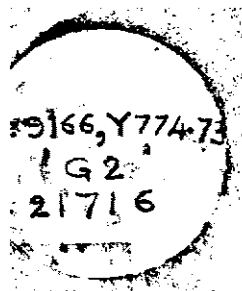


MEXICAN LABOR IN THE UNITED STATES
CHICAGO AND THE CALUMET REGION

BY
PAUL S. TAYLOR

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA PUBLICATIONS IN ECONOMICS
Volume 7, No. 2, pp. vii + 25-284, 6 maps



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CONTENTS

	PAGE
Introduction.....	25
I	
Historical.....	27
Mexican Population.....	48
II	
The Labor Market.....	60
Railroad Labor.....	62
Steel and Packing House Labor.....	66
Miscellaneous Employments.....	68
The Movements of Mexican Laborers.....	70
Wages.....	77
Labor Relations—Attitudes of Employers.....	80
Miscellaneous Industries.....	80
Railroads.....	82
Meat-Packing.....	87
Steel Mills and Foundries.....	88
Labor Relations—Attitudes of Mexicans.....	95
Race Relations in Industry.....	109
Collective Action.....	115
III	
The Socio-Economic Ladder.....	124
Mexican Societies.....	131
Law Observance and Enforcement.....	143
Industrial Advance.....	155
Saving, Spending, and Ownership of Property.....	160
Mexican Clerks and Business Men.....	166
Education.....	172
Standard of Living.....	181
Some Cultural Adjustments.....	192
Family.....	192
Religion.....	209
Patriotism.....	214
IV	
Domicile.....	220
Physical Conflict.....	229
Social Contacts and Isolation.....	231
V	
Field Notes.....	257
Summary.....	277

TABLES

TABLE	PAGE
1. Numbers and percentages of Mexicans employed in Chicago and vicinity in the maintenance of way departments of sixteen railroads, by groups of railroads.....	29
2. Total numbers and percentages of Mexicans employed in Chicago and vicinity in the maintenance of way departments of sixteen railroads, 1916-1928.....	32
3. Numbers and percentages of Mexicans employed in fifteen industrial plants of Chicago and the Calumet region, by types of industry.....	36
4. Total numbers and percentages of Mexicans employed in fifteen industrial plants of Chicago and the Calumet region, 1913-1928.....	39
5. Changes in nationality among employees in the slaughtering and meat-packing industry of Chicago between 1909 and 1928.....	40
6. Changes in nationality among employees in two large steel plants of the Calumet region between 1912 and 1928.....	42
7. Numbers and percentages of Mexican and Negro employees in three steel plants, two meat-packing plants, and a cement plant in Chicago and the Calumet region.....	46
8. State of origin in Mexico of 3,132 Mexican immigrants in Chicago and the Calumet region.....	49
9. Year of arrival in the United States of 2,016 Mexicans employed in four large industrial plants of Chicago and the Calumet region, 1928.....	51
10. Age in 1928 of 2,281 Mexicans employed in five large industrial plants of Chicago and the Calumet region.....	51
11. Marital status of 3,900 Mexican employees of eight large industrial plants of Chicago and the Calumet region, 1928.....	52
12. Number of Mexican children enrolled in elementary schools of Chicago and the Calumet region during the spring semester, 1928; schools grouped according to location.....	54
13. Nationality of employees in eight large plants of basic industries in Chicago and the Calumet region, 1928.....	60
14. Last previous employment in the United States of 554 Mexicans employed in a steel plant and 533 Mexicans employed in two meat-packing plants, Chicago, 1928, classified by state and by three principal industries.....	71
15. Last previous employment, by industry or occupation, of Mexican employees of three steel plants and two meat-packing plants of Chicago and the Calumet region, 1928.....	74
16. Length of service with their plants of 1,681 Mexicans employed by three large plants in basic industries of Chicago and the Calumet region, 1928	91
17. Mexican cases "under care" of the United Charities of Chicago, 1919-1930	124
18. Arrests, and charges and convictions in the municipal court, of Mexicans and American whites in Chicago in 1928 and 1929.....	145
19. Charges upon which Mexicans arrested during the two-year period 1928-29 were convicted in the Chicago Municipal court.....	146
20. Comparison of sex and marital status of Mexicans with persons of all nationalities based upon charges on which Mexicans and persons of all nationalities, arrested during the two-year period 1928-29, were convicted in the Chicago municipal court.....	148

TABLES—(Continued)

TABLE	PAGE
21. Approximate degrees of skill of 5,095 Mexican employees of seven large industrial plants in basic industries of Chicago and the Calumet region, 1928.....	155
22. Comparison of skilled, semi-skilled, and unskilled Mexican and Colored employees of two large steel plants of the Calumet region, 1928.....	157
23. Number and percentages of businesses operated by Mexicans in Chicago and the Calumet region in the summer of 1928, by types and by location	168
24. Distribution by grades of 1,242 Mexican children enrolled in twenty-nine elementary schools of Chicago in the spring semester, 1928.....	178
25. Data on 75 Mexican married women patients of a birth control clinic in the Chicago-Gary region during the two and one-half years ending June 30, 1929.....	207
26. Number of pregnancies and number of children born per year of married life, of 70 Mexican women patients of a birth control clinic in the Chicago-Gary region during the two and one-half years ending June 30, 1929.....	207

MAPS

MEXICAN COLONIES OF CHICAGO AND THE CALUMET REGION, 1928

Index Map and Maps 1-5, following page 56

1. Hull House colony
2. Stockyards and Brighton Park colonies
3. South Chicago and Irondale colonies
4. East Chicago, Indiana (Indiana Harbor)
5. Gary, Indiana

EL ENGANCHADO

This corrido surveys from the immigrant's point of view the clashes which arise from his contact with American industrialism and American customs. The reaction is characteristically that of the male Mexican laborer in his gloomier mood of disillusionment. A handicraftsman at home, his skill is rendered useless by the machine. With patriotism accentuated by expatriation, he excoriates those of his countrymen who yield to American prejudices of nationality or color. The young men come in for criticism on their style of dress. The children, alas, dance and speak like Americans. Aspersion is cast on the substitution of Mexicanized English for good Spanish. But the chief castigation is reserved for the girls and women who follow freer standards of dress and conduct. Here is a glimpse into the Mexican's skepticism over *la libertad de las mujeres*. In disgust, and alone, he turns again to his Michoacán.

El Enganchado

Allegro

Música de A. E. SALAS

Des-de Mo -- re - lia vi-ne'n-gan -- cha - do

mf

Ga-nar los do-lars fue mi'lu --- sión

Com-pré sa pa-tos com-pré som bre - ro

f *sf*

Y has-ta me pu - se de pan-ta -- lón ---

mf *p*

EL ENGANCHADO

(Literally, the hooked one, or more freely, the contract laborer.)

Desde Morelia vine enganchado
ganar los dólares fué mi ilusión
compré zapatos, compré sombrero,
y hasta me puse de pantalón.

Pues me decían que aquí los dólares
se pepenaban y de a montón
que las muchachas y que los teatros
y que aquí todo era vacilón.

Y ahora me encuentro ya sin resuello
soy zapatero de profesión
pero aquí dicen que soy camello
y a pura pala y puro azadón.

I came under contract from Morelia
To earn dollars was my dream,
I bought shoes and I bought a hat
And even put on trousers.

For they told me that here the
dollars
Were scattered about in heaps;
That there were girls and theaters
And that here everything was good fun.

And now I'm overwhelmed—
I am a shoemaker by trade
But here they say I'm a camel
And good only for pick and shovel.

De qué me sirve saber mi oficio
si fabricantes hay de a montón
y en tanto que hago yo dos botines
ellos avientan más de un millón.

Hablar no quieren muchos paisanos
lo que su mamá les enseñó
y andan diciendo que son hispanos
y renegando del pabellón.

Los hay mas prietos que el chapote
pero presumen de ser sajón
andan polveados hasta el cogote
y usan enaguas por pantalón.

Van las muchachas casi encueradas
y a la tienda llaman estor
llevan las piernas rete chorreadas
pero con medias de esas chifón.

Hasta mi vieja me la han cambiado
viste de seda rete rabón
anda pintada como piñata
y va en las noches al dancing jol.

Mis chilpallates hablan puro "inglés"
ya no les cuadra nuestro español
me llaman fader y no trabajan
y son reguénos pa'l chárleston.

Ya estoy cansado de esta tontada
yo me devuelvo para Michoacán
hay de recuerdo dejo a la vieja
a ver si alguno se la quiere armar.

What good is it to know my trade
If there are manufacturers by the
score,
And while I make two little shoes
They turn out more than a million.

Many Mexicans don't care to speak
The language their mothers taught
them
And go about saying they are Spanish
And denying their country's flag.

Some are darker than *chapote**
But they pretend to be Saxon;
They go about powdered to the back
of the neck
And wear skirts for trousers.†

The girls go about almost naked
And call *la tienda* "estor"‡
They go around with dirt-streaked
legs
But with those stockings of chiffon.

Even my old woman has changed on
me—
She wears a bob-tailed dress of silk,
Goes about painted like a *piñata*§
And goes at night to the dancing hall.

My kids speak perfect English
And have no use for our Spanish
They call me "fader" and don't
work
And are crazy about the Charleston.

I am tired of all this nonsense
I'm going back to Michoacán;
As a parting memory I leave the old
woman
To see if someone else wants to burden
himself.

* Black tar.

† Balloon trousers.

‡ Store.

§ Literally, suspended, gayly colored container, filled with candies, etc., to be broken by a blindfolded person with a stick as part of the fun at fiestas. Often the container, usually pottery, is covered with a gaudy paper doll.

MEXICAN LABOR IN THE UNITED STATES CHICAGO AND THE CALUMET REGION

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INTRODUCTION

Mexican immigrants have entered the heart of industrial America. They are now the latest and lowliest newcomers in the long succession of migrating nationalities that have furnished the labor to build and maintain the basic industries of the United States. There, in an urban-industrial environment, these Mexicans have come into contact more fully and more sharply than in rural areas with a mental and material culture different from their own, and in it they are remaining less a class and race apart. In studying this penetration of Mexicans into the industrial North, the area comprising Chicago and the Calumet region¹ was selected for special investigation. It is the principal meat-packing, steel, and transportation center of the country. In these, its basic industries, Mexicans have come to occupy a rôle which is both absolutely and relatively important. Indeed, barring a couple of railroads with widely distributed labor forces, and possibly Ford's in Detroit, which may have gained the lead since 1928, the largest employer of Mexican labor in a single plant in the United States in 1928-1929 was located on the southern shore of Lake Michigan.

