands.

"George," she exulted. "You've been reelected president. Weems wanted you. The Diamond people wanted you. All the old officers are reelected—only Weems is chairman of the Board. They want you to carry on."

George Judson stared at his wife incredulously. "Great heavens!" he blurted out. "I never dreamed—oh Fay, dearest!—Say, look out, you crazy Indian, you're strangling me with that telephone cord."

(THE END)

"Jim" Curwood of Owosso

(Continued from page 41)

I couldn't help contrasting it with the stiff formality and ultra-respect of many of the "affairs" given to Jim Curwood when he comes to any city in the east. I couldn't help wondering, at first, if Owosso really understands how the outside world regards its fellow citizen. I am quite sure, now, that it does. And I came to understand what Jim Curwood meant when he said that out in his town they were "not afraid to let their geese go barefoot." It makes life worth living for a famous man to know his people in that sort of way! "It's American, and it makes you feel at home," says the novelist.

I found, as I had guessed from my long acquaintance with him in the east, that while Jim Curwood was an intensely human "mixer" in the daily routine of his life, he was not at

in a social mixer. The Curwoods are too busy in "nature-bent" ways to be mixed up in many social affairs. They don't like parties and dances. But they do like friends. They love their homes and their gardens, and Jim (I find myself falling into the habit of his towns-people) takes particular pride in his ability to raise onions and radishes. "I can beat any one in Shiawassee county raising onions," he says. "I mean green onions, to eat with bread and butter."

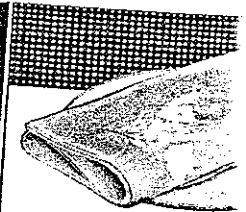
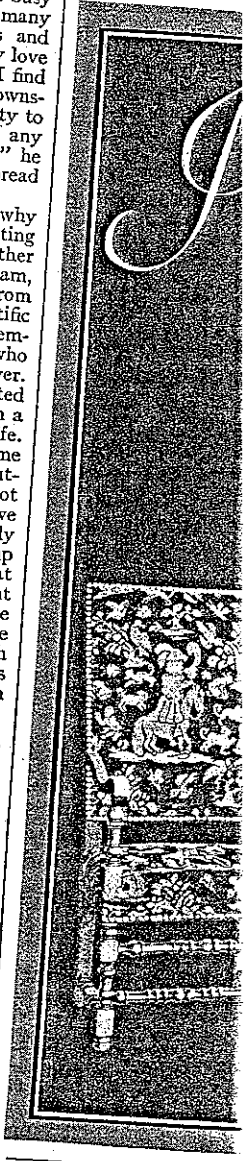
It did not take me long to discover why Curwood writes as he does, and why his writing goes directly to the hearts of people. Whether in his garden, in the woods, or on the stream, his mind is never for an instant away from nature. I have known several scientific naturalists, men who give impossible-to-remember names to any number of things, and who dissect nature as a surgeon cuts up a cadaver. But it was the soul of things which interested Curwood. He saw it in a dead stub and in a scum-coated pond as well as in vibrant life. Once afield, he impresses one as a supreme analyst questing beyond the limitations of cut-and-dried scientific formulas. He could not tell me the scientific name of a certain toad we came upon, but he could tell me of its family life from birth to death, and how it came up out of the mud and slime of ages ago, and what he thought it might develop into in the distant ages of the future. He could not give me the scientific names of trees, but he made me live with those trees, breathe with them, laugh with them, die with them—until I shall always think of trees as I have never thought of them before.

"THERE are two ways of looking at nature," he explained to me, when I questioned him. "Imagine a great surgeon completely buried in the science of his profession, finding his way to Mars, and to the Martians he describes a human being as he knows that being—so many bones here and so many there, so many teeth, a brain built so and so, a body built this way, and eyes, ears, and nose that way. But he leaves out the soul. And that is what happens with so many of our so-called nature scientists. And just as Martians would know little of an Earth-man until they understood the soul, so I believe people will never understand or profit fully from nature until they get down to the heart and life of it."

Such a creed creates sentiment, a deep and sincere love of all life, and especially of life that is not human; the life of the earth itself, of trees and flowers and rocks; of life as it is given to us in all its forms. "And of this life," says Mr. Curwood, "human life is not always the most beautiful. The closer one comes to the soul of nature, the more he realizes the littleness and inadequateness of man, and his monumental egoism."

