

never attended school and did not enter the public schools here. Before she was fourteen she went to work in an apron factory, where she passed as sixteen years of age and was allowed to work on a power machine. As a result of working two and a half years in the factory, she developed tuberculosis and was sent to a sanitarium. She left the sanitarium recently and is looking for "light work." She can neither read nor write, and can speak and understand very little English. She had never had a working certificate.

Often, of course, these immigrant children are noticed on the street or in the tenement by a vigilant truant officer or some other alert social worker, or they are reported to the school principal by some neighboring child who understands that their absence from school is not in accord with American right and custom in the matter. But in the meantime, the days wasted are precious days. These children more than any other children in the country need every day at school that can be given them, because the children of the immigrants are also the children of the poor; they will have to leave school to go to work probably on the very earliest day that the law permits "working papers" to be issued to them. Most of them will never hear the English language spoken in their homes; their fathers and their mothers are many of them illiterate, and must be, in the presence of their children, learners rather than teachers. With these children it is a matter of learning "now or never"; they will come in contact with few if any educational influences outside of the schoolroom before they go to work, and after they go to work they are likely to lose the little they have already learned unless they have made sufficient progress to have learned at least the English language.

As an experiment in attempting to make some connection between the records of Ellis Island, our largest single port of entry for arriving immigrants, and the education authorities, the Immigrants' Protective League, one of Chicago's private

social agencies, began in 1911 to act as a clearing-house by obtaining from the federal immigration authorities the names of all arriving children of compulsory school age who were "manifest"¹ to various parts of the state of Illinois. The League then sent the names of these same children to the school authorities in the various localities to which the children had gone, and asked in return for a report as to whether or not the children had been placed in school. The reports showed that in a large number of cases the children had not been enrolled until after the notification of the school authorities by this private society.

In a not inconsiderable number of towns no one could be found, neither a truant officer, superintendent of schools, nor member of the Board of Education, who would send back the reply blanks showing whether or not the children had been placed in school. Table XXVIII shows for a period of nearly

TABLE XXVIII

RESULT OF INQUIRIES BY IMMIGRANTS' PROTECTIVE LEAGUE REGARDING
SCHOOL ATTENDANCE OF IMMIGRANT CHILDREN

	1911 (10 Months)	1912	1913	1914-15
Number of towns to which lists were sent	118	167	91	209
Number sending replies	97	69	62	139
Percentage sending replies	82	41	68	67
Percentage not sending replies	18	59	32	33

four years (from March, 1911, to October, 1915) the number of towns to which lists of immigrant children were sent by the Immigrants' Protective League and the number of towns which did and which did not send replies. It will be seen that in

¹ That is, listed on the ships "manifest" to the immigration authorities as destined for Illinois.

a considerable number of towns varying from 18 to 59 per cent of the whole number of towns to which lists were sent, there was no representative of the local school authority who was sufficiently interested to send any reply concerning the school enrolment of these newly arrived immigrant children. The marked falling off in the number of towns in 1913 and in 1915 was due to the drop in immigration during those years.

From the replies sent from the towns in which someone was willing to send back the reply cards, the data presented in Tables XXIX and XXX have been compiled showing the number of children arriving, the number that had been entered in school before the receipt of the Immigrants' Protective League notices, the number entered in school as a result of the sending of these notices, together, finally, with those who refused to enrol.

TABLE XXIX

SHOWING NUMBER OF IMMIGRANT CHILDREN "MANIFESTED" TO 167 ILLINOIS TOWNS FROM MARCH 1, 1911, TO DECEMBER 31, 1915, WITH REPORTS FROM SCHOOL AUTHORITIES CONCERNING THEIR SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

Location of Children	Number
Children of compulsory age	821
In school	646
Not enrolled in school	174
Incapacitated	1
Children not of compulsory age	138
Children not located	305
	<hr/>
Total	1,264

Table XXIX shows that during this period of slightly less than four years, 821 children were found of compulsory school age. Of these children 646, or 79 per cent, had enrolled themselves in school; and 174, or 21 per cent, were not enrolled and presumably were not informed of their obligation to attend

under the compulsory law until a private organization had notified the school authorities of their existence.