This study is the seventh of a series on Mexican labor in the United States projected by the Committee on Scientific Aspects of Human Migration of the Social Science Research Council, and continued by its Committee on Population. It presents the results of field researches carried on principally during the summer of 1928, but supplemented by observations in the region at various times both before and since, mainly in the summer of 1929. The use of the present tense in the text, unless otherwise indicated, refers to conditions in the summer of 1928. There was a movement of Mexicans

¹ The industrial district on the southern shore of Lake Michigan from South Chicago, Illinois, to Gary, Indiana, inclusive, is known as the Calumet region, taking its name from the Calumet River which flows through it (see maps).

from this area to Mexico during 1930 and 1931, just as there was during the depression of 1921. The future of the Mexican population of the region depends chiefly upon the demand of local industries for Mexican laborers. In 1931 it seems unlikely, even with continued depression, that the region will be deserted by Mexicans in anything like the proportion in which it was depopulated in 1921. The roots of the colony have gone deep during the intervening years. But this question may be left with the future.

To Mr. José María Rodrigo and Miss Anita Edgar Jones I am indebted for capable and enthusiastic field assistance during the summer of 1928. In this study, in the remarks which sometimes introduce the quotations from Mexicans, the first person singular and plural are used indiscriminately to refer to the author or his field assistants, whoever may have participated in the interview. Mr. Robert C. Jones, who engaged in field work among Mexicans subsequent to our own, has generously compared observations and made available many of his notes and papers. Dr. Robert Redfield, of the University of Chicago, gave access to and permission to use valuable field notes which he had made in 1924. Very many individuals and corporations or other organizations gave generously of information, some of which was readily available, much of which had to be gleaned from payroll or similar records in their possession. Their willing cooperation, extended almost unanimously, has made it possible to trace in detail the course of Mexican migration into the area.

I

HISTORICAL

The beginning of colonies of Mexican laborers in Chicago and the Calumet region dates from 1916. Prior to that year Mexicans appeared only very sporadically: in a few railroad gangs for seasonal work, as individuals, or at most in two's and three's, adventuring by themselves far ahead of their fellow nationals. Hull House reports, for example, that a Mexican exhibitor of feather work at the St. Louis World's Fair of 1904 came, after a short residence in Boston, to Chicago, where his child appeared in one of its kindergarten classes; in 1928 the family was still living in Blue Island, a town near by. In 1929 a Mexican pool room proprietor in Lackawanna, New York, told me that in 1913 he had been employed at McCormick Works, Chicago. At that early date, he said, there were but fifty or sixty Mexicans in Chicago, and among them only three or four families; most of them worked as cigar-makers, and one he recalled was a blacksmith.

That the trickle of Mexicans northward into Illinois was small is evident further from the fact that although some Mexicans immigrating to the United States have given Illinois as the state of their intended permanent residence each year since at least 1909, their numbers prior to 1916 hardly averaged twenty-five annually. Some of these, as well as some who had not reported their destination as Illinois, doubtless came to Chicago. The Federal census of 1900 reported 156 persons born in Mexico in the entire state; in 1910 the number had increased to but 672, and even as late as 1920 it was only 3,854. Census data on Mexicans in Chicago, which appear for the first time in 1920, indicate clearly that the great majority were from Old Mexico, rather than from other parts of the United States where there are persons of Mexican stock. In that year, there were 1,141 foreign-born whites born in Mexico, and, including the second generation, but 169 more, or 1,310 persons of foreign white stock whose country of origin was Mexico. There were 595 foreign-born whites born in Mexico living in Lake County, Indiana, on January 1, 1920, of whom 407 were in East Chicago (probably practically all in Indiana Harbor) and 164 in Gary. There were thus 1,736 foreign-born white persons in Chicago

and Lake County, Indiana,—practically equivalent to the area included in this study—who were born in Mexico.

The first appearance of groups of Mexicans in this region was as track laborers on the railroads, transported from the Mexican labor markets of the Southwest. As early as 1907 Mexicans had been used for seasonal labor on railroads "even into Chicago."² Whether this meant literally the city of Chicago or simply the vicinity of Chicago, which seems more likely, there is no evidence that any permanent group of residents was established from this source in Chicago until 1916 when Mexicans were brought to the city for year-round employment. For a number of years prior to 1916, however, railroads with connections in the Southwest did use Mexican labor on their tracks in Illinois for at least summer work. By 1910, but probably not more than three or four years earlier at most, the Santa Fe, Rock Island, and Burlington railroads were all using Mexicans on their divisions in Illinois. Examination of the payrolls for the second half of June of that year on the Illinois divisions of the first two railroads, and of the Aurora and Galesburg divisions of the last, reveals that 1,120 men, or 21 per cent of the maintenance of way forces of the three roads were Mexicans. In 1915 on the same divisions, 575 men, or 15 per cent of the total, were Mexicans. But in June of the same year no Mexicans were employed on the Chicago terminal divisions of any of these three railroads.

In 1916 American industry was particularly active under the stimulus of war conditions in Europe. The stream of European immigrants had dwindled for the same reason. It was undoubtedly under these influences that Mexicans were drawn northward into Chicago and the Calumet region in that year. This is true whether the reasons given by particular persons appear as a "strike," as stated in one instance, or "wages," as reported by an employment agent for railroad labor, who said: "the hoboes got too independent and wanted higher wages"; or simply that more general descriptive term, "labor shortage," which was the explanation of a railroad civil engineer.

The history of employment of Mexicans for maintenance of way work on the Chicago terminal divisions of the railroads appears statistically in table 1. It is believed that this table includes all railroads of the area which employed down to 100 Mexicans in maintenance of way work in 1928. It does not include the sprinkling of

² Victor S. Clark, "Mexican labor in the United States," U. S. Bur. Labor Bull. 78:477.

TABLE 1

NUMBERS AND PERCENTAGES OF MEXICANS EMPLOYED IN CHICAGO AND VICINITY IN THE MAINTENANCE OF WAY DEPARTMENTS OF SIXTEEN RAILROADS, BY GROUPS OF RAILROADS*

Year	I. SOUTHWESTERN TRANSCONTINENTAL RAILROADS†											
	Rock Island			Santa Fe			Burlington			Group I		
	Mexican	Total	Per cent Mexican	Mexican	Total	Per cent Mexican	Mexican	Total	Per cent Mexican	Mexican	Total	Per cent Mexican
1916.....	57	208	27.4	30	79	38.0	5	266	1.9	92	553	16.6
1917.....	121	258	46.9	38	95	40.0	38	670	5.7	197	1,023	19.3
1918.....	108	221	48.9	17	127	13.4	10	702	1.4	135	1,050	12.9
1919.....	84	292	28.8	28	120	23.3	15	917	1.6	127	1,329	9.6
1920.....	209	373	56.0	72	110	65.5	46	288	16.0	327	771	42.4
1921.....	21	191	11.0	30	76	39.5	16	142	11.3	67	409	16.4
1922.....	36	208	17.3	47	107	43.9	38	220	17.3	121	535	22.6
1923.....	118	195	60.5	70	94	74.5	66	279	23.7	254	568	44.7
1924.....	108	202	54.0	72	105	68.6	62	153	40.1	242	460	52.6
1925.....	225	310	72.6	40	81	49.4	128	247	51.8	393	638	61.6
1926.....	339	505	67.1	74	101	73.3	96	180	53.3	509	786	64.8
1927.....	231	570	40.5	75	100	75.0	184	286	64.3	490	956	51.3
1928.....	152	220	69.1	67	99	67.7	238	296	80.4	457	615	74.3

* See footnote to table 2.

† Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific; Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe; Chicago, Burlington & Quincy.

TABLE 1—(Continued)

II. CENTRAL TRUNK RAILROADS†												
Year	Illinois Central			Milwaukee			Northwestern			Group II		
	Mexican	Total	Per cent Mexican	Mexican	Total	Per cent Mexican	Mexican	Total	Per cent Mexican	Mexican	Total	Per cent Mexican
1916.....	9	604	1.5	1	400	0.3				10		
1917.....	12	1,105	1.1	3	577	0.5				15		
1918.....	14	825	1.7	0	708	0.0				14		
1919.....	6	1,213	.5	53	886	6.0	0			59		
1920.....	54	838	6.4	114	750	15.2	0			168		
1921.....	18	584	3.1	50	220	22.7	2	785	0.3	70	1,589	4.4
1922.....	43	895	4.8	53	339	15.6	4	935	0.4	100	2,169	4.6
1923.....	250	2,657	9.4	234	649	36.1	37	955	3.9	521	4,261	12.2
1924.....	465	1,755	26.5	84	516	16.3	152	1,017	14.9	701	3,288	21.3
1925.....	789	2,876	27.4	253	1,065	23.8	266	1,400	19.0	1,308	5,341	24.5
1926.....	1,150	2,550	45.1	249	635	39.2	744	1,963	37.9	2,143	5,148	41.6
1927.....	211	663	31.8	255	1,159	22.0	1,201	2,486	48.3	1,667	4,308	38.7
1928.....	252	748	33.7	203	612	33.2	1,137	2,313	49.2	1,592	3,673	43.3

† Illinois Central; Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul; Chicago & Northwestern.

III. EASTERN TRUNK RAILROADS†												
Year	B. & O. C. T.			N. Y. Central			Pennsylvania			Group III		
	Mexican	Total	Per cent Mexican	Mexican	Total	Per cent Mexican	Mexican	Total	Per cent Mexican	Mexican	Total	Per cent Mexican
1916.....												
1917.....												
1918.....	16	542	3.0	0	417	0.0				16		
1919.....	26	469	5.5	4	540	0.7	1	451	0.2	31	1,460	2.1
1920.....	112	443	25.3	96	416	23.1	10	291	3.4	218	1,150	18.9
1921.....	43	358	12.0	3	257	0.1	4	283	1.4	50	898	5.6
1922.....	58	430	13.5	11	497	2.2	13	366	3.6	82	1,293	6.3
1923.....	72	585	12.3	27	310	8.7	75	606	12.4	174	1,501	11.6
1924.....	141	469	30.1	117	396	29.6	25	411	6.1	283	1,276	22.2
1925.....	156	318	49.1	118	624	18.9	67	389	17.2	341	1,331	25.6
1926.....	182	411	44.3	114	648	17.6	322	514	62.6	618	1,573	39.3
1927.....	169	332	50.9	142	568	25.0	179	368	48.6	490	1,268	38.6
1928.....	225	387	58.1	152	496	30.6	192	580	33.1	569	1,463	38.9

† Baltimore & Ohio Chicago Terminal; New York Central; Pennsylvania.