Curwood is a tireless worker, whether at his literary craft or in the woods. He is awake with the birds, frequently as early as four o'clock in the morning, seldom later than five, and at work by seven o'clock. He has a beautiful studio in his own home, but does practically all his writing in a little, second-floor room in his mother's house, two blocks away. My introduction to this room told me more of the inner thought and mind of James Oliver Curwood than I had ever known before. It is not a large room. It is old-fashioned and is part of an old-fashioned house. There is nothing of the luxury about it that one might expect in the studio of a man whose books are among the nation's best sellers and whose readers are numbered in millions. But it is "homey." When I was told that in this room Curwood had done his earliest work as a boy—that it was the birthplace of his dreams and his ambitions, and that twenty of his twenty-five novels had been written in it—I knew the reason for the glow in his eyes when we came into its quiet and seclusion.

In those boyhood days of long ago the young writer's father bought him a second-hand Caligraph typewriter, and for this machine made a "desk" out of an old sewing-machine.



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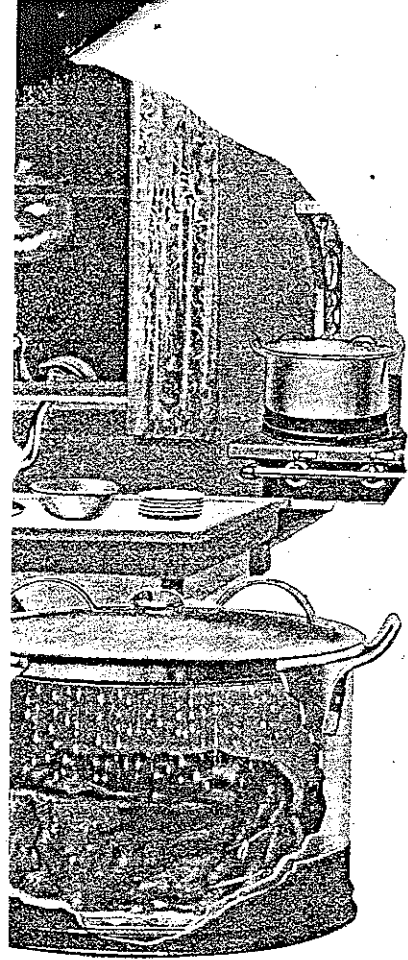
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"Jim" Curwood of Owosso

A quarter of a century later the man whose books are published in eight different languages and are bought by the hundred thousand yearly in his own country, writes on this machine-top. "You see," he explains somewhat apologetically, "I've had half a dozen desks at various times, but for some reason or other I've always had to go back to the old sewing-machine top. Whenever I put it aside. I seem to hear voices whispering to me that I've done away with an old friend. Foolish maybe, but I have that sort of feeling for inanimate things that have been an intimate part of my life."

Which, I take it, is the reason there are prints and magazine pictures in the room dating back thirty years, and why the old-fashioned paper on the walls has not been changed for more than twenty years, and why he still holds to the little, old-fashioned stove, though there is a modern heating system in the rest of the house. "It all helps to keep you close to your kid-hood days," explains Jim Curwood.

Undoubtedly the touch of Indian blood in him has a good deal to do with his ways of living. His great-grandmother on his mother's side was a full-blooded Mohawk Indian. His great-uncle on his father's side was Captain Marryatt, English adventurer, sea-captain, and writer of sea stories. This combination of blood is enough to put the love of air, sun, and water in any one. More than anything else he loves the great open spaces of the Far North, where he has traveled so many thousands of miles in his adventuring; but at home he still finds nature, from his own gardens to the rivers and lakes and woods of the beautiful country in which his home-town is situated.

One has to be his guest to know what it means to be made welcome. In his home you feel that you are utterly at rest. I know, because I have been there.

Women an' Politics

(Continued from page 43)

th' women folks this fall. We suppose there'll always be a few mussy, overweight women, single or unfortunately hooked up, who'll dabble in politics fer pay, but wrestlin' with great national problems, paradin' with torches, arguin' o'er th' tariff, an' p'litical speech-makin' 'll never appeal t' home-lovin' women, or social queens either, although it is said that Mr. an' Mrs. Lafe Bud are soon t' part after quarrelin' all fall o'er th' pearl button schedule in th' Fordney tariff bill. But th' bulk o' th' women folks hain't goin' t' take t' politics.

