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MIGRANTS
AS A SOCIAL AND EDUCATIONAL
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RUTGERS UNIVERSITY
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BY

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FOREWORD

The letter of transmittal which accompanied the report of the Commission to Investigate the Employment of Migratory Children submitted to Governor Morgan F. Larson in February, 1931, contained the following statement:

"It is evident from the investigations of the commission that there are in the state approximately 1,798 migrant children from the ages of six to fifteen inclusive who, because of their own employment, or that of their parents are deprived of a certain amount of schooling. In addition to this number there are about 428 children under six years of age who constitute a welfare problem which is also to some extent educational. Provision should be made for both groups but it is those of school age with whom we are concerned at this point."

A group of New Jersey citizens who are interested in the welfare of the children of the migrant worker created a fellowship known as the Migrant Fellowship. This fellowship provided the means whereby a careful study could be made to determine to what extent the educational and welfare needs of the children of the migrant workers are being met during the working season while their parents are engaged in cultivating and harvesting crops as well as to obtain data showing the home conditions and educational opportunities and school progress of the same group of children while their parents are living in the city for the winter months.

The Trustees of Rutgers University accepted the responsibility of administering the fellowship and the members of the staff of the School of Education directed and supervised the study. The fellowship was awarded to Miss Laura Fair, a graduate student who had had experience with the children of migrant workers and who was a trained social worker.

The study was made at Whitesbog, New Jersey, during the blueberry and cranberry seasons and was continued in Philadelphia and vicinity during the winter months.

The results of the study show that the children of migrant workers would probably receive better training experiences if they did not have to follow their parents to the fields during the harvesting season. However, they are not as seriously retarded in their school work as one might expect while their social environment and adjustments to life are approximately normal.

C. E. PARTCH
Dean of the School of Education
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Introduction

The annual migration of more than 2,000 boys and girls under 16 years of age who come, with their families, from Philadelphia, Camden, and other cities into certain farming districts of New Jersey during the late spring, summer and early fall months to gather berries and to do other agricultural work, creates a problem that in recent years has commanded the earnest attention of educators and social workers. (14) There is no legislation specifically relating to the subject of migratory child labor. The children are not affected by child labor laws because their work comes under the head of agriculture, or by compulsory education laws, because these laws do not follow over the state line.

In 1927, as the result of several conferences between school, labor and welfare interests, New Jersey and Pennsylvania took the lead in proposing bills in their respective legislatures making it "unlawful for non-resident children to be employed during the time when the laws of the state of the child's residence require his attendance in school." (8) But up to the present time no such law has been enacted, although the Pennsylvania Legislature in 1931 passed laws requiring the migratory child to attend school, authorizing the local school authorities to provide for his attendance and tuition. (6)

In 1930, the New Jersey Legislature provided for a Commission "to investigate and study the matter of employment of migratory children in the State of New Jersey, and conditions surrounding such employment."¹

Accordingly, on June 30, 1930, the Commission consisting of four members, with Mrs. Isabelle Summers as chairman, was appointed by the governor to make this study. In the spring of 1931 the Commission published a comprehensive report which contained valuable data concerning the nationality of the workers, the age of the workers, types of employment, living conditions, etc. This was a horizontal survey, *i.e.*, it covered rapidly the whole state; the data consisting of first-hand information as to the living and working conditions of migratory labor in the entire state were acquired from field trips and a questionnaire.

¹Assembly Joint Resolution 6, State of New Jersey, February 4, 1930.

The study here described was undertaken through the cooperation of Rutgers University, the Council of Women for Home Missions,² cranberry growers and other farmers of New Jersey, the school authorities in Philadelphia, and other interested individuals. It was the purpose of the investigation to make a vertical survey covering more intimately the lives of the families at one particular agricultural center studying the people from a more personal angle. Since no previous study of this type had been made, it was hoped that such an approach would throw some light on a knotty social problem by showing the actual conditions under which these laborers work and live. But living consists of more than academic progress, and it seems only fair that other social and economic factors be considered in determining the effect of such migration on the lives of the children, and in making recommendations for child labor legislation and compulsory school attendance laws.

The locality chosen for the study was Whitesbog—the blueberry and cranberry plantation of Joseph J. White, Inc., near New Lisbon, N. J. It is, therefore, not necessarily typical of the conditions found generally among migrants, but it does show in detail the problem in one spot and in one type of agricultural work.

The children do not come to Whitesbog until the latter part of June, after completing the last of the school year, but they do not return to the city until approximately October 20, missing thereby more than a month at the beginning of the first semester. The school authorities do not feel that this loss is nearly as serious as that of a great number of truck farm workers, who leave school in April and do not return until November. Even so, it would suggest that the children are inevitably handicapped insofar as some fundamentals of their school work are concerned.

Scope of the Study

The writer's experience with the group studied in the survey included two periods of six weeks each in 1930, and also during the season of 1931, as a worker in the "social center" for migratory children at Whitesbog, with daily observation of and contact with approxi-

²In 1920 the Council of Women for Home Missions in New York City launched a Christian Social Service program for migratory children. The council aims to show the local owners what can be done in the way of bettering conditions for their workers, and have them gradually assume the financial responsibility with the council still supervising the work. "Social centers" have been established in various agricultural districts for the benefit of the laborers, three of which were in New Jersey at the time this study was made. The one with which the writer is most familiar will be described in detail.(8)

mately 96 families. The conditions at this plantation should be taken as representing a goal toward which other growers should work, rather than as a typical example of conditions prevalent in New Jersey. The growers and the social workers realize that even these conditions are far from ideal. However, they are the best possible under present economic conditions, and the proprietors hope to effect improvements in the future. As a help in planning the current programs and as an aid to her successors, the worker kept a daily record of the programs, the methods used, and the results.

The Italian "boss" supplied the home address of each family who worked at Whitesbog, and during the spring and winter of 1930-31 the writer visited them for the purpose of making a survey of their living and working conditions in the cities of Philadelphia and Camden. Only 69 of the 96 families could be located because of incorrect address, migration to the farms, or change of address. In the latter case, the neighbors were loath to give the new address for fear the visitor might be a bill collector or an attendance officer.

The Italians seemed delighted to see their friend of the country and usually gave the desired information in pleasant conversation over a cup of coffee. The writer felt that such pleasant, friendly relations made the information received more accurate than any which might have been secured by a stranger. Only once did the visitor meet with hostility. In this case the mother refused to shake hands, turned her back and sat down without even offering a seat. When she talked it was only in monosyllables. She showed no signs of recognition, and it was later discovered that she had stayed in the country only three days, having become ill and returned home without ever having seen the "school" or the "teachers." This might have occurred more commonly if the writer had not had an opportunity to make friends with the people beforehand. The above incident was the single unpleasant exception to the friendly hospitality which characterized all of the interviews.

When all of the children were at school the conversation did not run very smoothly, because the majority of the old people spoke unintelligible English. So it was through motions, a few expressions common to both, and observation that the desired information was secured to be written down later.

The children were scattered over twenty public and four parochial schools in South Philadelphia, and it was the rule to ascertain the name of the school the children of each family attended. The parents often did not know the name of the school, and would give such direc-

tions as, "My Petey, he go 'round on Ninth street." Much questioning was required to secure some clue as to the name of the school.

Through the cooperation of Dr. Armand J. Gersen, the associate superintendent of elementary schools, and Father Lyng, of the Madonna House, it was possible to obtain admission to the school records of the children. These records showed the date of re-entrance of the children in the fall, their attendance, progress, effort, conduct, health, and the subjects in which they were failing.

While making the study the writer was enrolled at Rutgers University in seminar courses in Social and Educational Research. Most of the other students in these courses were professional teachers of considerable experience. During the seminars the records kept at Whitesbog and the information secured from visiting the families in the cities were submitted for the consideration of these experienced fellow students, as well as that of the professors. The resulting discussions served as a check on the relative importance of the various data collected.