TABLE 1—(Concluded)

IV. LOCAL RAILROADS†												
Year	Outer Belt			C. M. & Gary			C. Junction			Belt		
	Mexican	Total	Per cent Mexican	Mexican	Total	Per cent Mexican	Mexican	Total	Per cent Mexican	Mexican	Total	Per cent Mexican
1916.....	100	1,093	9.1	4	81	4.9	0	259	.0			
1917.....	107	924	11.6	11	105	10.5	81	261	31.0			
1918.....	127	636	20.0	10	106	9.4	4	379	1.1	14	171	8.2
1919.....	112	695	16.1	5	103	4.9	2	289	.7	3	203	1.5
1920.....	91	618	14.7	8	110	7.3	4	207	1.9	21	187	11.2
1921.....	15	498	3.0	3	148	2.0	2	235	.9	5	208	2.4
1922.....	510‡	995	51.3	0	160	.0	8	310	2.6	7	350	2.0
1923.....	600‡	1,014	59.2	35	170	20.6	144	445	32.4	51	356	14.3
1924.....	580‡	1,208	48.0	12	134	9.0	220	348	63.2	72	264	27.3
1925.....	565‡	1,056	53.5	63	185	34.1	221	443	49.9	91	264	34.5
1926.....	575‡	1,117	51.5	28	140	20.0	204	549	37.2	106	302	35.1
1927.....	560‡	1,122	49.9	36	135	26.7	180	489	36.8	147	257	57.2
1928.....	460	1,189	38.7	9	145	6.2	175	377	46.4	181	280	64.6

Year	Indiana Harbor			Western Indiana			Terre Haute			Group IV		
	Mexican	Total	Per cent Mexican	Mexican	Total	Per cent Mexican	Mexican	Total	Per cent Mexican	Mexican	Total	Per cent Mexican
1916.....											104	
1917.....											199	
1918.....	1	450	.0								156	
1919.....	11	381	2.9								133	
1920.....	26	406	6.4	5	92	5.4					155	
1921.....	12	436	2.8	19	182	10.4	0				56	
1922.....	85	575	14.8	18	244	7.4	0				628	
1923.....	306	529	57.8	79	203	38.9	17	931	1.8	1,232	3,648	33.8
1924.....	735	986	74.5	94	202	46.5	39	1,350	2.9	1,752	4,492	39.0
1925.....	437	644	67.9	151	561	26.9	140	1,941	7.2	1,668	5,094	32.8
1926.....	792	1,374	57.6	246	1,182	20.8	84	816	4.2	1,985	5,480	36.2
1927.....	451	682	66.1	200	500	40.0	63	527	12.0	1,637	3,712	44.1
1928.....	334	515	64.9	158	276	57.2	28	705	4.0	1,345	3,487	38.6

† Elgin, Joliet & Eastern; Chicago, Milwaukee & Gary; Chicago Junction; Belt Railroad of Chicago; Indiana Harbor Belt; Chicago & Western Indiana; Terre Haute & Southeastern.

‡ Estimate only.

TABLE 2

TOTAL NUMBERS AND PERCENTAGES OF MEXICANS EMPLOYED IN CHICAGO AND
VICINITY IN THE MAINTENANCE OF WAY DEPARTMENTS
OF SIXTEEN RAILROADS, 1916-1928*

Year	Mexicans	Total employees	Per cent Mexican
1916	206	.....	.....
1917	411	.....	.....
1918	321	.....	.....
1919	350	.....	.....
1920	868	.....	.....
1921	243	.....	.....
1922	931	.....	.....
1923	2,181	9,978	21.9
1924	2,978	9,516	31.3
1925	3,710	12,404	29.9
1926	5,255	12,987	40.5
1927	4,284	10,244	41.8
1928	3,963	9,238	42.9

* This table comprises combined data of the railroads included in table 1. It is believed that every railroad in the area employing locally in maintenance of way down to 100 Mexicans is included here. The method of determining nationality was by examination of names on payrolls for the month of June, in almost every case for the second half of the month. It was necessary also to count the total numbers of employees. The amount of error involved in using this technique is believed to be very slight. Figures for the E. J. & E. Railroad were furnished by the company from examination of payrolls for the years 1916-1921, estimated for the years 1922-1927, and counted contemporarily in 1928.

The unit of line included in these tables was the Chicago division; on the Northwestern railroad, sections of the Wisconsin and Galena divisions within the limits of Cook County were included; the entire lines of local railroads were included. Manifestly, it was impracticable to confine the limits of line included in the table strictly to the boundaries of Chicago and the Calumet region. It is believed that no Mexicans were employed by the railroads in this territory in the summer of 1915.

Table reprinted, by permission, from the *Journal* of the American Statistical Association, June 1930, p. 306.

Mexicans employed by railroads in other capacities, such as freight handlers, nor those employed in the yards in miscellaneous capacities, sometimes in appreciable numbers, nor the relatively few scattered on the tracks of railroads employing less than 100 Mexicans in maintenance of way. The method of determining nationality was the same as has been used frequently in studies of this series, viz., identification from the name; the results are believed to approximate the actual number of Mexicans very closely. The payroll for the second half of June of each year was used in practically every case; in one instance estimates only were available for the years 1922-27. The summer figure is of course a seasonal peak; a winter figure would show a smaller number of Mexicans absolutely, though perhaps not relatively.

From tables 1 and 2 it is clear that 1916 marked the real entry of Mexicans into maintenance of way work in Chicago and the Calumet region. In that year numbers of Mexicans appeared on the tracks of the Santa Fe, Rock Island, and Elgin, Joliet & Eastern, or "Outer Belt" line. The two former roads have southwestern lines which tap Mexican labor markets, but the latter is local. A very few Mexicans were found on the rolls of the Burlington, Milwaukee, Illinois Central, and a local railroad; these probably had come with the Santa Fe or Rock Island, but after arrival shifted their employment. The following year, marking the entry of the United States into the war, the numbers of Mexicans on the Burlington and Rock Island increased materially. Also, the Chicago Junction, a local railroad the principal operations of which center at the stockyards, had eighty-one Mexicans on its track force, or 31 per cent of the total; these were brought up from El Paso, but they scattered so rapidly to other employments, principally industries, that the payrolls did not again show an appreciable number until 1923.

It is clear from the figures and from statements of railroad men, employment men, and Mexicans, that the principal influx of Mexicans came from the railroads which tapped the Southwest, the Santa Fe probably serving as the principal conduit. These southwestern railroads are shown in the table as group I. Although the numbers of Mexicans which appear in the early years on the local railroads, principally the Elgin, Joliet & Eastern, are greater than those on the southwestern railroads, the inflow by replacement on these local railroads was much less than on the railroads able to bring fresh recruits north on their own lines.

In 1928 the percentage of Mexicans employed in the Chicago-Gary area on all groups of railroads stood at fairly high levels, ranging from 74.3 per cent on the southwestern railroads to 39 per cent on the local and eastern railroads. Further detailed comparisons may be made readily by reference to the group totals in table I.

The trend of employment of Mexicans on all railroads in the area is shown clearly by the grand total which appears in table 2. Rising from 1916 to an early peak in 1920, the number fell in 1921 to 28 per cent of the number employed the preceding year. Recovery and then advance in numbers marked 1922 and 1923. Despite declines in 1927 and 1928 the trend since 1921, during the period covered by this study, has been strongly upward. The uneven penetration of Mexicans in track work in the area is shown strikingly by the fact that

the proportions of Mexicans employed on individual railroads in 1928 ranged from 4 per cent on the Terre Haute & Southeastern to 80 per cent on the Burlington. On all these railroads combined, the percentage of Mexicans employed was 42.9; this was higher than any preceding year notwithstanding some numerical decline below the 1926 peak.

Simultaneously with the appearance of Mexicans on the tracks of the area in 1916, a malleable iron company on the north side of Chicago also brought up from the Southwest several "batches" of Mexicans. The president of the company owned land in Chihuahua, where he had become familiar with the use of Mexican laborers. Some were also secured through Chicago employment agencies during the next two years while the local Mexican labor market was being built up, principally by the importations of the railroads. It is estimated that perhaps as many as two hundred different Mexicans were on the rolls of the iron company between about 1916 and 1918, but they did not stay long, as the experience was apparently satisfactory to nobody concerned. No Mexican laborers were employed at this plant in 1928, and it is not included in tables 3 and 4.

Except for this initial importation and attempt to use Mexicans which failed, the employment of Mexicans in industry lagged behind their use on the tracks by two or three years. As industrial activity heightened during the latter part of the war and the early post-war period, Mexicans left railroad employment and entered the packing houses and steel mills in increasing numbers. During the steel strike in 1919 one of the companies brought Mexicans from Kansas City, Omaha, St. Louis, and as far as El Paso; in the same year and the year following, because of "labor shortage," a tannery brought about sixty Mexicans from Kansas City who were employed on "wet work" in the hide rooms, and elsewhere under the less agreeable conditions. The steel strike of 1919 and the packing-house strike of 1921 both served to re-distribute Mexicans already in the region. Some who were employed in these industries at the outbreak of the strikes went out with the strikers and sought employment elsewhere; others, particularly track laborers, were brought into the "struck" plants by labor scouts.

The tremendous pulling power of northern industry in 1918-19 and again during 1923-29 was clearly visible in many places besides the region to which the Mexicans were drawn. At Laredo, for example, which is a major port of entry, the new immigrants streamed past border agriculture in large numbers, often giving no heed at all to

its cries for more labor. In 1929 I personally observed this at the border, and in Chicago heard from a Texas-Mexican in the stockyards, who previously had been a labor scout for farmers near Laredo, a graphic account of the situation in earlier years. Not only the pull of industry, but also methods of recruiting and attempting to hold laborers were described.³

I used to try to get cotton pickers in Laredo, but now all they have got in their heads is Chicago or Detroit; they won't stop in Texas for a \$10 job [of course none were offered at this exaggerated figure]. I did pay passports for Mexicans in Nuevo Laredo, but they left after a day even when they were paid 2½ cents for cotton picking [1919 probably; 1929 rates were usually from ¾ cent to 1¼ cents]. We used to take their shoes and hats and put them in another house, but they got away from us anyway in 1919, and we used to even guard each door of the houses they slept in on a big farm. We used to put the wives separate from the husbands, but the men left their wives to come north.