The situation in Chicago, where the superintendent of compulsory education has co-operated most cordially with the Immigrants' Protective League, is shown in Table XXX. The

TABLE XXX

SHOWING NUMBER OF IMMIGRANT CHILDREN MANIFESTED TO CHICAGO FROM SEPTEMBER 1911 TO MAY 1915* WITH REPORTS FROM COMPULSORY EDUCATION DEPARTMENT CONCERNING THEIR SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

Location of Children	Number
Children of compulsory age	3,542
In school	2,977
Not enrolled in school	532
Incapacitated	33
Children not of compulsory age	775
Children not located	3,383
Total	<u>7,700</u>

*This table does not include the figures for the year 1913-14 and therefore covers a period of two years and eight months only. For the year 1913-14 no report was made to the Immigrants' Protective League by the superintendent of compulsory education.

figures show that during a period of less than three years, 532 children were found in Chicago who were of compulsory school age but who were not enrolled in school until after the notices from the Immigrants' Protective League were received. The percentage of unenrolled children was smaller in Chicago than in the country towns—15 per cent as compared with 21 per cent of all the children between seven and fourteen years of age. This is due no doubt to the fact that many of the smaller cities and towns have made no provision for enforcing the compulsory law. Moreover, in Chicago, where there are so many social agencies, some of which are devoting themselves exclusively to work among immigrant groups, it is to be expected that a smaller proportion of children would be able to escape the knowledge of their duty of attending school. On the other hand it

should be noted that the number of children reported as "not located" is relatively very much higher in Chicago than in the other towns—3,383 children, or 44 per cent of the whole number in Chicago compared with 305 children, or 24 per cent of the whole number in towns outside.

In the majority of cases the school authorities reported that as a result of their visits the children of compulsory school age had been enrolled in school, but in some cases the report showed that the child's parents or guardian refused to comply with the law and that the school authorities for one reason or another would not or could not enforce the law. Thus, in one town three Scotch children, all under fourteen, were found whose parents refused to send them to school. In this case the superintendent said he was powerless to compel them to attend, as the town had no money to enforce the compulsory attendance law. In another town an English girl of eight was kept from school because her mother was ill. The truant officer reported that nothing could be done about the child because the uncle who cared for the mother and child was a reputable man who gave them a good home and would in time be sure to send the child to school.

From another town the superintendent, replying to an inquiry about a family of three children, wrote that they were not in school, and he sent the following memorandum with regard to them: "Came to school a few days and had to go home to rid themselves of vermin. Parents absolutely refused to return them to school. No money to enforce compulsory laws. Age was misstated to emigration [*sic*] bureau. Deport them unless they agree to attend school." The assumption on the part of this superintendent was that the compulsory education laws were to be ignored by the local authorities but could be enforced by some "emigration bureau" by means of deportation, in spite of the fact that deportation would not be legal in such a case.

In several instances children were not in school because there were no "beginners' classes" for them to enter. In many towns these classes are formed only in the fall, and a child arriving during the winter or the spring must wait until the next fall to enter school. Since these immigrant children have at most so few years for school attendance and since they have so much to learn if they are to become useful American citizens, some provision should always be made for enrolling them in school at the earliest opportunity. Moreover, the school authorities are under obligations to provide instruction for them if the compulsory law is complied with.

In a number of cases it was found that the children had been sent illegally to work. The lists sent out by the League include the names and the addresses of all children under sixteen years of age, because in many cases it appears upon investigation that the children are younger than the records indicate. The age given by the parents on the Ellis Island "manifest" is increased sometimes with the hope of eluding the school authorities and of putting the child to work illegally.