Characteristics of the Italian Laborer

A study of the literature in regard to the background of the Italian laboring class reveals that they come from an underprivileged, uneducated, hardworking social caste in southern Italy. They have always farmed and have felt no need of, nor desire for, knowledge from books. The men have worked long, hard hours and have expected the women and children to do the same. They have come to America because of economic stress in their own country, and have entered numerous trades, but especially agriculture and day laboring, such as railroad building and ditch digging. (1, 2, 5, 10, 13)

Italians do not lose their racial characteristics by crossing the sea, and we find that it takes some time for them to make the adjustments necessary for their new living and working conditions. They are apt to regard laws such as compulsory education as working against them, because of their inherited hatred of all governmental restrictions.

The most of those who come to our shores are day laborers used to doing strong arm and mighty back jobs requiring no training, even in the use of modern machinery. They have lived in the country all of their lives, have felt no need for an education, and few have learned to read and write their own language. These people have settled in "Little Italy" in such large cities as Philadelphia and New York, and have gone into many trades.

A large number have gone into the field of unskilled work, *i.e.*, in

the creation and maintenance of public works and buildings for the city. They have achieved a foremost position in the building and upkeep of railroads, in which line they show steadfastness, strength and endurance. Most of them, however, go into farming, three types of which are found. First, there is the independent small truck farmer found between the Mississippi and the Atlantic; second, the tenant of a small plot of ground in a fairly isolated community; and, third, the migratory farmer, who travels from one farm to another during the spring, fall, and summer months, and works as a day laborer, gathering the various crops as they come in season. In this study we are concerned only with the third class. In fact, those who settle on their own lands are in the minority, for the reason that most of them do not have the capital with which to purchase land. The great majority are in immediate need of a daily wage in order to meet the bare necessities of life.

They usually sell all of their worldly goods to get passage over, they start with nothing to back them, and are often tempted by tricks of trade and purchase. Consequently, many Italians never get on their feet financially, and continue through life by a "hand to mouth" existence.

Italians are clannish, and segregate in a section of the city with their own stores, banks, and movie houses. They speak their own language almost entirely among themselves; therefore, the children suffer a greater language handicap than those of almost any other nationality. They mingle little with others and so fail to become Americanized by the most natural process—that of imitation.

In considering the social and educational problems dealt with in this study, it is well to bear in mind these facts about the foreign background of the Italian immigrant as well as his American environment. The greatest privilege open to the immigrant in America is the wonderful system of free public education. It is possible for any boy or girl to get a thorough elementary and high school education, learn a vocation, or, if necessary, go to a special school for delinquents or orthogenetic backwards, without any cost to the parents. If the greatest possible use were made of the free public schools in our country today, many of the problems of our foreign friends would be eliminated.

Living and Working Conditions at Whitesbog

When the families come to Whitesbog they find the dwellings in good repair. These houses are two story shingle buildings, and each family has two, three, or four rooms according to its size. They are

equipped with built-in bunks, benches, and perhaps a table. Many of the families build cooking shanties in the yard. They eat outside and use the house only for sleeping and storing. The Company provides the workers with the houses, wood, water, and straw for their beds. They bring ticking, dishes, and other "comforts" from the city with them, and in a few hours the houses take on the individual airs of their respective occupants. All are given the same start and the future cleanliness, or filth, is governed by the occupants. Some of them scrub and clean after coming in from work, or on Sundays, and others do not bother to clean house in the country any more than they do in the city.

The houses do not have running water in them, but the faucets delivering the water, which is pumped from a central system, supplied by a bored well 500 feet deep, are at frequent enough intervals so that it is not a burden to carry the water. There is also a nearby stream which is usually deep enough to be used as a washing place when the day's work is over.

The toilets are outside the houses and in good clean condition. The source of the water supply is at least one-half mile away from the toilets, thus avoiding any possibility of contamination. The garbage is placed in boxes or barrels outside the houses. Once or twice a week a man collects it in a truck, and dumps it at a safe distance from the house.

The workers are given no physical examination when they arrive. However, a well equipped dispensary is provided by the company. Simple cuts, infections, digestive disturbances, etc., are taken care of by safe remedies under the supervision of one of the social workers who has had training and experience in first aid and home nursing.

The company doctor lives 7 miles away, and anything which does not respond quickly to simple treatment is referred to him. The nearest doctor is 4 miles away and he is called in emergency cases. If necessary, the company provides transportation of the patients to the doctor. The individual pays his own bill.

During the blueberry season the work starts at 7:00 a. m. and, as a rule, at the same time for cranberries except when the bogs have been flooded the night before and it is necessary for them to dry off before work begins. No children under 8 years are allowed in the fields. They must come to the "center." Children from 8 to 10 years may work in the fields or stay at the center; those over 10 may come to the center for all day only on consent of the social worker in charge.³

³ See Appendix for Camp Rules (p. 38).

The personnel and equipment of the center would be inadequate to care for all the children if those over that age were permitted to come.

In the fields the families work in groups so that the children are under their parents, and not under a "padrone." Therefore, the children are not as likely to be exploited. Usually one of the younger children carries the baskets of fruit up to the packing sheds, and gets the family ticket punched. The 8 to 10 year old children who go to the field are often given a small task of several quarts a day by the parents. This allotment is usually picked in the morning, before the day becomes very warm. In that case, the children spend the rest of the day playing around the fields or sleeping under the shade of a tree.

A half-hour is given for rest and refreshment at noon. If the field or bog is nearby the workers come home for their lunch. If it is some distance away they take lunch with them in the morning and eat it under the packing sheds. However, the nursing mothers are brought home in a truck and they supplement the bottles the babies have had in the nursery. As a rule, work is over about 4:30 o'clock, sometimes sooner, sometimes later, according to the ripeness of the fruit and the demand of the market. The workers usually have left several hours of daylight in which to cook, wash, or play. Unless it is during the rush season or the workers choose to do otherwise, there is no work on Saturday afternoon. During the writer's two years' experience there, on no occasion was work undertaken on Sunday.

On approaching the field at any time of day, one might hear the happy songs and laughter of the workers, in their friendly groups. In their trips to and from the fields, either walking or in trucks, they have a broad smile, and a gay wave of the hand for any passer-by. These are evidences of the care-free manner in which the Italians work and live in the country.

Work is done by the "piece." The workers are paid 6 cents per quart for picking blueberries, and 17½ cents per peck for cranberries.

During the time that the workers are in the country they have the privilege of using their "tickets," with which they are paid in the fields, as money at the company store. The outside merchants, who bring supplies in by trucks, also accept the tickets in exchange for their wares. Therefore, no absolutely accurate record of the amount made by each family can be secured, but following is the amount each family received at the end of the season of 1930 just before returning to the city.

The wages of those who were working for both blueberry and cranberry season ranged from \$69.14, received by one woman (a grand-

mother working alone) to \$509.70 earned by one entire family. The average received by 13 such families was \$310.96. Those working for a single season, either the blueberry or the cranberry season, took home with them an amount which ranged from \$18.50 to \$270.93, with an average of \$107.07 per family. These amounts were clear profit to the workers after all of their living expenses in the country had been paid.

During the time that the writer was at Whitesbog there was no



A GROUP OF ITALIAN CHILDREN PLAYING UNDER SUPERVISION

serious illness among the Italians. Some organic troubles of long standing, three cases of mumps and a few digestive disturbances made up the chief ailments. The children seemed to develop rosier cheeks, and brighter eyes. They had three good meals a day, and a youngster was seldom seen without a big piece of Italian bread with oil or tomato sauce on it. The rest of their diet consisted of macaroni, tomatoes, peppers, lettuce, coffee and milk. The increase in their weight was found to be "more or less in proportion to the normal increase for a given age as shown in studies made by two distinguished scientists." (14)

After the day's work was over there were often happy gatherings

in front of the shanties. Songs, games, and dances were then the order of the day. The occasions were lively and enjoyable, if some one had the initiative to start them. The group as a whole lacked leadership ability. Several years ago the "boss" had quite a knack for directing games and entertainments, and he was always careful to have musicians and entertainers among his crew of workers. But he died and although some of his games are still played, his leadership is sadly missed.