The statistical history of the penetration of Mexican labor into industrial plants of Chicago and the Calumet region is presented in detail in table 3. It is believed that this table includes all plants of the area employing down to as low as one hundred Mexicans in 1928; indeed one plant included here never had more than the ninety-six Mexicans which it employed in 1927. By comparison of the totals for groups I and II it will be readily noted that entry into the steel industry preceded entry into meat-packing slightly as to time, and much more in its extent. In both industries a peak was reached in 1920, followed, as on the railroads, by a sharp recession in 1921 owing to the severe business depression of that year, when the number of Mexicans employed fell to but 37 per cent of that of the previous year. Recovery and then advance in numbers marked 1922 and 1923 and most of the succeeding years. If complete figures were available for 1929, it is believed that they would show an increase over those in industries in 1928; decreases undoubtedly followed in 1930 and 1931. In 1922, but even more in 1923, several steel plants transported several thousand Mexicans to the region from Kansas City and Texas.⁴ Railroads and sugar-beet culture were two other sources from which Mexican industrial laborers were drawn. A number of railroads brought Mexicans to the area annually from St. Louis, Kansas City, and the Southwest, many of whom after arrival left the track for industrial employment. Even prior to 1921 some Mexicans, trans-

³ Cf. Paul S. Taylor, *Mexican labor in the United States*, I, 330-332 (Univ. Calif. Publ. Econ., VI). Hereafter these studies will be cited only by volume and page number.

⁴ For evidence of the repercussions of this movement to industry on the labor market for sugar beet tenders and cotton pickers see I, 141, and II, 2.

TABLE 3
NUMBERS AND PERCENTAGES OF MEXICANS EMPLOYED IN FIFTEEN INDUSTRIAL PLANTS OF CHICAGO AND THE CALUMET REGION, BY TYPES OF INDUSTRY *

Year	I. STEEL AND METAL											
	Gary Works—Illinois Steel†			South Works—Illinois Steel			Tin Mill—American Sheet & Tin Plate Company			Inland Steel		
	Mexicans	Total employees	Per cent Mexicans	Mexicans	Total employees	Per cent Mexicans	Mexicans	Total employees	Per cent Mexicans	Mexicans	Total employees	Per cent Mexicans
1916.....	9	9,667	.1	9	9,823	.1						
1917.....	14	11,896	.1	19	11,244	.2	10	1,481	.7			
1918.....	53	12,199	.4	51	10,874	.5	10	1,486	.7	1		
1919.....	67	10,580	.6	75	9,552	.8	23	1,753	1.3	90	5,003	1.8
1920.....	80	12,357	.6	203	9,008	2.3	97	2,716	3.6	945	5,081	18.6
1921.....	34	8,223	.4	15	5,557	.3	56	2,587	2.2	389	3,015	12.9
1922.....	107	11,370	.9	206	8,033	2.6	52	1,909	2.7	1,224	4,563	26.8
1923.....	474	11,680	4.1	731	8,305	8.8	162	3,304	4.9	1,714	5,788	29.6
1924.....	675	13,223	5.1	1,074	8,895	12.1	205	3,020	6.8	1,730	6,562	26.4
1925.....	1,117	14,251	7.8	749	7,801	9.6	275	3,259	8.4	1,971	6,917	28.5
1926.....	865	12,306	7.0	1,030	8,456	12.2	307	3,247	9.5	2,526	7,305	34.6
1927.....	709	11,776	6.0	1,110	8,947	12.4	303	3,507	8.6	2,223	6,905	32.2
1928.....	821	12,766	6.4	1,260	9,295	13.6	342	3,965	8.6	2,000	6,696	29.9

* See footnote to table 4.

† Numbers of Mexicans employed at this plant for the years 1912-1915 were as follows: 0, 1, 2, 6.

‡ A few Mexicans were employed in 1918.

TABLE 3—(Continued)

Year	Wisconsin Steel			National Tube			McCormick Works			Group I		
	Mexicans	Total employees	Per cent Mexicans	Mexicans	Total employees	Per cent Mexicans	Mexicans	Total employees	Per cent Mexicans	Mexicans	Total employees	Per cent Mexicans
1916.....										18		
1917.....										43		
1918.....										114		
1919.....										255		
1920.....										1,325		
1921.....	4	1,241	.3							498		
1922.....	11	1,606	.6							1,600		
1923.....	312	2,205	14.2	40	800	5.0				3,433		
1924.....	379	2,568	14.8	59	704	8.4				4,122		
1925.....	571	2,896	19.7	211	2,858	7.4	754	4,500	1.7	4,969	42,482	11.7
1926.....	665	3,045	21.8	381	3,310	11.5	394	6,022	6.5	6,168	43,691	14.1
1927.....	637	3,027	21.0	225	2,279	9.9	355	6,022	5.9	5,562	42,463	13.1
1928.....	594	3,049	19.5	220	2,273	9.7	258	6,029	4.3	5,495	44,073	12.5

‡ Estimate.

II. MEAT PACKING

Year	Swift			Armour			Hammond		
	Mexicans	Total employees	Per cent Mexicans	Mexicans	Total employees	Per cent Mexicans	Mexicans	Total employees	Per cent Mexicans
1916.....									
1917.....	4	10,360	.0	3	10,541	.0	1	2,238	.0
1918.....	43	12,608	.3	35	14,646	.2	2	2,460	.1
1919.....	50	10,924	.5	29	12,718	.2	6	2,120	.3
1920.....	155	8,543	1.8	111	9,818	1.1	12	1,751	.7
1921.....	42	6,969	.6	40	7,491	.5	3	1,348	.2
1922.....	38	6,115	.6	48	6,837	.7	2	1,053	.2
1923.....	155	7,814	2.0	327	7,497	4.4	10	1,537	.7
1924.....	83	6,282	1.3	628	8,674	7.2	25	1,341	1.9
1925.....	109	5,652	1.9	535	8,199	6.5	29	1,318	2.2
1926.....	143	5,361	2.7	469	8,367	5.6	45	1,329	3.4
1927.....	219	5,602	3.9	377	7,715	4.9	106	1,335	7.9
1928.....	281	5,548	5.1	465	7,646	6.1	190	1,430	13.3

1932]

Mexican Labor in the United States

37

TABLE 3—(Concluded)

II. MEAT-PACKING—(Continued)

Year	Omaha			Wilson			Group II		
	Mexicans	Total employees	Per cent Mexicans	Mexicans	Total employees	Per cent Mexicans	Mexicans	Total employees	Per cent Mexicans
1916.....	0	978	.0				8		
1917.....	26	1,014	2.6				106		
1918.....	13	963	1.3				98		
1919.....	28	687	4.1	25	5,056	.5	331	25,855	1.3
1920.....	22	682	3.2	9	3,520	.3	116	20,010	.6
1921.....	21	753	2.8	24	3,409	.7	133	18,167	.7
1922.....	80	997	8.0	46	4,593	1.0	618	22,438	2.8
1923.....	72	917	7.9	60	3,739	1.6	868	20,953	4.1
1924.....	56	792	7.1	44	3,458	1.3	773	19,419	4.0
1925.....	50	798	6.3	54	3,360	1.6	761	19,235	4.0
1926.....	62	823	7.5	95	3,291	2.9	858	18,766	4.6
1927.....	74	893	8.3	103	3,197	3.2	1,113	18,714	5.9

III. MISCELLANEOUS

Year	Universal Cement			Olson Rug Company			Fruit Growers' Express			Group III		
	Mexicans	Total employees	Per cent Mexicans	Mexicans	Total employees	Per cent Mexicans	Mexicans	Total employees	Per cent Mexicans	Mexicans	Total employees	Per cent Mexicans
1916.....												
1917.....	3	988	.3							8		
1918.....	1	777	.1							1		
1919.....	16	1,241	1.3							16		
1920.....	90	1,717	5.2							90		
1921.....	30	1,592	1.9							30		
1922.....	87	1,627	5.3							87		
1923.....	255	1,982	12.9	23	281	8.2	11	717	1.5	289	2,980	9.7
1924.....	267	1,883	14.2	38	403	9.4	18	1,120	1.6	323	3,406	9.5
1925.....	228	2,149	10.6	53	444	11.9	29	726	4.0	310	3,319	9.3
1926.....	275	2,085	13.2	43	405	10.6	22	472	4.7	340	2,982	11.5
1927.....	265	1,983	13.4	42	340	12.3	96	637	15.1	403	2,980	13.6
1928.....	261	1,726	15.1	105	450	23.3	76	719	10.6	442	2,895	15.3

ported northward to the sugar-beet fields of the Middle West in the spring, failed to return south at the close of the season in the fall, and wintered in the industrial area, adding their numbers to the general labor market. Annual accretions from this source have continued.

TABLE 4
TOTAL NUMBERS AND PERCENTAGES OF MEXICANS EMPLOYED IN FIFTEEN
INDUSTRIAL PLANTS OF CHICAGO AND THE CALUMET REGION,
1913-1928*

Year	Mexicans	Total employees	Per cent Mexican
1913	1	-----	-----
1914	2	-----	-----
1915	6	-----	-----
1916	18	-----	-----
1917	54	-----	-----
1918	221	-----	-----
1919	369	-----	-----
1920	1,746	-----	-----
1921	644	-----	-----
1922	1,820	-----	-----
1923	4,340	-----	-----
1924	5,313	-----	-----
1925	6,052	65,220	9.3
1926	7,269	65,888	11.0
1927	6,823	64,189	10.6
1928	7,050	65,682	10.7

* This table comprises the combined data of the individual plants included in table 3. The figures for thirteen plants were secured from plant nationality reports for the years for which they were available. For the other two plants and for the years preceding the making of nationality reports in five plants, the method of determining nationality by examination of names on the payroll was employed. Unavoidably the figures do not represent the same dates within each year, sometimes even in the series of figures from a single plant. The decisions necessary to fit diverse data into a table, while of necessity more or less arbitrary, probably have not materially distorted the results, and have perhaps produced less distortion than other decisions which might have been made. It is believed that only two plants in the region which employed 100 or more Mexicans in 1928 are not included here. According to the best figures obtainable Crane Company employed about 250, and Youngstown Sheet and Tube Company about 350 Mexicans in the spring of 1928. The former began to employ Mexicans in 1920, and in 1926 employed as many as 355; the latter began to employ them in numbers about 1923, perhaps a sprinkling having been employed for a few years preceding.

Table reprinted, by permission, from the *Journal* of the American Statistical Association, June 1930, p. 306.

As on the railroads, the penetration of Mexican labor has been very uneven as between industries and individual plants. In 1928 Mexicans comprised 12.5 per cent of the employees of the steel and metal plants shown in the table, and only 5.9 per cent of all employees in five meat-packing plants. In the fifteen industrial plants combined, the percentage of Mexican employees was 10.7 (see table 4), but in the individual plants the proportion of Mexicans ranged from 3.2 per cent to 29.9 per cent.