"Take Indianny, fer instance, where ever' male is a politician—a state where farmin' an' other legitimate callin's are only side-lines—a state where ever' feller, save a few distinguished literary lights, is either lined up, or is gittin' lined up, fer some p'litical office, or gittin' in good with some one that's already got an office. We've all heard o' th' famous Hoosier hospitality, an' th' reason fer it is that ever' Hoosier expects you t' work an' vote fer him at some future time. That's why they shake hands th' year around out there.

"Well, late in September I played croquet with a party of Indianny women that hadn' even registered, an' when I asked 'em who wuz goin' t' git th' senatorship, they jest giggled, an' wanted t' know what th' ketch wuz. If women hain't aroused in militant Indianny, it's good-night fer woman suffrage so fer as it's cuttin' any ice," continued Dr. Tanger.

Artie Small, o' th' Elite Dry Goods Store, wuz snowed under fer coroner, an' says th' bumper crop o' termaters defeated him. Joe Kite drove a "Stand by th' President" Ford on election day, an' waited five hours fer Miss Fawn Lippincut t' dress fer th' polls, an' finally had t' drive off without her 'cause she couldn' find her earrin's.

Child Labor in Our Cities

(Continued from page 65)

as casual as the act of buying a newspaper or getting our shoes shined—we are in a hurry, with other things on our minds.

How many juvenile workers there may be in our city streets throughout the country can only be estimated. The Census of 1920 gives 20,706 newsboys ten to fifteen years of age, a few hundred more than in 1910. But for various reasons, which can not be gone into here because of space limitations, the Census figures are altogether too low for accuracy. There are probably more than the Census total of newsboys in the largest fifty cities, to say nothing of the cities and towns with less than 100,000 population. If we add to the newsboys the bootblacks, the errand, delivery, and messenger boys, the vendors of chocolate, chewing gum, and shoestrings, the market-stand helpers, and all the rest of the young traders and employees, we shall obtain a figure somewhere between 200,000 and 300,000 as the number of children under sixteen spending a large or small part of their time in street work.

One child may do several kinds of the city's chores—sell papers, black boots, and run errands on the same day. Little Arthur, twelve years old, has for five years been selling papers several hours after school and nearly all day on Saturday; on Sunday he shines shoes during the forenoon. He is anemic and his school record is poor. Another twelve-year-old boy works as a messenger from eight in the morning until two-thirty in the afternoon, when he changes to inside employment—selling peanuts and candy in a vaudeville house until 10:30 or 11 o'clock in the evening. He earns on the average four dollars a week and works practically twelve hours a day. Perhaps when he is thirteen he will work thirteen hours.

SO KINDLY disposed are we toward the street workers, or so ignorant of their need of protection, that we have done very little to safeguard them by state laws, municipal ordinances, or other means. Hardly more than half the states recognize their existence, and relatively few cities have street trades ordinances. The age limits in state laws are usually below the moderate minimum of fourteen for factory employment—sometimes ten or twelve for boys, and higher for girls. Street-trades provisions in state laws or municipal ordinances are seldom well enforced, in respect of age limitations, prohibition of night work, or license requirements. In Chicago a boy of eight who sold papers every night until one a. m. proved to be the son of a policeman.

Child labor in city streets may be condemned on the general principle that city streets are not a suitable place for either play or work, but to prohibit, by laws or ordinances, city children from working in the streets would not necessarily insure their welfare. The streets would still be left, with all their physical and moral hazards. This does not mean, however, that street work does not have its own hazards, or that it should not be regulated in such fashion as to eliminate certain undeniable abuses.

It must be said that even where the licensing of juvenile street workers is practised, the protection supposed to be afforded children is often nullified by the defects of the system or the carelessness and inefficiency of licensing officers. Children neither physically nor mentally fit for the strain of street work receive licenses. William, age twelve, is an epileptic with a long history known to medical and social workers. Ralph, a puny boy of eleven, has a medical and clinical record of "difficult feeding in infancy and delayed development; subject to convulsions, seizures; diseased tonsils; bad posture; malnutrition, possibly chorea; living in a manner not proper as regards hygiene and diet." Thomas, thirteen, also passed by the issuing officer, has serious heart



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