The Italians at Whitesbog are Catholics. There is no Catholic church within a radius of 20 miles and so they are unable to attend mass the entire time that they are in the country. A simple, non-denominational service is held for them on Sunday morning by the social workers. However, the Mother Superiors in the city feel that there is nothing which takes the place of mass for Catholics, and that it should be provided for them.

The children are happy to get out in the country and happy to leave. They like to be on the go, as all children do. The parents feel somewhat the same way, but they believe that the children are much better off in the country with fresh air and a good place to play. They are glad to get them off the streets. The laborers feel that they can live more cheaply in the country, and 90 per cent of the heads of the families look forward during the winter to summer and Whitesbog again.

Living Conditions in the City

The living conditions of these Italians as found on visits to their homes in the city came as a pleasant surprise to one who had seen them only at work in the fields. Sixty-three per cent of those from whom information could be secured were either buying or owned their homes. These were being bought through building and loan associations and paid for on the basis of \$25 or \$30 a month for 8 or 10 years. Not more than 3 or 4 of the 69 were completely paid for, and most of the prospective owners had 6 or 8 more years to pay on them.

The houses were 2-story buildings, rows of which were identical. Eighty-seven per cent of them had 5 or more rooms and a bath, and only 8 of the 69 did not have a bath with running water. All of the houses had running water in the kitchen. The majority of them were completely furnished with gaudy, cheap furniture—over-stuffed, red parlor suites, gaudy pictures on the walls, and so on. The parents had the best bedroom in the house. In it was the completely matched furniture, statues, mottoes, and other treasures of the family. No

matter how scarce the money might be for food or clothes, most of the families were proud owners of either player-pianos or radios bought on the installment plan. The conversation was often completely drowned out by music from one or the other of them.

TABLE 1
Living Conditions in the City
(68 Families)

	Number	Per Cent
Home Ownership:		
Number who own homes	35	63
Number who do not own homes	17	31
Number living with parents	3	6
No information	13	—
Size of House:		
Five or more rooms and bath	59	87
Four rooms and bath	4	6
Three rooms	2	3
Two rooms	3	4
Ventilation:		
Sufficient	67	100
No information	1	—
Lighting:		
Electric	63	94
Gas	2	3
Oil lamps	2	3
No information	1	—
Heating:		
Furnace	37	55
Coal Stove	30	45
No information	1	—
Toilets:		
Inside	50	83
Outside	10	17
Clean	35	58
Dirty	25	42
No information	8	—
General Cleanliness:		
Clean	49	72
Untidy	12	18
Dirty	7	10

All of the houses were sufficiently ventilated, which means that they averaged two or three windows to a room. As nobody was blessed with an over amount of coal the windows were usually closed.

Electric lights were found in 94 per cent of the houses, and often shone through fixtures in the shapes of flowers, bouquets, and ladies,

and gave forth vari-colored lights. The two houses in which kerosene lamps were used were poverty stricken in every way. The two using gas were wired for electricity, but it had been cut off because of inability to meet the bill.

Coal was expensive and found missing in several instances. Fifty-five per cent of the houses had furnaces and 45 per cent used coal stoves in the kitchen. The latter threw off an abundance of heat as well as being used for cooking.

Eighty-three per cent of the toilets were inside the house. About 87 per cent of them were clean, ranging in cleanliness from fairly clean to immaculate white tiles. Thirteen per cent of them could be classed as dirty, even filthy.

Seventy-two per cent of the houses had an appearance of general cleanliness, 18 per cent of them were untidy (beds unmade and the like), but clean underneath; 10 per cent of them might be classed as definitely dirty, showing months' accumulation of dust and filth. The majority of the housewives took great pride in their homes and scrubbed and cleaned every day from the stone steps to the kitchen sink. Even the small girls are interested in house cleaning and it is taken as a matter of course that at an early age they assume certain house-keeping duties.

In 81 per cent of the cases the sexes slept in separate beds in separate rooms. In about one-half of the cases there were only one or two persons to a bed. In only one case was there found to be as many as ten persons in two beds. In 15 per cent of the families the sexes slept in the same room and in the same bed, but apparently with no feeling of impropriety. In the majority of these cases the children were under three years of age. Sixty-three per cent of the parents had separate rooms, or a child under three in the room with them. In some of these instances it was a situation in which the mother was with the girls or the father with the boys.

Economic Situation

As the unemployment situation was an outstanding economic problem of the winter of 1930-31, the number of migrants unable to find employment was probably greater than in normal times.

Thirty of the 60 fathers from whom information was secured had been unable to find any employment after they returned to the city, although they had applied repeatedly at employment agencies. Of those employed, 33 per cent were engaged as part-time laborers by the city—"made work" to relieve the unemployment of the winter of

TABLE 2
Economic Situation of 68 Families

	FATHER		MOTHER		CHILDREN	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
EMPLOYMENT:						
Unemployed	30	50	50	78	40	60
Employed part time	20	33	—	—	3	4
Employed full time	6	10	1	2	12	18
Home work	—	—	11	17	10	15
Own business	4	7	2	3	2	3
No information	8	—	4	—	1*	—
EARNINGS:						
\$12 to \$15 per week	20	72	1	8	2	3
More than \$15 per week	6	21	1	8	0	0
Less than \$12 per week	2	7	11	84	5	8
No information	2	—	1	—	9	—
No earnings, or included in family income	—	—	—	—	52	89
CHARITY:					Number	Per Cent
Families not receiving charitable aid					36	67
Families receiving charitable aid					12	22
Families applied for charitable aid					6	11
No information					14	—

*Family with no children.

1930-31. The fact that 83 per cent of the men were without employment, or doing part-time "made work," suggests the existence of a grave problem. Ten per cent were working full time and 7 per cent owned their own business, a little store or fruit stand.

Of the number employed 72 per cent received from \$12.00 to \$15.00 a week, the amount paid by the city for "made work." Twenty-one per cent were able to earn more than that, and the remaining 7 per cent even less.

The amount which the mothers and children added to the family income was small, although, in many cases it was the only means of support, other than that earned in the country, or donated by charity. Seventy-eight per cent of the mothers were unemployed. Seventeen per cent did "homework," i.e., sewed linings in coats, embroidered blouses, and so forth, for an insignificant sum. Only one mother was employed full time. She worked for the Campbell Soup Company while her husband stayed at home and took care of the children. Three per cent of them helped in their respective husband's business.

The earnings of the women employed were almost negligible. Al-

though 8 per cent of them received more than \$15.00 a week, and 8 per cent from \$12.00 to \$15.00 a week, the vast majority, or 84 per cent, earned only a meagre \$3.00 or \$4.00 a week for working all day at sewing—as one woman said, "Only enough to pay the milk man."

Sixty per cent of the children were unemployed. Fifteen per cent helped their mothers with "homework"—boys and girls. Even one little 6-year-old was embroidering cross stitches on blouses. The children worked at this after school. Eighteen per cent were employed full time and in every case had stopped school at 14 or 16 for that purpose. Three per cent had their own business, in every case a store. None of them earned more than \$15.00 a week; 11 per cent made less than that. The majority of the children's earnings were counted in the family income mentioned above.

It would appear that the laborers pay all their back debts as soon as they return to the city, and immediately start accumulating more for the next year's earnings in the country.

As the visits in the city were kept on a friendly basis the subject as to whether or not the family had to accept charity was a delicate one and not easy to handle. Often the information could not be secured without hurting their feelings. Several times it was found that their great pride made them say that they did not accept charity when it was found later from welfare agencies that they did. Therefore, it is probable that even more were doing so than the 33 per cent who were definitely known to be either living on grocery orders from the Family Society, or to have put in an application for assistance.

Health

The majority of the youngsters were found to be clean, healthy and sufficiently clothed. The clothing was sometimes fancy, sometimes neat, and very often of a cheap quality. In 89 per cent of the cases it was sufficient and in 86 per cent clean. In one extreme case a family of boys had torn filthy clothing pinned on them. On the other hand, the writer saw a little girl of three years who, after her morning bath, was dressed in clean, snowy white underclothes, hand embroidered, with a clean starched dress, and a well made camel's hair coat and hat.