TABLE 5

CHANGES IN NATIONALITY AMONG EMPLOYEES IN THE SLAUGHTERING AND MEAT-PACKING INDUSTRY OF CHICAGO BETWEEN 1909 AND 1928*

Native-born†	1909		1928	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
White	2,931	18.9	3,604	27.3
Colored	459	3.0	3,894	29.5
Indian .....	.....	.....	2	¶
Foreign-born				
Austrian‡	56	.4	271	2.1
Armenian	33	.2	.....	.....
Belgian‡	15	.1	3	¶
Czechoslovakian†	1,490	9.6	274	2.1
Danish	17	.1	7	.1
Dutch	23	.1	5	¶
English	149	1.0	23	.2
English colonies†‡	124	.8	231	1.8
Filipino .....	.....	.....	2	¶
Finnish	7	.1	1	¶
French	17	.1	5	¶
German	1,605	10.4	382	2.9
Greek	64	.4	9	.1
Honduranian .....	.....	.....	1	¶
Irish	1,164	7.5	390	3.0
Italian	81	.5	99	.8
Japanese	1	¶	.....	.....
Lithuanian	1,860	12.0	1,033	7.8
Magyar	74	.5	43	.3
Mexican	1	¶	746	5.7
Norwegian	27	.2	5	¶
Polish	4,293	27.7	1,570	11.9
Porto Rican .....	.....	.....	2	¶
Portuguese .....	.....	.....	2	¶
Rumanian	9	.1	16	.1
Russian†	440	2.9	383	2.9
Scotch†	101	.7	36	.3
South Slavic†	224	1.4	18	.1
Spanish	2	¶	4	¶
Swedish	177	1.1	58	.4
Swiss	12	.1	9	.1
Turkish	6	¶	2	¶
Welsh	6	¶	3	¶
Miscellaneous†	21	.1	61	.5
Total	15,489	100.0	13,194	100.0

* Data for 1909 taken from *Reports of the Immigration Commission*, 13:204; those for 1928 are a combination of figures of the nationality reports for the Chicago plants of Swift & Company, as of October 11, 1928, and of Armour & Company, Chicago, average for the year 1928. "Nationality" is used here in the sense of "a people" rather than in a political sense, subject, of course, to irregularities in reporting. The attempt to compare data from three sources with non-uniform bases of nationality classification has compelled some readjustments

The historical process by which Mexican laborers had come, in the summer of 1928, to constitute approximately 43 per cent of the track labor on the principal railroads within the area of Chicago and the Calumet region, and 11 per cent of all employees in a group including most of the important plants in the steel and meat-packing industries, should now be visible in its main outlines: It appears as a war and post-war movement, with railroads and the steel plants stimulating the flow and serving as its principal channels. From these railroads and steel plants, Mexican laborers dispersed to other railroads and steel plants, and to other industries, particularly to meat-packing. Further evidence bearing upon and expanding this theme will be presented in the sections of this study dealing with Mexican Population and with the Labor Market.

The area from Chicago to Gary has long been an important immigrant-receiving center and the nationalities employed in its basic industries have altered their proportions as the sources of immigration have shifted. Until recently the immigrants have been almost entirely from Europe, but now the term "immigrant" to Chicago must be recognized as including Negroes migrating northward and Mexicans from below the Rio Grande as well. By means of three tables these changes in nationality of employees, are shown as they have taken place over a period of from fifteen to twenty years in selected large plants of the meat-packing and steel industries.

The changes of nationalities in the meat-packing industry between 1909 and 1928 are shown by table 5, which compares a nationality

of classification. In making these, as little violence as possible was done; specific data lost by reclassification are noted below, yet imperfections such as "miscellaneous" classifications and perhaps others remain which necessitate caution in making refined uses of these data.

† In 1909 data, the 2185 persons "native-born of foreign father, by country of birth of father" have been combined with the 746 "native-born of native father"; in 1928 "United States white" and "American white" have been classed as "native-born white"; "native-born colored" have been similarly derived. "Colored" and "Negro" are used interchangeably in this study. In 1909 "Czechoslovakian" includes 673 specified as Bohemian and Moravian, and 817 Slovaks; in 1928 it includes 86 specified as Bohemians and 115 as Slovaks. "English colonies" in 1909 represents 30 French Canadians and 94 other Canadians; in 1928 it includes 1 New Zealander, 5 British West Indians, 21 Canadians, and 204 not specified, but probably principally Canadians. In 1909 "Scotch" includes 21 specified as "Scotch-Irish." In 1909, "Russian" includes 18 specified as Ruthenian and 37 Hebrews; in 1928 it includes 6 specified as Hebrews and 12 as Galicians. In 1909 "South Slavic" includes 37 Servians, 87 Croatians, 1 Dalmatian, 7 Bulgarians, 1 Macedonian, and 91 Slovenians; in 1928 it includes 9 Croatians, 2 Albanians, 5 Serbians, and 2 Jugoslavs. In 1909 "miscellaneous" includes 3 foreign-born Negroes, and 18 "other Hebrews"; in 1928 it includes 3 South Africans, and 58 unspecified.

‡ Nationality not specified.

¶ Less than .05 per cent.

TABLE 6

CHANGES IN NATIONALITY AMONG EMPLOYEES IN TWO LARGE STEEL PLANTS
OF THE CALUMET REGION BETWEEN 1912 AND 1928*

Native-born	1912		1928	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
White	4,453	25.5	7,449	33.8
Colored	266	1.5	2,716	12.3
Indian .....	.....	.....	1	¶
Foreign-born				
Albanian	14	.1	26	.1
Arabian .....	.....	.....	11	.1
Argentinian†	2	¶	2	¶
Armenian	6	¶	17	.1
Belgian†	2	¶	6	¶
Bohemian	48	.3	111	.5
Bosnian .....	.....	.....	3	¶
Brazilian† .....	.....	.....	1	¶
Bulgarian	74	.4	85	.4
Canadian†	133	.7	230	1.1
Chinese .....	.....	.....	3	¶
Croatian	1,631	9.4	852	3.9
Cuban .....	.....	.....	8	¶
Dalmatian	10	.1	9	¶
Danish	10	.1	24	.1
Dutch	10	.1	13	.1
East Indian	1	¶	4	¶
English	206	1.2	197	.9
Filipino .....	.....	.....	3	¶
Finnish	2	¶	9	¶
French	17	.1	10	.1
Galician	6	¶	15	.1
German	589	3.4	422	1.9
Greek	276	1.6	343	1.6
Guatemalan† .....	.....	.....	1	¶
Hawaiian .....	.....	.....	1	¶
Hebrew	2	¶	6	¶
Herzogovinan	3	¶	1	¶
Irish	380	2.2	226	1.0
Italian	206	1.2	217	1.0
Japanese	9	.1	2	¶
Lithuanian	190	1.1	173	.8
Macedonian	176	1.0	212	.9
Magyar	529	3.0	394	1.8
Mexican† .....	.....	.....	2,081	9.4
Montenegrin	16	.1	14	.1
Norwegian	89	.5	51	.2
Persian	30	.2	2	¶
Peruvian† .....	.....	.....	3	¶
Polish	4,491	25.7	3,105	14.1
Porto Rican† .....	.....	.....	2	¶
Rumanian	277	1.6	119	.5
Russian	767	4.4	405	1.8
Scotch	122	.7	206	.9

TABLE 6—(Concluded)

	1912		1928	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
Servian	614	3.5	482	2.2
Slovaks	1,080	6.2	836	3.8
Spanish	16	.1	388	1.8
Swedish	559	3.2	494	2.3
Swiss‡	10	.1	6	‡
Syrian†	6	‡	15	.1
Turkish	61	.3	17	.1
Uruguayant .....	.....	.....	1	‡
Welsh	52	.3	26	.1
West Indian‡ .....	.....	.....	4	‡
Total	17,441	100.0	22,061‡	100.0

* Data from nationality reports of Gary and South Works, Illinois Steel Company, December 31, 1912, and December 31, 1928.

† "Canadian" includes all "British North Americans." In 1928 "Syrian" includes 12 specified as "Assyrian."

‡ Nationality, or "race," not specified.

‡ Less than .05 per cent.

§ Includes 1 from "British Asia Minor."

report of the industry made to the United States Immigration Commission in 1909 with the combined 1928 nationality reports of the two largest meat-packing plants in Chicago. Incomplete and non-uniform classification of nationalities accounts for difficulties such as the failure to separate some "Austrians" into their proper (non-political) nationality groups, and the improper classification of others, e.g., the union of diverse peoples under such terms as "Czechoslovakian," "South Slavic," or "English colonies." Notwithstanding these defects in classification, which could easily be remedied by the personnel departments of the companies should they so desire, the main trends during the almost two decades stand out clearly.⁵ The five principal groups in numerical order of importance in 1909 were Polish, native white, Lithuanian, German, and Czechoslovakian nationalities. In 1928 the groups were colored, native white, Polish, Lithuanian, and Mexican, in the order named. The principal decreases were among the Poles, who fell from 27.7 to 11.9 per cent, the Ger-

⁵ "From 1880 to 1886 the nationalities employed in the stockyards, in the order of their numerical importance, were Irish, Americans, Germans, and a few Scotch." In July, 1904, the approximate proportions of the principal nationalities employed were Irish, 20 per cent; Americans [white] and Scotch, 2 per cent; Germans, 15 per cent; Poles, 20 per cent; Bohemians, 20 per cent; others, including Lithuanians, Slovaks, a very few Kraius, Finns, and Greeks [and probably Negroes], 18 per cent.—Carroll D. Wright, "Influence of trade unions on immigrants," U. S. Bur. Labor, Bull. 2:56. Also see *Reports of United States Immigration Commission, XIII, 199 ff.*, for earlier history of Europeans in the industry.

mans, who fell from 10.4 to 2.9 per cent, and the Czechoslovaks, who fell from 9.6 to 2.1 per cent. The Irish and Lithuanians also dropped notably. On the other hand, Negroes increased from 3 to 29.5 per cent, native whites from 18.9 to 27.3 per cent, and Mexicans from practically zero to 5.7 per cent. The reader can make further comparisons by consulting the table. The increase in native whites shown in this, and in other tables presented in this study, is to a considerable degree accounted for by the entry into the industry of second generation Europeans. The significance, if any, of the fact that the total number of employees in 1928 is smaller than the total in 1909, is not measured by the difference given here, since it is the result of a difference in basis of reporting between 1909 and 1928, as well as of an improved industrial technique.

The nationality changes which have taken place in the two largest plants of the steel industry between 1912 and 1928 are presented in table 6. Because reports for both years are from the same two plants, which, as part of the same company, keep almost identical nationality records, and because these are the most complete and accurate which in classification than it was possible to make table 5. In 1912 the five principal nationalities, in order of numbers, were Poles, native whites, Croatians, Slovaks, and Russians; they ranged from 25.7 down to 4.4 per cent of the total. In 1928 the first five groups, in order, were native whites, Poles, Negroes, Mexicans, and Croatians, and they ranged from 33.8 to 3.9 per cent of the total. Noteworthy increases were those of the native whites from 25.5 to 33.8 per cent, the Negroes from 1.5 to 12.3 per cent, and the Mexicans from zero to 9.4 per cent.