In one town a thirteen-year-old Greek boy was found at work instead of at school, and investigation showed that he had been admitted to this country under bonds to attend school for two years. He was at once placed in school, and the superintendent undertook to make bimonthly reports as to his attendance and progress to the Bureau of Immigration at Ellis Island.

Another working child was a German girl of twelve, who was kept at home to help with the housework. Her mother had not intended to send her to school at all, because she would that year have finished the common-school course in Germany. She was quite willing to comply with the law, however, when she was told that in Illinois the child was required to attend school until her fourteenth birthday.

In one town the superintendent of schools complained that the parochial school authorities had in several instances issued

working certificates to children under legal age, apparently without ascertaining their correct age. In one case when the matter was looked up and the illegality of the certificate was proved, the father had obviously given false information. When confronted with the facts, the father destroyed the certificate and made no further objection to placing the boy in school. In this same town a Magyar boy of thirteen was found working in the cotton mills. The case was reported to the factory inspector, who saw to it that the boy was sent to school. In another town a Lithuanian boy of eleven, whose parents claimed that he was sixteen, obtained a working certificate from a parochial school and got a job in a large industrial plant. This case also was reported to the factory inspector. In another case, two Finnish children, a boy of ten and a girl of seven, were in school but in their leisure hours were tending bar in their father's saloon, in violation of the provisions of the child labor law.

Sometimes, of course, the family seemed not to know of their obligations to send the child to school and were glad to comply when notified. Thus, a German boy of eleven, whose mother was employed in domestic service, was living with friends who had not thought of placing him in school; but the mother was glad enough to send him at once when she learned through the visit of the truant officer that he was expected to go.

The importance of these visits to immigrant children is further indicated by the fact that a number of cases were reported of children who were afraid to go to school alone, but went gladly when escorted by the truant officer.

Occasionally the visit of the investigator brought into school a child who was above the compulsory age. Thus, a Greek boy of fifteen was being kept out of school until he should learn English, and the truant officer was able to persuade his friends that he would acquire the desired knowledge much more quickly by attending school.

It is a pleasure to record that in many cases the new immigrant families had discovered the educational resources of the town without assistance and were using them to the fullest possible extent. Thus, one Croatian boy of fifteen had entered the evening as well as the day school; and a family of Austrian Hebrews was found in which, besides the three children in the day school, there were four older ones who worked in the daytime and were in regular attendance at night school.

The replies to the notices sent show that some of the persons acting as truant officers had evidently enjoyed none of the advantages of the compulsory system in their own youth, their communications being sometimes quite illiterate. Thus one officer who was asked to find out whether certain immigrant children who were "manifested" to his town had been enrolled in school wrote back, "There are no foren children in our school." In another town the clerk of the board, who evidently acts as truant officer, wrote very illegibly, "I Visit the School once Every Five Weeks. we are Looking after all Foren Born Children Very Clost So that they are in School all the time." From another town, the clerk of the board wrote with regard to a family of three children, "we have a good many Italians tending our school they tend regular the 3 you have wrote to us about are not in our school."

The children most in need of protection are, of course, the children who are nearly fourteen years of age or who are large enough to pass for fourteen. To parents who are not only very ignorant but very poor the temptation to sacrifice the older children to the younger ones and to the general family security is great. As we have said elsewhere these children will, unless their parents or guardians are promptly made to understand the compulsory education law, "lose what is perhaps their only chance of schooling and what is certainly their best chance of initiation into American life and their best introduction to those new conditions with which they must become

familiar." There may be found in the records of the United Charities of Chicago many cases where the eldest child of an immigrant family has been sacrificed. For example, an Italian family with eight children, survivors of the Messina earthquake, first applied for help at Hull-House because the eldest child, Chiara, who was said to be nearly sixteen years old, was out of work as a result of the garment workers' strike, and the father was also out of work. The family wished to buy milk for the baby on credit. The parents were at that time also trying to get a certificate for the thirteen-year-old girl, Giovanna, who was deaf and subnormal, but they were compelled to return the child to school. Several months later they tried again to get working papers for Giovanna, and then claimed that she was fourteen years old. The district office of the United Charities to whom the family had been referred then wrote to Messina and received a reply, saying that the records were not destroyed by the earthquake, and it was therefore possible to ascertain the correct dates of birth, which were given, showing that Giovanna was only twelve years old instead of fourteen, and that Chiara was not yet fourteen, although she had been working ever since the arrival of the family in Chicago more than two years before.