The food was sufficient in 69 per cent of the cases. This means that the chief food was something filling, such as bread or macaroni and usually included milk, and vegetables. Eggs were commonly used and coffee was indulged in daily by old and young alike. Fortunately, they made it about half milk for the babies.

TABLE 3
Health of 68 Families Visited

	Number	Per Cent
CLOTHING:		
Sufficient	59	89
Scanty	7	11
Clean	57	86
Dirty	9	14
No information	2	—
FOOD:		
Sufficient (including vegetables and milk)	38	69
Insufficient	17	31
No information	13	—
DISEASE:		
One communicable	10	15
More than one communicable	9	13
Organic	8	12
Colds	9	13
None	32	47
GENERAL APPEARANCE:		
Healthy	55	81
Pale and anemic	13	19

In 47 per cent there were reported no diseases. In 10 families, or 15 per cent, there was just one case of a communicable disease. In 9 families there was more than one case of a communicable disease. Gall stones, appendicitis and other organic diseases were found in 12 per cent of the cases. There were colds in 13 per cent. Such a record is indicative of a fair degree of sanitation.

Eighty-one per cent of the children looked well nourished, clean and happy; while 19 per cent were pale, anemic and undoubtedly suffering from inanition.

Play Life

Even though there are parks scattered at intervals over south Philadelphia the majority of the children were found to play on the street, in the house, or in a tiny backyard. The movies were a special Saturday afternoon treat, except for one woman who went almost every day and took her three youngest children, ages 2, 4, and 6. They all got in for 20 cents.

In four cases the children played in the park or school playground after school. In one case the boys went to the Y. M. C. A. and the girls to the Y. W. C. A. Dice and smoking were mentioned as the favorite sport in only one instance.

The use of the Italian dialect was prevalent among the parents, even though most of them had been in this country more than twenty years. The children, through their school and street life, had learned to speak English more fluently. The mothers spoke English less fluently than the fathers, because they did not get out and mingle with other people as much. Italian was the chief language among the parents in 44 per cent of the families, English in 42 per cent and a mixed jargon in the remaining 14 per cent. In only one case was Italian used by the children. A 3-year-old was being taught to speak Italian, because the parents felt that she would pick up English for herself and they wanted to be sure that she got the native tongue. One man showed a book which he bought on first coming to America and by which he taught himself to speak English.

In three cases the father had left home. In the majority, 95 per cent, the family was all together, apparently affectionate and happy.

Nearly all who had any plans for the future wanted to return to the country to gather fruit and vegetables. They found the work and life in the country pleasant and a great financial help. One family very emphatically did not want to go back to Whitesbog, 63 per cent

TABLE 4
Social Conditions

LANGUAGE:	Parents		Children	
	Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
Italian	31	45	1	2
English	29	43	65	98
Broken	8	12	—	—
No children	—	—	—	2
STABILITY:			Number	Per Cent
All together			62	95
Husband left home			3	5
No information			3	—
HOW LONG IN THIS COUNTRY:				
15 to 20 years			22	35
More			40	63
Less (wife 10 years)			1	2
No information			5	—
PLANS FOR FUTURE:				
To go back to Whitesbog			43	63
Did not want to go back to Whitesbog			1	2
To go back to Italy			2	3
"Don't know"			20	29
Owens business (barber shop)			2	3

of them were just as emphatic about wanting to go back, and 30 per cent were undecided about any plans for the future. Two parents expressed a desire to go back to the old country. Two wanted to go into business for themselves—one as a barber and the other to run a lunch stand at the shore.

The group in the city were, as a whole, a happy lot. Although their faces would get long and their eyes troubled as they would shake their



JERRY—AGE SIX WEEKS



"I BRUSHED MY TEETH THIS MORNING"

heads and say, "no work," a merry laugh a few minutes later would show their naturally happy sunny dispositions.

Educational Status of the Children

From the progress records of 127 migratory children taken directly from their roll sheets and registration cards it was found that 34 per cent of them were not retarded at all. Seven per cent were $\frac{1}{2}$ year retarded; 16 per cent, one year; 7 per cent, $1\frac{1}{2}$ years; 18 per cent, 2 years; 1 per cent, $2\frac{1}{2}$ years; 12 per cent, 3 years; 5 per cent, 4 years; 3 per cent, 5 years; and 0.8 per cent, 7 years. Four per cent of the children were in the classes for orthogenic backwards. This

amount of retardation was computed on the assumption that all children start school at 6 years and should progress at the rate of one grade a year. The fact that they do start at 6 is generally true among Italians according to principals and superintendents, and the records.

Forty-eight per cent of the children were doing passing work. Those failing were having difficulty with arithmetic, reading and spelling. These subjects were mentioned more frequently than geography, history and oral English as the causes of failures.

In several families (at least 4) where the children had apparently the same opportunity for attending school, it was found that there was a great range in their progress. In one family there was one child not retarded at all and one 5 years retarded and failing in all of his work. In another case one child was not retarded at all, with another 7 years retarded. In two families the range was from not retarded to orthogenic backward classes.

Dr. Henry Gideon, director of compulsory education in Philadelphia, cooperated to the extent of securing the records of 100 Italian children who had never missed any time at school because of migration of their families to the farms. The results of these data are given below and are compared with similar data secured from the migrant group. They were so greatly in favor of the migratory group insofar as progress in school was concerned that the writer was afraid that there had been some mistake in spite of all the care with which Dr. Gideon had collected the material. Dr. Gideon, however, assured her that as far as he knew there was no error. But to be absolutely safe he sent records of another group of 100 non-migrant children residing in the southeastern section of the city. These data also appear in the table given below.

Records of the non-migratory groups showed that retardation was not entirely caused by absence from school. The per cent retarded in both of the non-migrant groups was larger than in the migrant group.

In the first non-migrant group less than half as many children were fully up to grade as in the migrant group. In the second non-migrant group the number of children fully up to grade was 5 per cent less than in the migrant group.

The number of children retarded from one-half to one and a half years was 6.3 per cent greater in the first non-migrant group than in the migrant group and 1.7 per cent less in the second non-migrant group than in the migrant group.

The number of children retarded two years was 12 per cent more in the first non-migrant group than in the migrant group and 5 per

cent more in the second non-migrant group than in the migrant group.

The percentage of children retarded three years runs closer together in the three groups, but still shows a smaller percentage in the migrant group to be so much retarded.

TABLE 5

Comparison of School Progress, Migrant and Non-Migrant Philadelphia School Children

Years Retarded	Migrant Group	Non-Migrants	
	per cent	First Group	Second Group
None	34	16	29
½	7	0	5
1	16	30	15
1½	0.7	0	2
2	18	30	23
2½	1	0	0
3	12	18	16
3½	0	0	1
4	5	4	7
4½	0	0	1
5	3	0	1
7	0.7	0	0
O. B.* Class	4	0	0

*Orthogenic backward.

School Attendance

Only one or two children were found to stay out of school for any length of time after returning to the city. Most of the re-entrances were made on October 20, the Monday following the Saturday on which they left the bog. Seventy-one per cent of the children attended regularly, some of them not missing a single day after returning. Fifty-one per cent of the 29 per cent who were irregular gave illness as the cause, 31 per cent truancy or parental neglect, and no cause was given for 36 per cent of the cases. The irregularity of attendance was not the same within whole families. Some would attend irregularly while others would be present virtually every day.

The non-migratory group were as irregular in attendance as the migratory group. Not one in the former group had a perfect attendance record for the year. Many of them missed almost half of the sessions. The smallest number of days missed in the first non-migratory group was 11½. There were two children missing only one day each in the second group.

Most of the children after getting back to the city were glad to return to school, and attended regularly except in cases of illness. Attendance is probably aided by the fact that absences are quickly investigated by attendance officers.