Since the most important of the recent migrations to Chicago and the Calumet region are those of Negroes and Mexicans, comparative figures were obtained of the number of each employed annually by the two largest meat-packing plants, the three largest steel plants, and the largest cement plant of the area. These are presented in table 7.

Data on Negro employees in the steel plants are taken from nationality reports. One plant employed no Negroes in 1910 and 1911; another employed only seven and eight, respectively, in these years; and the third plant, which in 1912 employed nearly all the 266 Negroes, employed only about thirty in 1910. In iron and steel manufacturing in the Middle West, of which the Calumet region is

a part, only sixty-two Negroes were reported by the United States Immigration Commission in 1909, or .5 per cent of the 12,658 employees for whom data were obtained.⁶ The figures presented here, therefore, reach practically to the beginning of employment of Negroes in the steel industry of this region.

Data on Mexicans in these three steel plants commence with 1913 when Mexicans first appeared in the nationality reports. That this was the beginning of the employment of Mexicans in the industry is confirmed by the fact that the Immigration Commission reported no natives of Mexico employed in iron and steel manufacturing in the Middle West in 1909.⁷

Any Mexicans employed before the dates shown in table 7 in the two meat-packing plants included there, or indeed in the entire Chicago industry, were numerically negligible. Of 15,489 employees in the Chicago slaughtering and meat-packing industry on whom data were obtained in 1909, only one was a native of Mexico.⁸ Data on Negro employees of the packing plants are historically much less adequate. As early as 1880 a lone Negro was employed in the yards as a member of Armour's killing gang. But not until 1894 did Negroes play an important part in the industry. In that year "Negro labor was employed to break the strike and has been an element in the situation ever since." "While few of the strike breakers of 1894 were retained, yet that event marks the real beginning of the employment of Negroes. At the beginning of the present strike [1904] some 500 Negroes worked in the yards. . . ." In 1909 the Immigration Commission reported 462 Negroes employed in the slaughtering and meat-packing industry of Chicago, or 3 per cent of those for whom data were obtained.¹⁰

⁶ *Reports*, IX, 17. For nationalities employed earlier, see *ibid.*, 10-13.

⁷ *Loc. cit.*

⁸ *Ibid.*, XIII, 204.

⁹ Carroll D. Wright, *loc. cit.* See also Spero and Harris, *The Black Worker*, (New York, 1931): 264 ff. for an account of the Negro in the stockyards. These writers state that when the strike of 1894 broke out about 500 Negroes were employed in the yards, but the source which they cite referred instead to the strike of 1904.

¹⁰ XIII, 204. According to the census of 1910 the number of semi-skilled and unskilled Negroes in the Chicago industry fell to less than one hundred. Although Spero and Harris, *op. cit.*, 268, apparently accept the census figure for comparative purposes, as indicative of a precipitous drop in the number of Negro employees, I doubt whether the low census figure can be compared with the 462 Negro employees reported by the Immigration Commission a year earlier. I regard the latter as a better gauge of the employment of Negroes. The 1910 census omits skilled Negroes from its count. But indicative of an even wider margin of non-comparability than could be caused by the omission of the skilled is the fact that, although two plants alone showed 5,110 Negro employees on their payrolls or nationality reports in 1920 (see table 7), the census of the same year showed only 2,792 Negro laborers and semi-skilled workers.

TABLE 7
NUMBERS AND PERCENTAGES OF MEXICAN AND NEGRO EMPLOYEES IN THREE STEEL PLANTS, TWO MEAT-PACKING PLANTS,
AND A CEMENT PLANT IN CHICAGO AND THE CALUMET REGION*

Year	Three Steel Plants					Two Meat-Packing Plants				
	Mexicans		Negroes		Total employees	Mexicans		Negroes		Total employees
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent		Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	
1912.....	0		266	1.3	20,266					
1913.....	1	†	112	0.7	16,086					
1914.....	2		70	0.5	13,062					
1915.....	6		196	1.0	20,268					
1916.....	18	0.1	558	2.4	23,593					
1917.....	33	0.1	1,274	4.4	28,734	7	†	†		20,901
1918.....	104‡	0.4	1,546	5.3	29,089	78	0.3	†		27,254
1919.....	232	0.9	2,699	10.7	25,115	79	0.3	†		23,642
1920.....	1,228	4.6	2,580	9.8	26,446	266	1.5	5,110	27.8	18,361
1921.....	438	2.6	1,647	9.8	16,795	82	0.6	2,928	20.3	14,460
1922.....	1,537	6.4	3,432	14.3	23,966	86	0.7	4,236	32.7	12,952
1923.....	2,919	11.3	3,352	13.0	25,773	482	3.2	5,148	33.6	15,311
1924.....	3,479	12.1	4,096	14.3	28,680	711	4.8	4,840	32.4	14,956
1925.....	3,837	13.2	3,717	12.8	28,969	644	4.7	4,244	30.6	13,851
1926.....	4,421	15.8	3,261	11.6	28,067	612	4.5	4,068	29.6	13,748
1927.....	4,042	14.6	3,138	11.4	27,628	596	4.5	3,864	29.0	13,317
1928.....	4,081	14.2	3,203	11.1	28,757	746	5.7	3,894	29.5	13,194

* Data from Indiana Harbor Works, Inland Steel Company; Gary and South Works, Illinois Steel Company; Chicago Plants, Armour & Company and Swift & Company; Buffington Plant, Universal Atlas Cement Company.

Table reprinted, by permission, from the *Journal of Political Economy*, vol. 38, No. 5 (October, 1930).

† Less than one-tenth of 1 per cent.

‡ Data available for one plant only: 1917, 1,466; 1918, 1,624; 1919, 1,710. See text comments on early employment of Negroes in the stockyards.

§ A few Mexicans employed at Inland Steel in 1918 do not appear here, since no nationality report showing their number was available; probably they were employed after the report was made.

TABLE 7—(Concluded)

Year	A Cement Plant					All Plants				
	Mexicans		Negroes		Total employees	Mexicans		Negroes		Total employees
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent		Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	
1912.....										
1913.....						1§				
1914.....						2§				
1915.....						6§				
1916.....						18§				
1917.....	3	0.3	25	2.5	988	43	0.1			50,623
1918.....	1	0.1	17	2.2	777	183	0.3			57,120
1919.....	16	1.3	72	5.8	1,241	327	0.7			49,998
1920.....	90	5.3	471	27.4	1,717	1,584	3.4	8,161	17.5	46,524
1921.....	30	1.9	340	21.4	1,592	550	1.7	4,915	15.0	32,847
1922.....	87	5.3	587	36.1	1,627	1,710	4.4	8,255	21.4	38,545
1923.....	255	12.9	458	23.1	1,982	3,656	8.5	8,958	20.8	43,066
1924.....	267	14.2	473	25.1	1,883	4,457	9.8	9,409	20.7	45,519
1925.....	228	10.6	405	18.8	2,149	4,709	10.5	8,366	18.6	44,969
1926.....	275	13.2	437	21.0	2,085	5,308	12.1	7,766	17.7	43,900
1927.....	265	13.4	335	16.9	1,983	4,903	11.4	7,337	17.1	42,928
1928.....	261	15.1	321	18.6	1,726	5,088	11.6	7,418	17.0	43,677

§ It is possible that there were Mexicans in the meat-packing and cement plants which would increase these totals somewhat, but probably there were none, and certainly there were extremely few.

The war demands for labor resulted in important increases in use of Negro labor until in January, 1918, Negroes were said to comprise 20 per cent of the labor in the yards. Table 7 shows that in the two largest meat-packing plants the percentage of Negroes rose to 27.8 per cent in 1920, sagged in 1921 to 20.3 per cent, and in 1922, as a result of the use of Negroes to defeat the strike of 1921-22, rose to 32.7 per cent.

Mexicans appeared in numbers later than Negroes in all these plants, and entered them in very unequal proportions. The effect of reliance upon, and importation of Negroes by the packing industry is clearly evident in the table. The steel plants, on the other hand, partly by importations, brought up the numbers of Mexican employees above those of the Negroes. The cement plant relied much more heavily upon Negroes than upon Mexicans until 1927 when the margin in favor of Negroes diminished markedly.

In 1928 in these plants Mexicans somewhat exceeded Negroes in steel, but were heavily outnumbered in meat-packing, and moderately outnumbered at the cement plant. In the six plants combined, Mexicans comprised 11.6 per cent of all employees as compared with 17 per cent for the Negroes.¹¹ The Mexicans in that year stood almost at their numerical and proportional peak, whereas Negroes had declined from a peak of 21.4 per cent in 1922, and stood at almost exactly the proportion of 17.5 per cent of all employees which they had comprised in 1920. The Mexicans rose in the same period from 3.4 per cent of the total to 11.6 per cent. Both groups remained at nearly stable proportions of the combined total of employees from 1924 to 1928. Over a short period of six years, it may be said, therefore, that there was some replacement of Negroes by Mexicans. But on a much larger scale over a ten-year period or longer, Mexicans and Negroes had both been replacing "whites."

MEXICAN POPULATION

The Mexicans of Chicago and the Calumet region have come principally from the *mesa central* of Mexico, the region north and northwest from Mexico City. They have "leap-frogged" from the interior of Mexico to the northern interior of the United States, literally passing through and beyond their compatriots of the Mexican northern border states who have made the shorter migration to the adjacent

¹¹ On a base broader than table 7 by two large steel plants, the differential between Mexicans and Negroes is less. See table 13 which shows that in 1928, 14.9 per cent of all employees were Negroes and 12.1 per cent were Mexicans.

southwestern United States. Table 8 shows by states, the origins of a representative sample of over 3,000 Mexicans in the Chicago-Gary

TABLE 8
STATE OF ORIGIN IN MEXICO OF 3,132 MEXICAN IMMIGRANTS IN CHICAGO
AND THE CALUMET REGION*

State of origin	Number	Per cent
Jalisco	647	20.7
Michoacán	579	18.5
Guanajuato	546	17.4
Zacatecas	254	8.1
Distrito Federal	187	6.0
Coahuila	140	4.5
San Luis Potosí	134	4.3
Nuevo León	133	4.2
Chihuahua	112	3.6
Durango	111	3.6
Aguascalientes	81	2.6
Sonora	50	1.6
Tamaulipas	38	1.2
Hidalgo	15	.5
México	12	.4
Guerrero	11	.3
Oaxaca	11	.3
Querétaro	11	.3
Vera Cruz	10	.3
Yucatán	10	.3
Morelos	9	.3
Puebla	9	.3
Nayarit	8	.2
Colima	5	.2
Sinaloa	4	.1
Baja California	2	.1
Chiapas	2	.1
Tlaxcala	1	†
Total	3,132	100.0

* Data in this table are a composite of tabulations from records of individuals obtained from the following sources: 1,849 clients of the Immigrants' Protective League registered from 1919 to February 1, 1930; 168 Mexicans registered at the consulate from January 3, 1927 to May 12, 1928; 460 employees of Wisconsin Steel Works, May 19, 1928; 655 employees of South Works, Illinois Steel Company, June 1928. Extensive inquiries and inspection of the data themselves indicate that the sample is fairly representative.