Chiara's working certificate was then confiscated, and she was returned to school by order of the Department of Compulsory Education, but came to Hull-House in the evening, saying that she could not go to school with such small children; she was a "great big girl and would be married soon." She had, of course, in these two years lost her only chance of learning English. She will now never learn to read. Her mother was very angry and said "Hull-House ladies are dreaming to send so old a girl to school" (thirteen years, nine months). The Messina records were obtained too late to do anything for Chiara, but they have saved the younger child, who has now had her tonsils removed and her deafness cured and has two years

of schooling ahead of her. The eldest child will be as illiterate as her parents, and the hard part of it is that she will be illiterate in spite of our compulsory law and our free school system.

Especially difficult are the cases of immigrant children who drift in from other cities and who may have lived in several towns without attending school in any one of them. Unless some system of transfers between cities can be worked out, there is not much hope of catching these more migratory families. Some of them pass through the hands of social workers, but frequently not until it is too late to save the children. For example, a Polish woman applied for help in a district office of the United Charities of Chicago, saying that her six children were freezing and her husband ill in the hospital with incurable heart trouble. Their story was pitiful: the man had worked in the sulphur mines at home and, hearing of the high wages in America, decided to come to this country. He came to New York, but was unsuccessful in finding work and then went to Pennsylvania, because he had heard of work in the brickyards there at \$1.50 a day. He had saved enough in two years to bring over his wife and children; but after the first year, work became slack, so he moved to another small town in the same state, and then, still unsuccessful, he went back to New York, where he struggled along for sixteen months, and then came to Chicago, where work was plentiful but for him disastrous, since it had led to overwork and a mortal illness. The oldest child, Hedwig, who was not quite twelve, seemed so large and stout that neighbors told them to say she was fourteen and the child could earn money for them. When she was told that the little girl must leave the candy factory where she was working and go to school the mother refused to submit, and a long struggle followed to get the child in school. The mother claimed that the child was unwilling to go to school and felt no other excuse was needed.

Another interesting case is that of a little Italian boy, Joe C——, one of five children. Application for help was made at the office of the United Charities when the father was out of work. Joe, who was then the proud possessor of a working certificate, could not spell his name although he could write it. He could neither write nor spell any other word, however simple. He had attended the B—— School in Chicago for one month, but he did not know what grade he had been in. He had been in the town of S—— near Chicago for about a year and a half and claimed that he had attended school there. He has not been able to "get a job" since he left school. What hope is there, if he does, that he will ever learn to read and write?

One great difficulty in the way of educating the non-English-speaking immigrant child is the foreign parochial school. It has been pointed out that the Illinois law permits a child to leave school and to go to work without knowing how to read or write the English language. The provision of the old compulsory education law of 1889, which required children to attend schools in which the instruction was in English was stricken out at the succeeding session of the legislature through the influence of the sectarian schools; and at the time, the German-Lutheran schools of Cook County seem to have been most influential in obtaining the omission of the words "in English."

Later, when the child labor law made provision for the granting of working papers, it was not possible to include among the educational requirements that the children leaving school to go to work should be able to speak, read and write the English language. The law merely provides that the children shall be able to read and write simple sentences; and the additional words "in English," which were so much desired by those interested in the protection of children were finally omitted from the law. The result has been the establishment, not only in Chicago but in other parts of the state, of large numbers of parochial schools in foreign neighborhoods in which the instruc-