Health

The health records were not available in many cases, as the examination for the year had not been given and recorded. For those of the migrant group for whom a record could be secured carious teeth was the chief defect, affecting 53 cases. Diseased tonsils came next in 25 cases. There were eleven cases of nasal obstruction, 6 of eye strain, 2 of underweight, 3 of stooped shoulders, and 1 defective hearing.

Forty-five per cent of the first non-migrant group were marked "fair" in their health records. Here, also carious teeth was the chief defect with 36 out of 100. There were 16 with diseased tonsils, 13 with eye strain, 12 underweight, 6 with nasal obstruction, 3 with stooped shoulders, 3 undernourished and 2 with defective hearing.

In the second non-migrant group of 100, 45 were marked "good" in health, and 23 "fair." As in both other groups the chief defect was carious teeth.

From the following ratings, migratory children as a group were not considered as creating a disciplinary problem.

TABLE 6

Discipline Ratings of Migratory Children

Rating	Migrants	Non-Migrants	
	per cent	First Group	Second Group
Excellent	2	5	2
Good	51	34	37
Fair	41	51	51
Poor	4	10	10

Principals' Opinions of Migratory Children

While getting the school records of the children it was also possible to talk with the principals and get their opinions on the subject of the children leaving school. These opinions may be summarized as follows:

1. We can give no cause and effect as to why the children are "left down," since conditions are not constant. Intelligence is what counts. A study in a recent issue of the *American Journal of Research* shows that unless the absence

is serious it does not affect promotion. The absence in the spring is more serious than that in the fall.

2. Three hundred of my enrollment of 1,500 go out to the country now, and if I had my way all 1,500 of them would leave in April, come back in November, and not be taught reading and writing, but continue where they left off in the country with nature study and bird lore. I contend that they come back clean, wholesome, and healthy with high ideals, which the city streets knock out in a month. "From a philosophy of life point of view it is a wonderful thing, but a terrible handicap to the teachers!"

3. I think that the children should really be retarded more than they show, because the teachers are lenient with them as they are out so much. I would like to see some legislation against it. There is no doubt about Italians as a whole being a backward group. The teachers give individual help wherever they can. There is more retardation in the lower grades.

4. No, Italians are not of low mentality, but they lack encouragement at home, which with their language handicap enters in with migration in retarding them; with the first cause stressed. They will be hit and scolded for a poor report, and receive no encouragement for a good one. The number migrating has decreased in the last few years.

5. I would personally like very much to see some legislation against children going out to the country. I think that supplementary teachers which they used to have, and hope to have again as soon as finances pick up, would do much toward solving the problem of retardation. Italians as a whole are a slow group—my school is about 90 per cent Italian and ranks among the lowest in the city in Intelligence Quotients—the median is much below 100.

6. I find a greater language handicap among Italians than any other nationality. The greatest retardation is in the lower grades; 50 per cent failed to pass in first grade. They should have special classes.

7. I do not like the attitude that many people take that Italians are backward. I have impressed my teachers to change their attitude about this, and have brought the school up from the lowest to the highest in this district in certain tests. I think children should not miss school, but that there are physical and material advantages to their stay in the country. The attendance officer says she finds migrant homes better than the overage home in South Philadelphia. They put the money they make in the country into their homes. She thinks there are advantages to their stay in the country.

8. The Italians in my school come from a low peasant class of Southern Italy, with a poor social background—they are retarded and become social misfits. I have no statistics, but feel that this is more prevalent among migrants. I have a sympathetic group of teachers, who understand pupils and try to get contact with the parents through the children by sending literature home. I think much could be done in a small group by one who understands the Italian language. English is a great handicap to them. They are a very responsive group, and one can see results of work with them.

9. The appropriation by the State Legislature and the expenditure of the Board of Education are governed largely by the attendance record of the school, so, "migration is much more a problem of attendance than it is a problem of

retardation." The language difficulty and slack compulsory attendance laws after they return are much more a problem in my school.

10. I think Italians as a whole are the hardest group with which to work. They are dull, hard to manage, and have a very poor home environment. I do not think blueberry and cranberry pickers are as seriously handicapped as some of the children leaving early in the spring.

11. Italians as a whole are retarded, and are problems. Those that go out to the country are given individual instruction by a sympathetic corps of teachers and make the grade even though they undoubtedly lose out on some of the subject matter. Each school works out its own system of grading, and this one gives the child the benefit of the doubt and promotes him, rather than have him a social misfit and disciplinary problem. I think it is more a matter of individual differences, than a matter of missing six weeks. In the same family one child is getting along all right and the other is dull and retarded.

12. Of course, they are retarded. Why would we run the school for ten months if it did not take that long to cover the subjects? If children do not fail to make the grade it is because of individual help, or, because they learn just enough to pass and miss some of the fundamentals. These studies don't usually amount to anything. The teachers do not consider the children handicapped by their stay in the country. One said, "It is not a matter of their going out to the country so much as it is of individual differences in the abilities of the children."

13. Italians are retarded by the new language and environment, and retardation is probably accentuated by their stay in the country. The teachers gave favorable reports of the children. One said, "Mary did not lose anything by being in the country because she worked so hard when she came back and she was so healthy and stable. I wish some of my other pupils could go to the farms."

14. This class of pupil is undoubtedly handicapped by losing any time at school, because of an innate weakness. Teachers try to realize the economic and social conditions, so they often push the child ahead when he does not deserve it, thus cluttering up the grades. There is a great need for more special and orthogenic classes.

15. It would be necessary to study each child separately in order to make a scientific statement as to why he is retarded. Many factors other than absence enter in. They have to go out to the country to scrape up enough to live through the winter months.

16. This is a special class school, so migration does not affect us so much as it probably would a regular school. We have special low groups with promotion at any time, so we are not greatly affected by absence in the country. Out of an enrollment of 250 about 40 are migrants. Unless they miss 6 weeks at each end of the school year, the loss is not serious. Work in this school is handed out in such small doses that the child at all mentally alert can catch up.

17. This is a school for orthogenic and mentally deficient children weeded out from the other schools of the district. Only a very small percentage of the children are migratory. As to one boy I have in mind, I should say, "Let him go; he is probably much better off in a cranberry bog."

Besides these statements by public school principals, the following opinions from officers of parochial schools and from school counselors are pertinent:

The Mother Superiors in the parochial schools all seem to think that the children are retarded by missing time at school. It keeps them from promotion. They grant the good of fresh air, and the relief to economic stress. They are very much concerned because children do not have the opportunity to go to mass.

19. A school counselor says that so far as the school and the school system are concerned: "Yes, they are handicapped, but all things considered, I should say, 'No, migration does not seriously interfere with their development'."

20. Another school counselor thinks that compared with other nationalities, Italians show lack of ambition, and ability to speak the language. They have the poorest home environment of any nationality. The boys run in gangs which are very hard to break up, and anything which will change their environment and put them in a better social situation will be a wonderful thing. He would like to recommend some children to go to the country, for they need it. He would like also to see the parents trained in the English language and in citizenship.

The Social Center at Whitesbog

Out on a cranberry bog at Whitesbog, New Jersey, there was a "social center" under the auspices of the Council of Women for Home Missions cooperating with Joseph J. White, Inc. This was a little house right in the midst of the Italian settlement. It had three rooms—a nursery, a kitchen, and a large recreation room. Here there were trained workers, often college graduates, who had a combination day nursery, nursery school and kindergarten during the day to take care of the children under ten years while their parents are out working. At night there were clubs for the older girls and boys, who had been working in the fields during the day. This afforded a wonderful opportunity to instill high ideals of character, health, and citizenship into young minds in which such thoughts had not had a chance in the struggle of their "hand to mouth" existence.

Season of 1930

During the summer of 1930 a group from Rutgers University administered tests to a group of these girls and boys, ranging in age from 7 to 13 years. The tests used were the Kuhlmann-Anderson and Pintner Cunningham Intelligence Tests, Woody-McCall Arithmetic, and Comprehension and rate reading tests.