† Less than one-tenth per cent.

area. Grouping the states of origin, it appears that 73.7 per cent of these Mexicans came from the central plateau, 21.7 per cent from the northeastern states, and but 2 per cent from the west coast.¹²

¹² For a statistical comparison of origins in Mexico of the Mexicans of the Winter Garden District, South Texas, Imperial Valley, California, and Chicago and the Calumet region, see "Note on streams of Mexican migration" by the present writer, *Am. Jour. of Sociology*, XXXVI:287-288 (September, 1930).

This outpouring of the interior population began during the closing decade or two of the last century when Mexican railways first afforded easy opportunity and inducement for movement. The labor demands of the railways of both countries, augmented by some other industries, notably mining in northern Mexico and sugar beets in the United States, soon scattered Mexican laborers afar. The stream which built up the Mexican colonies of Chicago and the Calumet region in 1923 flowed largely along channels that had been established at least two or three decades earlier, and from the original sources of emigration.¹²

The enormous variations in routes by which Mexicans have reached Chicago appear later in table 14 (p. 71), which shows that a few have come by way of states as widely scattered as California, Montana, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia: For the most part, however, they have come into the United States at Laredo or El Paso, and have been transported from the Southwest into the North by railroads, steel or sugar beet industries, or have made their own way northward, either directly, or intermittently from job to job and from place to place.

Probably most of the Mexicans of the region in 1928 had entered the United States within the previous five or six years, and the colonies were being augmented continually by new arrivals from Mexico as well as from other parts of the United States. This appears clearly from table 9 which shows that of a sample of 2,016 employees in four large industrial plants, practically 70 per cent had entered the United States in 1923 or subsequently, and 11 per cent approximately within the year preceding the compilation of the table. While comparatively recent arrivals predominated, practically 9 per cent of these employees had entered the country before 1917, and one of them as early as 1898. The sample shown in the table is probably fairly representative.

One of the most evident characteristics of the Mexican group is its youth. The data presented in table 10, which are probably typical, indicate that in 1928 slightly over 60 per cent were in their twenties, and 90 per cent were under 40 years of age. Further data on over 800 Mexican employees of a steel plant, although not exactly comparable, are nevertheless corroboratory. Of these, 61.5 per cent were aged 21 to 30 inclusive, 29.6 per cent aged 31 to 40 inclusive, and 8.5 per cent over forty.

¹² For a good account of early field observations of this migration see Victor S. Clark, *op. cit.*

Males predominate heavily over females. Such data as are available are presented in table 11, which indicates that the single Mexicans outnumbered those who were married, but the wives of one-third of the latter were not in the United States. Probably, because of the

TABLE 9

YEAR OF ARRIVAL IN THE UNITED STATES OF 2,016 MEXICANS EMPLOYED IN FOUR LARGE INDUSTRIAL PLANTS OF CHICAGO AND THE CALUMET REGION, 1928*

Year	Number	Per cent
1927-8.....	224	11.1
1926.....	295	14.6
1925.....	149	7.4
1924.....	234	11.6
1923.....	496	24.6
1922.....	130	6.4
1921.....	66	3.3
1920.....	91	4.5
1919.....	66	3.3
1918.....	50	2.5
1917.....	36	1.8
Before 1917†.....	179	8.9
Total.....	2,016	100.0

* Data from Chicago plants of Armour & Company and Swift & Company; McCormick Works; South Works, Illinois Steel Company.

† Data by years available from one plant only, commencing with 1916 and running consecutively backward to 1898, are: 26, 17, 7, 8, 9, 8, 7, 0, 2, 3, 5, 0, 4, 1, 0, 1, 1, 0, 1.

TABLE 10

AGE IN 1928 OF 2,281 MEXICANS EMPLOYED IN FIVE LARGE INDUSTRIAL PLANTS OF CHICAGO AND THE CALUMET REGION*

Age groups	Number	Per cent
Under 20.....	1	†
20-29.....	1,401	61.4
30-39.....	659	28.9
40 and over‡.....	220	9.7
Total.....	2,281	100.0

* Data from Chicago plants of Armour & Company and Swift & Company; Buffington plant of Universal Atlas Cement Company; McCormick Works; South Works, Illinois Steel Company.

† Less than one-tenth per cent.

‡ Five of these, and perhaps others concealed by incomplete reporting, were between 50 and 59 years of age.

inability of employment departments to keep records of marital condition up to date, the proportion of married persons, and those whose wives were in the United States, is slightly understated by the table, since it is known that both had been increasing markedly, and it is

not certain that the records of these were complete. On the other hand, among railroad workers the proportion of single Mexicans, and married men with wives remaining in Mexico, was probably higher than in the industrial plants from which the data for table 11 were obtained.

The Mexican population of the region, then, was overwhelmingly composed of young laborers from the central plateau of Mexico, with a low, but increasing proportion of women among them. Most of them come from those elements of the Mexican population in which the strain of Indian blood predominates. The period of their resi-

TABLE 11

MARITAL STATUS OF 3,900 MEXICAN EMPLOYEES OF EIGHT LARGE INDUSTRIAL PLANTS OF CHICAGO AND THE CALUMET REGION, 1928*

	Number	Per cent
Married	1,825	46.8
Single	2,075	53.2
Total	3,900	100.0

* Data obtained from Chicago plants of Armour & Company and Swift & Company; Buffington plant, Universal Atlas Cement Company; Gary and South Works, Illinois Steel Company; Gary Works, National Tube Company; McCormick Works, and Wisconsin Steel Works, International Harvester Company. The 3,900 employees for whom data were available are 7.4 per cent less than the total of Mexicans employed in these plants. Figures available for 893 or 48.9 per cent of the above employees who were married, from three plants, show that the wives of 558, or 62.5 per cent, were in the United States. Since these data are recorded upon individual employment cards, marriages or immigration of wives to the United States subsequent to the original entry on the card may not appear, unless perhaps the employee has again passed through the employment office routine. For this reason and because of the observed trend, the number of married Mexicans and those whose wives are in the United States, is understated by the figures in this table.

dence in this country has generally been brief, and their mobility is great. A priest reports that in 1926 he made a census of his Mexican parishioners in the vicinity of Hull House and that when he returned to call on them six months later, most of them had moved away without leaving an address. Other Mexicans, however, had taken their places in the neighborhood. Further observations on the mobility of the Mexicans appear in the later section on Movements of Mexican Laborers.

The total number of "Mexicans" in Chicago according to the census of 1930 was 19,362; there were in addition, 967 foreign-born "non-Mexican" whites who were born in Mexico.¹⁴ In Lake County,

¹⁴ In 1930 the census established the race classification "Mexican," defined as "all persons born in Mexico or having parents born in Mexico, who are not definitely white, Negro, Chinese, or Japanese." In the 1920 census practically all persons of this classification were counted as "whites."

Indiana, the corresponding figures were 9,007 and 132, respectively, making a total of 28,369 Mexicans and 1,099 foreign-born "non-Mexican" whites who were born in Mexico, or a combined total of 29,468. The latter figure is for practical purposes comparable with the total of 1,905 persons of foreign white stock whose country of origin was Mexico, who were in the same area in 1920.

In 1930 "Mexicans" constituted .57 per cent of the entire population of Chicago, 3.4 per cent of the population of Lake County, Indiana, 9.8 per cent of the population of East Chicago (and probably more than 3 times this percentage of the population of Indiana Harbor), and 3.5 per cent of the population of Gary. Including with "Mexicans," the whites born in Mexico, the percentages were .6, 3.5, 9.8, and 3.6 per cent, respectively, of the total population.

There were at least six distinct major colonies of Mexicans in 1928 in the area covered by this study, and a few smaller clusters as well. In addition, there was a considerable dispersion in small groups of two's and three's. No adequate statistical data for charting the Mexican population of Chicago and the Calumet region were available when this study was written, but an effort to present its distribution is nevertheless made in the accompanying maps following page 57. The method employed was a combination of observation, inquiry of many Mexicans and Americans acquainted with their residences, such as employment men and social service workers, and use of numbers of Mexicans enrolled in elementary schools during the spring of 1928. Where Mexican population was present three gradations of density are indicated: least, medium, and greatest density. It was not feasible to set up a statistical measure of densities while conducting these researches. In none of the areas indicated as densest, is it likely that Mexicans were in the majority in any square block, although undoubtedly they were often a plurality. The standard of least density includes as few as two or three families per square block. Reliance upon school enrollment figures for construction of a dot-distribution map was impossible, for the proportion of families and single men varied greatly in the different colonies. The method employed is of course subject to all the irregularities of imperfect observation and knowledge, and non-uniform standards for measuring densities held by informants in different portions of the area. Nevertheless, it is believed that these maps do present a substantially accurate, if rough, picture of the colonization of Chicago and the Calumet region by Mexicans in 1928. In table 12 are presented the numbers of Mexican

TABLE 12

NUMBER OF MEXICAN CHILDREN ENROLLED IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS OF CHICAGO
AND THE CALUMET REGION DURING THE SPRING SEMESTER, 1928;
SCHOOLS GROUPED ACCORDING TO LOCATION*

1. Hull House colony (map 1):

St. Francis	142	12th and Newberry Sts.
Dante	105	840 S. Desplaines St.
Foster	97	720 O'Brien St.
Goodrich	88	915 W. Taylor St.
Dore	87	758 W. Harrison St.
Garfield	76	1426 Newberry St.
Jackson	62	820 S. Sholto St.
Swing	28	1701 String Ave.
Guardian Angel	14	Forquer and Desplaines Sts.
Skinner	14	1070 W. Jackson Blvd.
<hr/>		
Total	713	
Per cent	27.6	

