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EDITORIAL

## WOMEN IN INDUSTRY.

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**C**APITALIST confession is not always good for the capitalist soul, as it helps Socialist agitation. In *Bradstreets* there appears a consideration of “Women in Industry,” in which there appears a capitalist confession of this character.

Seeking to find the origin of woman labor in the manufactures of this country, *Bradstreets* considers the causes leading to the employment of women in the classic capitalist State of Massachusetts. It says, referring to the industrial conditions in that State in 1815: “There came about an overcrowding in the labor market and a decline in the rate of wages, which made it difficult for men to support their families. As a result women entered the industrial field in increasing numbers.” The employment of women, then, is attributable to the non-employment of men—a condition born of capitalism and not to any lack of industry on the part of men or a desire for “emancipation” on the part of women.

There can be no doubt that this cause is as operative to-day as it was in 1815. This is shown in the increasing employment of women when compared to that of men. *Bradstreets*, still citing Massachusetts, shows that from 1870 to 1900 the total male population increased 94.30 per cent.; while the total female population increased 90.81. “During the same period the number of males employed in gainful occupations increased 94.77 per cent., while the number of females so employed increased 156.45 per cent.” Thus there is a disproportionate and excessive employment of women as compared to men.

It is safe to infer that this disproportionate and excessive employment of women as compared to men, which *Bradstreets* believes “is to a large extent representative of conditions in the country as a whole,” would not exist, nay, would be reversed, were it possible for men to obtain employment sufficiently

remunerative to support their families. With the spasmodic, uncertain and insufficient employment of labor so characteristic of capitalism, with the labor-displacing machinery that throws skilled and strong men out on the streets to make way for unskilled and weak women and children, the need for the supplementary earnings of women, and children also, grows ever greater; and, as long as capitalism exists, will so continue to grow, “race suicide” preface-writing Presidents to the contrary notwithstanding.

Only with the triumph of Socialism, which will give labor all it produces and turn machinery into a social and not, as at present, a class institution, thus enabling the working class to support their families, will the abnormal phenomenon attending the employment of women in industry disappear. This the capitalist confession regarding their origin makes clear; and it is in this respect that capitalist confession is not good for the capitalist soul, as it helps Socialist agitation.

Transcribed and edited by Robert Bills for the official Web site of the Socialist Labor Party of America.  
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