The results of these tests showed that the median I. Q. was below 100, with several children scoring zero. Their reading age was below

their mental age. They stood higher in arithmetic than in reading, though many were below their mental age in that subject also.⁴

The children came to school at seven o'clock in the morning when their parents went out into the fields to work. There were twelve tiny babies for whom the day's activities consisted of a morning bath, and routine feeding and care. The ones whose activities are now to be described in some detail were those of nursery school, kindergarten, and elementary school age. The basis of all our work with them was the formation of good habits. Their daily program opened with "cleaning-up," a tooth brush drill, washing faces and hands, cleaning nails, and tidying up in general before they began the morning exercises. Inspection followed and the ones with clean nails, etc., got a colored square by their name on the chart. The movable chairs were now arranged in a circle and First Aid administered, the instructor doing the actual work, and a child assisting. We took this opportunity to stress cleanliness, importance of taking care of small wounds, and the principles of sanitation.

A simple prayer; a Bible story, sometimes dramatized, sometimes told with pictures, sometimes told by one of the children; and such songs as "Jesus Love Me," and "Father We Thank Thee" opened the morning exercises. We always strove to make good citizens of them, so it was with great feeling and ceremony that they stood up straight, sang "America," then turned toward the flag and saluted it with the pledge of allegiance.

The atmosphere of this morning circle was very free and if a child had something to say or show he did not feel the least restraint about doing it. We were very unfortunate about getting a piano and a musician at the same time, but that did not keep us from teaching the children many songs about animals and plants, lullabies, and nursery rhymes with motions, which gave the children a sense of rhythm. They learned to count by saying "Ten Little Indian Boys." This also trained in coordination of the arms and legs, as there were simple steps to go with the hand motions.

This section of the state has an abundance of wild flowers which we discussed and encouraged the children to observe. Almost every morning someone would come bearing a token triumphantly. Last fall we found nearly every flower mentioned in the Autumn poem "The goldenrod is yellow, the corn is turning brown."

Our program was very elastic and could be changed easily to meet any condition, but, as a rule, the morning circle was followed by a

⁴See Appendix (p. 39) for report of tests.

period of free play in the yard. This yard was one great sand pile, in which houses, castles, cranberry bogs, pies, and cakes might be built, torn down and rebuilt to one's heart's content. A swing, a slide, balls, and sand toys also helped to keep the youngsters happily occupied.

However, during the blueberry season one year and last year during the cranberry season it was possible for us to have a little patch of the respective fruits to take care of. So often in the morning we



LEARNING TO PICK BLUEBERRIES



WATER IS A NOVELTY

would take the children out for an hour or two to gather the fruit. From among the children we had a "row boss," a "bushel man," and all of the other accessories of the regular pickers; and from this child management the young pickers received very rigid instruction as to picking the vines or bushes clean, not putting in any bad fruit, and staying within his bounds. The blueberries were turned in at the sheds and the children received pay for their work, but we were allowed to keep the cranberries and make jelly of them for our lunch.

The handwork which came in the morning was correlated with some part of the discussion of the morning circle—either the Bible story or the nature talk. The children were allowed supervised freedom in this work. We strove to follow Burnham's policy of "a task,

a plan, and freedom." They traced, colored, and cut out animals when we talked of Noah's ark; or modeled animals from clay. They drew, very simply, the steps in the germination of a seed, after the story "From the Seed to Leaf." Sometimes they were given such free activity as cutting any picture from a magazine, mounting it, and making up a story about it. Some of the results were delightful and the good training involved is obvious.

During the fall acorns were gathered, and strung for necklaces, for bracelets, and to amuse the babies; pine needles also were used to make ornaments. Leaves were pinned with tiny twigs to make charming hats. Nature seemed to take on a new light for these little cooped-up souls, and they drank it in with squeals of delight over the beautiful flowers and the gorgeous fall colors.

Noon was a very important time of day. Some of the larger boys and girls had been busily preparing lunch, under supervision, and now was the time to serve it. Soup, vegetables, bread, butter, cookies were served—not all at once, of course. We did not forget that little Italians must have "spaghetti" occasionally, so that was added to the diet every now and then. This planning and serving of lunch was used as an opportunity to discuss wholesome foods, proper preparation, and a few simple rules of table etiquette. All hands were washed again, before they were seated around the tables. They learned to say a simple grace when their lunch was served.

After lunch all hands fell to cleaning up the house and yard. Tiny tots stood on chairs at the sink to wash the cups and bowls, while others wiped them and put them away. The tables, with oil cloth tops were washed—not always spotlessly clean, but the best a tiny youngster can do. The floor was swept, but some special mention had to be made of the spaces under the tables and chairs to insure a good job. The linoleum was scrubbed for the second or third time during the day; and the papers were picked up in the yard.

Now all was in readiness for a quiet hour. Mats were spread on the floor, and the children remained quiet and relaxed for an hour or possibly an hour and a half, many of them going fast asleep.

We usually tried to plan a pleasant surprise for the afternoon. There was a nearby stream, which was often deep enough to go swimming in, or at least to use for wading, building dams, sailing boats, or catching small fish by hand. This was the usual afternoon fun. There was at our service an old model-T Ford touring car, and the height of the youngsters' joy was reached when we piled them in—any number up to 24—and took them for a ride in the woods. Some-

times we took our afternoon lunch of milk and crackers with us, and had a picnic in the woods.

The parents came in about 4:30, so the remainder of the day was spent getting the house in order, in free play and if time permitted, in a repetition of the morning songs and stories.

On rainy days when there was no work the younger children stayed at home with their parents, and the group from 8 to 20 years came to the "center." They amused themselves with books and magazines. Sometimes they got up an impromptu program of songs, dancing, etc. Those who wished to do so were provided with needles, scissors, hammers, saws, or whatever tools were needed to do some sort of constructive hand work under supervision. The day instead of being spent in idle mischief was one of wholesome recreation and work.

At night we had club work for the older girls and boys, who had been in the fields during the day. By the time their day's work was done they were in a physical and mental condition for play and recreation more than anything else, so that was what we gave them. The little house rang with the music of guitar and accordion, while dancing feet shook the beams with an Italian jig. After many games like "Going to Jerusalem," and "Pretty Girl Station," came the grand finale of group singing. Picnics and hikes were part of our recreational program, and many girls and boys roasted "weinies" over an open fire for the first time in their lives.

The boys were just boys, and up to their usual pranks and mischief making. For one or two nights they were uncontrollable. Finally we called them together and said: "Well, boys, as far as we are concerned it is all over. We want to work and play and have a good time with you. We have done all we can, and you are not playing fair. So unless you can think of some plan to continue your club, we will call it off for the summer." It took only a few minutes for them to present a plan. They organized a committee, headed by a "chief bouncer," whose duty it was to "bounce" anyone that misbehaved. After that, order was at once restored when a "bouncer" called for quiet in order to give some instructions for a game.

So, after six short weeks, with rosy cheeks, with berries and other tokens of the country in their hands, and the breath of the country in their lungs, we waved goodbye to them as they went back to their life on the streets in the crowded slum sections of the city.

Season of 1931

A second season of experimental work with migrant children was carried on at Whitesbog during the summer and fall following the

winter of the survey of their living and working conditions in the city. In a general way the same program was followed as in 1930, but with the changes suggested below.

The pickers came out as usual about the first of July for the blueberry picking season. On the same day that picking began the "social center" was opened with 5 babies, 25 other children, 3 workers and an Italian girl to do the washing.

Special attention was given to the health of the babies. The puny, undernourished ones were taken to the company doctor for examination. Changes were made in their diet, vegetable and fruit juices were recommended, and regular hours advised. After a few weeks of this treatment great improvement was noted.

With the approval of Rutgers University and the grower, Miss Elizabeth C. White, the children were given four rows in a blueberry field just a few yards back of the school to care for as their own. They were taken out during the cool part of every morning, from 7 until 9 o'clock, to pick the fruit. It was considered as a game, more or less, while at the same time the children were taught how to gather the fruit without mashing it or rubbing off the bloom; how to fill their quart boxes full; and how to pick the bushes clean of the ripe fruit. They each had a ticket which was punched for them when they filled a quart. This money was not given to them, but was counted as the 5 cents which they paid each day for their lunch. Besides the punch given for picking a quart the 6 or 7 children who filled their quart boxes first were given a special treat of going with one of the teachers in the automobile when she carried the berries to the packing shed. We considered this wholesome recreation and exercise, good training in a vocation (Miss White says that the best and fastest pickers are the ones who learned to do it when they were children) and an aid in the development of a sense of responsibility. The children were proud to think that they were earning the money to pay for their own lunch.

However, some visitors made charges of exploitation, child labor, and rearing children to be nothing more than berry pickers. So it was judged advisable to drop this activity in order that the work might not be handicapped by unfavorable public opinion. This was done much to the disappointment of the children, their parents and the teachers.

The program of recreational clubs worked out beautifully with the help of the young people of Mount Holly. On Monday night from 7:30 until 9:00 o'clock the yard surrounding the center would be alive with people. This was the night for out-of-door games. On one side

a group of girls under 15 years were led in playing "blind man's bluff;" on another the older girls played volley ball. The largest part of the yard was devoted to the boys, who had two leaders for baseball and dodge ball games. It was with great reluctance that games had to be called off in favor of bed-time.

On Tuesday night the children gathered for an hour of story telling. Often the mothers and fathers would come up, stand on the outside of the fence and listen as intently as the children. After the stories some of the older boys of their own accord would come up with accordion and banjo and entertain with modern song hits, and perhaps an Italian tune or two.

Thursday night brought another change in the scene, with a series of boxing bouts. Mr. Reno, the boxing coach at Bucknell University and director of summer playgrounds at Trenton, was the master of ceremonies. At other times Mr. Reno put on a track meet for both boys and girls.

Movies were attempted on Friday night, but with little success, because of inadequate electric current. They were, however, held in high favor by the Italians and could be worked out to a great educational advantage if local conditions changed so as to permit their use. Slides were available from the state museum at Trenton for the postage charges.

Cranberry season brought still further changes. The company desired to do all hand picking, as "scooping" injured the vines; so on September 5 enough additional pickers arrived to make the force 450 strong.

The doors of the center were again thrown open and in swarmed 80 children. Tooth brushes were distributed wholesale, teeth brushed and faces and hands washed by the dozen and a morning circle carried on after a fashion. When lunch time rolled around, it was necessary to feed the children in shifts.

So greatly was the building crowded that during the rest hour about half of the children had to sit on chairs or play outside while the other half slept on the pads. Of course, this condition could not last. It partially solved itself and the rest was solved by Miss White. As usual, some of the families found the work too hard and unsatisfactory, so they soon returned to the city. Some of the parents, who were used to the more select group of the blueberry season, objected to having their little ones mix with such a motley group, so a mother or older sister arranged to stay at home with them. To completely meet the crowded condition the one-room building which had been

our original "social center" was reopened. A yard was enclosed, and the house equipped with stove, refrigerator and other essentials for a nursery. Here the babies and smaller children were cared for. One of the workers had special supervision of this department with Anna, a fairly intelligent Italian woman, as her assistant. Anna soon learned to wash the babies, scrub, wash clothes, and care for the little ones so well that she could be left to do it alone during part of the day.

Having the smaller children out of the way made the work with the older group much more satisfactory. The cleaning up in the morning could be taken care of almost entirely by one or two older boys and girls. During the handwork period gay leaves, flowers, birds and butterflies were made to adorn the walls of the room.

The youngsters responded nicely to responsibility which was thrown on their shoulders. The house was kept much cleaner during lunch when each table was responsible for the dirt on and under it. We found the rest-hour much more quiet when there was a child "teacher" for each sleeping pad to see that the children lay quietly and closed their eyes.

Great pleasure was derived from the loan of a little library of about 25 children's books by the Burlington County Library. These books came in a neat case, and were delivered and called for by the librarian. There were old reading books, "Little Black Sambo," Social Science series books, and others that children love. Some of the older children were allowed to read these books during the rest hour, and they were used almost every afternoon in the story hour.

The short evenings and the return to standard from daylight-saving time made it almost impossible to have outside recreational clubs in the evening. Our house was entirely inadequate for such a large group, so the young people from Mount Holly came up only occasionally, instead of three or four times a week as they did in the summer. Since the laborers lived mostly by the sun, they retired early, and did not have that long period of idleness between work and bedtime, which they would have had during the summer months.

So with a big party and presents for all of the small children the season of 1931 came to a close on October 23. The children returned to the city with their parents and if they did as last year, entered the public schools on October 26 and took up a normal life in a regular home for the winter and spring.

Summary

At Whitesbog, the Italian laborers lived in simple but adequate and sanitary quarters, rent free. The hours for work were reasonable,

usually from 7:00 a. m. to 4:30 p. m. with a half hour for lunch at noon. They were paid by the "piece" and the amount of money they take home with them after the expenses of the entire season were paid ranged from \$64.19 to \$509.70, with an average of \$310.19 per family.

In the city they have comfortable homes. The majority of the workers owned, or were buying their houses, which usually included at least five rooms and an inside toilet and bath. In over 50 per cent of the families the father had been unable to find any, or permanent employment after returning to the city. The families were living on their earnings from the country, from charity, or by accumulating debts. Many were several months behind on their building and loan dues, and their gas and electric bills.

The children, as a rule, were healthy, well clad, with sufficient food; but they spent most of the recreational time in the house, or on the crowded street rather than in a park or playground.

In school there was a retardation up to 7 years, or orthogenetic backward classes; but the majority of the 128 migratory children studied were only one year or less retarded. In few cases were they found to be disciplinary problems, and usually were considered as stable, healthy and hard working after returning to the city.

In general, the feeling among the principals of the schools which these children attend was that Italians as a whole were a retarded group, and that the retardation was undoubtedly aggravated by loss of time in school. They agreed that with other social and economic factors considered, their migration to the country was not to be condemned. However, they would like to see some legislation go into effect, more as a means of regulating their attendance records than as a means of aiding the progress of the child.

At the "center" at Whitesbog, the children under 10 years of age were taken care of during the day while the parents were out working. The daily program resembled a combination day nursery, nursery school and kindergarten. At night the "center" was open for recreation to the parents, and to the older girls and boys.

During the season of 1931 local help was enlisted for the recreational programs. This worked very satisfactorily and met with approval and great interest by the volunteer helpers, the social workers in charge and the children. The county library service also contributed to the social program by loaning suitable books.

The work was entirely experimental, and was still far from perfect. But it was undertaken with open minds, ready for constructive suggestions, with the hope that it would improve as new plans were tried out.

Conclusions

After looking intimately into the lives of Italian migratory labor at home and abroad, in the fields and in the cities, we ask whether the data indicate that the children should not be permitted to migrate or that they should be forced to return early?

The following facts would support a conclusion that the children should not be permitted to migrate:

1. They miss from 4 to 6 weeks at school in the fall, thus losing out on some fundamentals of their school work, and spoiling the school attendance record.
2. Their housing facilities are neither as elaborate nor as adequate in the country as in the city.
3. In the country they have no opportunity for participation in the activities of their own church.
4. It would be expensive, difficult to administer, and would involve interstate complications to provide them with schools while in the country.

On the contrary, the following facts support the conclusion that the children should be permitted to migrate and remain through the season:

1. Over 40 per cent of the migratory children studied are retarded only one year or less, and school authorities express the opinion that other factors such as home environment, language handicaps, and lack of innate ability, play as important a part in retardation as loss of time by coming to the country.
2. In over half of the cases the heads of the families were unable to find employment after returning to the city and so were dependent on the earnings from the country, supplemented by charity and debts to carry them through the winter months.
3. The records of the non-migrant groups secured for the purpose of comparison showed a larger per cent not retarded in the migrant than in the non-migrant groups. They also showed a larger per cent retarded from one to three years in the non-migrants than in the migrants.
4. For generations back the forefathers of these laborers have been working on farms. It is the work to which they seem to be best suited physically and mentally.
5. The living quarters in the country are clean, sanitary, and adequate for the few weeks of camp life which they spend there.
6. The children thrive physically in the pure, wholesome, fresh air.
7. The workers are happy about their work.

8. School authorities and social workers believe that the children return to the city much more stable emotionally after a stay in the country, away from the noise, rush and filth of city streets.

9. It might be possible for an adapted type of schooling to be offered them in the country during those months they are in the fields so that they would not necessarily suffer any retardation as a result of their stay in the country.



SUPERVISED PLAY

Some Suggestions for Educational Work in the Migrant Areas

The director of compulsory attendance, in charge of the schools to which these children go, stated that he would be willing to transfer any children from his records to the records of a school of Whitesbog, and readmit the children to his schools when they returned to the city in October. Of course, the school in the country would have to be approved by the authorities before any such transfer could be made.

The writer's experience suggests that such a country school should be in the form of a continuation school, under the support of the state. The work with the babies and younger children should follow very much the same general plan as the one described as operated at present. The boys and girls from 8 to 16 years of age should be allowed

to work in the fields, but should come into the school in shifts of two or three hours each. During these periods they should be under a sympathetic, well-trained instructor, who would train them in citizenship, character, and wholesome attitudes in an indirect way. Direct methods should be used for instruction in nature study, bird lore, plant and animal life, language and arithmetic. These are things which will make of them better, happier and more worthwhile workers in their trade—agriculture, while at the same time it will not close the door of opportunity into other trades. Wholesome recreation and worthy use of leisure time, should have an important part in this program.

With adequate personnel it would be possible and highly worthwhile to give to the parents a course in English language and citizenship. The mothers might be trained in home nursing, food preparation and other subjects which would help them to rear a healthier family.

This school could open in the latter part of June and continue until the cranberry season closed in the latter part of October. During those four months, although the population would be shifting, the staff would have opportunity, because of a close personal contact, to instill ideals of health, character, and living in an effective manner.

The enlisting of local help also offers great possibilities. New workers bring in new ideas. The spirit of mutual cooperation in the neighborhood is better. The expense of paid helpers is cut down, although a skillful supervisor would always be necessary. County libraries, county nurses, doctors, and Y. W. C. A. and Y. M. C. A. workers are usually ready to lend a helping hand in a worthwhile social project of this sort.

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Appendix

Camp Rules for Italians Living at "Florence" and "Rome," Whitesbog, N. J.

General

1. In all matters not especially mentioned in the following rules Mr. Mike Filizzone will decide what is right.
2. No one, except in case of sickness, is to stay about the houses during working hours. Those who do not comply with this rule may be discharged.
3. No one is to start for work in the morning before the general signal without the special permission of the boss. Any one doing so will be laid off from two hours to half a day.
4. Any one coming to work drunk will be laid off from half a day to one day.
5. Those wishing to use the oven should apply to the oven boss, who will assign a time.
6. The men are not to go to the women's toilet. The women are not to go to the men's toilet. Those found breaking this rule may be discharged.
7. Profane language, especially in the presence of children, will not be tolerated; any one guilty may be fined from 50 cents to \$2.00 or may be discharged.
8. No one is to play games with cards or any other gambling game, to sell intoxicating liquors, or to carry fire arms. Any one breaking this rule may be laid off half a day.
- *9. It is forbidden to take pieces of wood or boards without permission; to carry away any boards that may be around the gates or bridges, or to

*NOTE: The reason for rule No. 9 is that the boards about the gates and bridges regulate the irrigation of the cranberry bogs and interference with them may easily cause damage running into many thousands of dollars.

remove them from one place to another. Any one who breaks this rule may be fined from \$2.00 to \$5.00 or discharged at the discretion of Mike Filizzone.

10. No one is to cut down any tree or to cut or hack any live pine tree to obtain turpentine or for any other reason. Any one disobeying this rule will be fined \$2.00 or may be discharged.

11. The State of New Jersey imposes a fine of \$20.00 and costs on any one fishing without a license. Every effort will be made to have this new law enforced.

Sanitation

12. At the end of each week all rooms are to be scrubbed. Any one failing to do his or her share of this work will pay a fine of fifty cents for each failure.

13. All tin cans, garbage, or other trash is to be put in the containers provided. When any one is caught breaking this rule the family will be fined fifty cents to two dollars.

14. All toilets are to be scrubbed at least once a week. Proper arrangements to have this work done will be made by Mike Filizzone.

Children

15. Babies and children under eight years of age are not allowed in the blueberry fields, sheds, nor in the cranberry bogs. These little children must be left at home with an older person to care for them when the nursery school is not open.

16. Any child under eight years old *must* be left with the teachers when the Nursery School is open unless its mother is at home with it.

17. No child over ten may be left at the Nursery School without the special consent of the teachers.

18. For each child left at the Nursery School the parents must give the teachers ten cents a day to help pay for the food the child eats. Any amount due the teachers when the tickets are cashed will be deducted from the pay and given to the teachers by the Company.

19. Children are forbidden to ride on the trucks at any time except with the special permission of the boss. The parents of the children are responsible for enforcing this rule. Truck drivers are to report to the boss any one breaking this rule, and the boss is positively directed to lay off the whole family from one hour to one day.

JOSEPH J. WHITE, INC.

Report of Mutual Tests

Letter from Dr. Daniel A. Prescott, Associate Professor of Education at Rutgers University, reporting the results of mental tests given to migrant children at Whitesbog during the summer of 1930:

RUTGERS UNIVERSITY, NEW BRUNSWICK, N. J.
August 18, 1930.

MY DEAR MISS FAIR:

Enclosed are the data resulting from the tests that we gave to your children at Whitesbog. You will see that the young children understand English so poorly that we were able to get practically nothing of value from them and the

test will therefore be of no use in helping you to plan the school work for specific individuals. This very fact is significant, however, because it shows: First, that the children will be able to profit very little from formal instruction and should instead be taught through story and activity; second, that such formal instruction as is given should be of a very elementary type designed to increase their reading ability and their knowledge of the English language.

Test results for the older children reveal some very interesting facts. The I. Q. range is from 70 to 117 with a number of children scoring zero. Psychologically those scoring below 75 would be classed definitely as feeble-minded children while those scoring from 80 to 90 would be classed on the border line as dull and those between 90 and 100 as below normal. The greater part of the group falls into this latter class, as you can see. It is my feeling, however, that the lack of school experience and a language handicap have prevented these children from showing their true ability and that the median I. Q. instead of being 95 as these test results show is much nearer the 100 mark of average American children. I have data from Italian children in other communities which would support this contention.

The test results also show that the children are definitely being penalized by their lack of regular school attendance. Every child except two reads with less comprehension than is to be expected from his mental age and when one remembers that the mental ages as revealed by the tests are probably too low the retardation in reading appears more serious still. Since reading is a tool subject so necessary for the mastery of other school subjects it is apparent how serious it must be for 10, 11, 12, and 13-year-old children to be able to do only second and third grade reading.

It is noticeable that the children almost all stand higher in arithmetic than in reading. This is doubtless due to the necessity of knowing arithmetic in their daily living and the skill which they showed is an indication that the English tests have perhaps rated them too low. Despite this, however, many of the children in arithmetic skill are far below what their mental ages would justify us in expecting of them and here again we see that they are seriously penalized by their irregular school attendance and lack of interest. I wish that there was some way by which you could encourage the older children to do a little reading in the evenings, but I can see that it would be extremely difficult. Almost any kind of light fiction material would be acceptable as a starter to get their interest because what they need most is a lot of practice in reading to fix the fundamental mechanical habits. Lacking these, never in their lives will they ever turn to reading as an avocation or as a source of information and many of these children have only from one to three years left in which to master these mechanical habits. Frankly, the tests show that the children are seriously retarded in both reading and arithmetic not only in relation to the average American children, but in relation also to their own mental abilities.

Very truly yours,

DANIEL A. PRESCOTT,
Associate Professor of Education.