2. Scattering west of Hull House colony (map 1):

Riis	25	1111 S. Throop St.
Jefferson	20	1522 Elburn Ave.
Pickard	15	2301 W. 21st Place
Rogers	5	1247 W. 13th St.
Smyth	5	1059 W. 13th St.
Whittier	5	1900 W. 23d St.
Clarke	4	1310 S. Ashland Ave.
McLaren	4	1500 Flurnoy St.
Froebel	2	2021 W. 21st St.
Cooper	1	1624 W. 19th St.
Lawson (not on map).....	1	1256 S. Homan Ave.
<hr/>		
Total	87	
Per cent	3.4	

3. Archer Avenue stockyards colony, east (map 1):

Haines	70	231 W. 23d Place
Mark Sheridan (S. of map 1)	41	533 W. 27th St.
Drake (S. of map 1).....	7	2641 Calumet Ave.
Ward (S. of map 1).....	7	2701 S. Shields St.
<hr/>		
Total	125	
Per cent	4.8	

4. Forty-third Street stockyards colony, east (map 2):

Hendricks	47	313 W. 43d St.
Graham	10	4436 Union Ave.
<hr/>		
Total	57	
Per cent	2.2	

TABLE 12—(Continued)

5. Stockyards colony, west (map 2):		
Seward	124	4600 S. Hermitage St.
Hamline	43	4747 Bishop St.
	<hr/>	
Total	167	
Per cent	6.5	
6. Brighton Park colony, Kedzie and Pershing Road (map 2):		
Davis	86	3014 W. 39th Place
	<hr/>	
Total	86	
Per cent	3.3	
7. South Chicago colony (map 3):		
Thorpe	298	8914 Buffalo Ave.
Sullivan	56	83d St. and Coles Ave.
Marsh	35	9810 S. Exchange St.
Phil Sheridan	19	9035 Escanaba Ave.
Phil Sheridan, Branch	24	9358 Houston St.
Taylor	4	9912 Avenue "H."
Warren	8	9210 Chappel Ave.
St. Kevin's	6	105th St. and Torrence Ave.
	<hr/>	
Total	450	
Per cent	17.4	
8. Iroindale colony, South Chicago (map 3):		
Bright	74	10740 S. Calhoun Ave.
	<hr/>	
Total	74	
Per cent	2.9	
9. Scattering, Chicago:†		
Mitchell	9	2233 W. Ohio St.
Ogden	8	9 W. Chestnut St.
Luther Haven (map 1)	7	1472 Wabash Ave.
Agassiz	6	2851 N. Seminary Ave.
Knickerbocker	5	2301 N. Clifton Ave.
Arnold	3	718 Center St.
Spalding (map 1).....	3	1628 Maypole Ave.
	<hr/>	
Total	41	
Per cent	1.6	
10. Indiana Harbor colony (map 4):		
Lincoln	166	136th and Elm Sts.
Field	156	Block and Washington Aves.
Riley	113	138th and Elm Sts.
Garfield	25	148th and Melville Sts.
Washington	20	141st and Hemlock Sts.
Harrison†	5	144th and Magoun Sts.
	<hr/>	
Total	485	
Per cent	18.8	

TABLE 12—(Concluded)

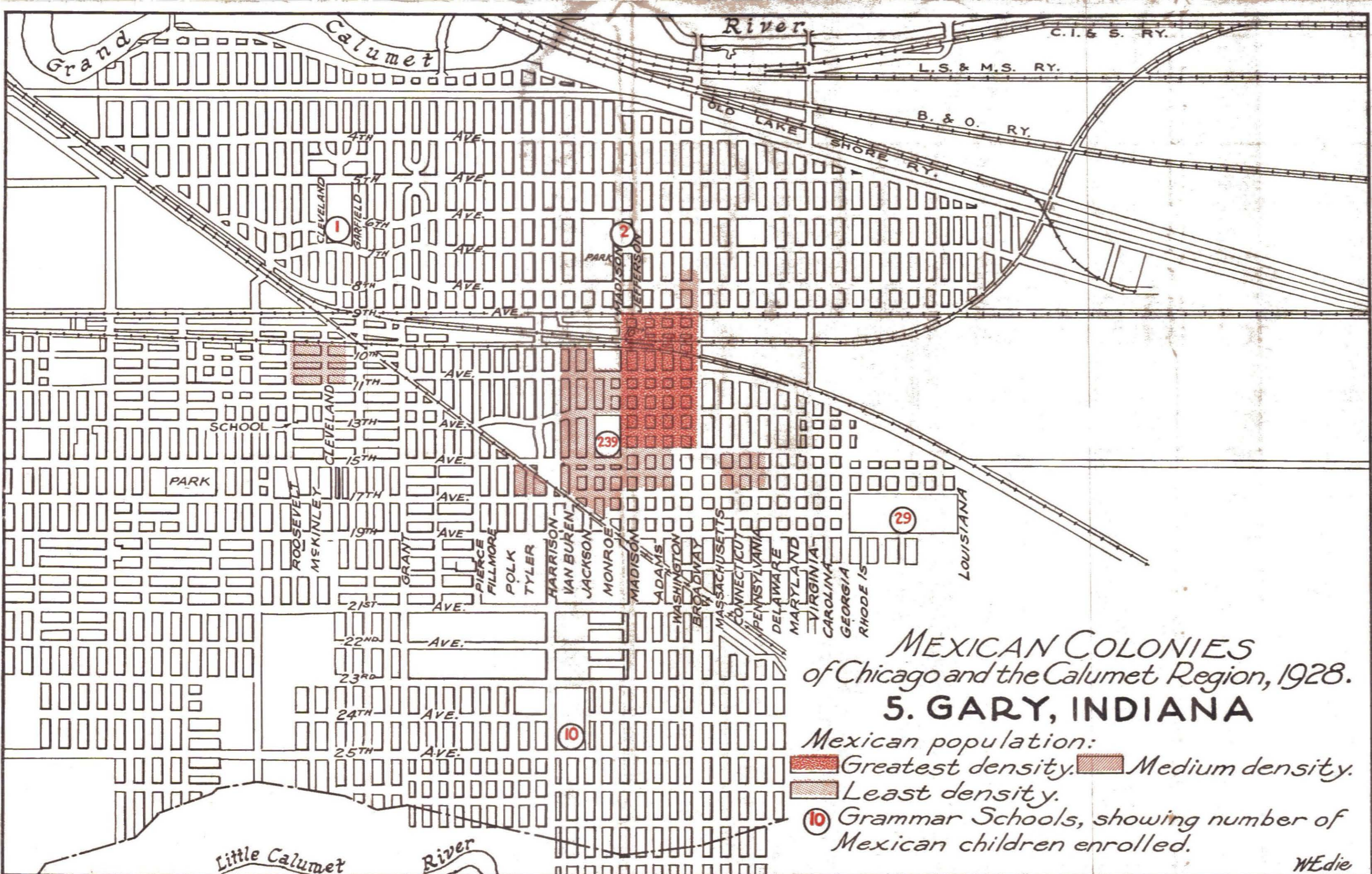
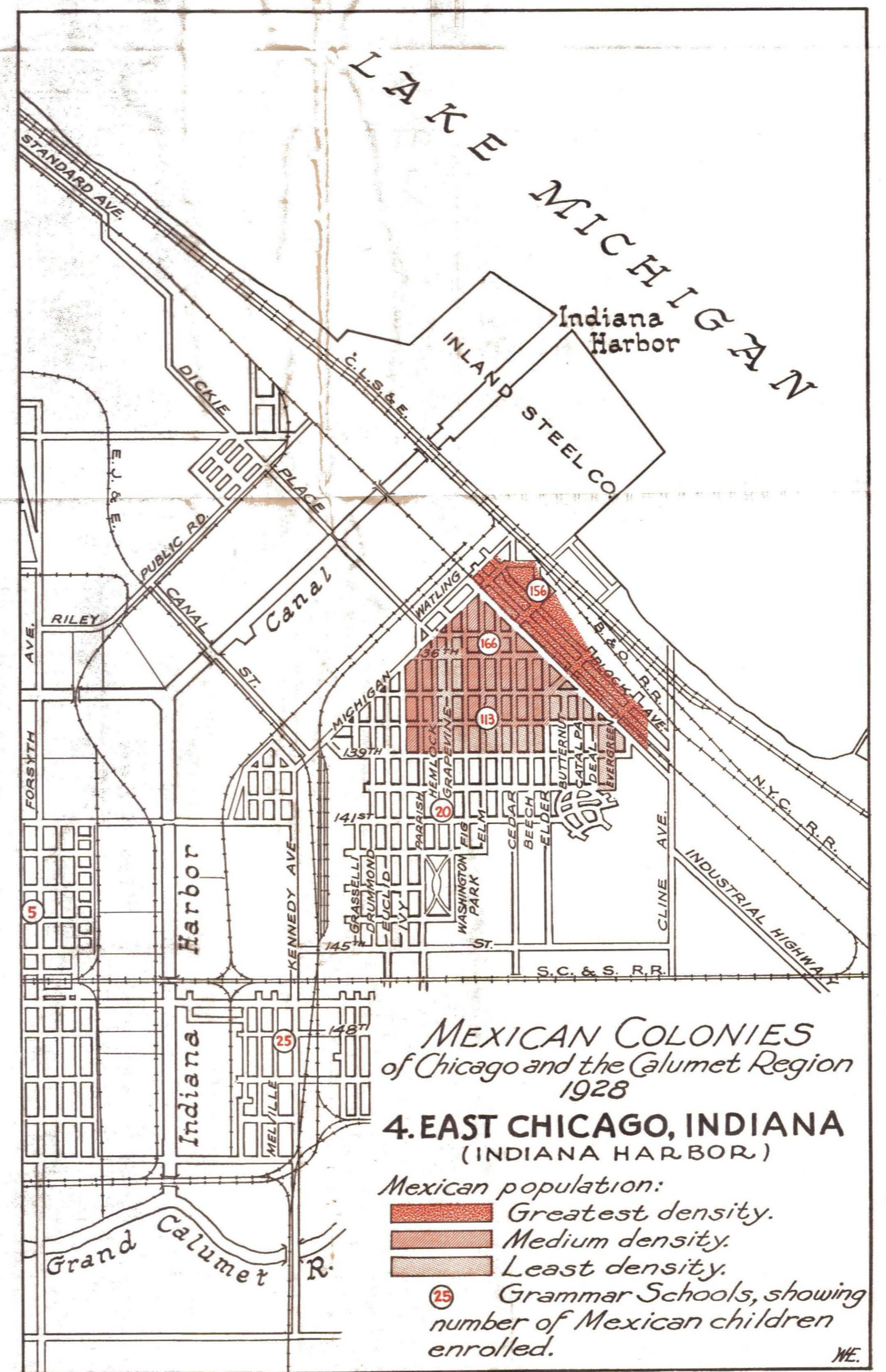
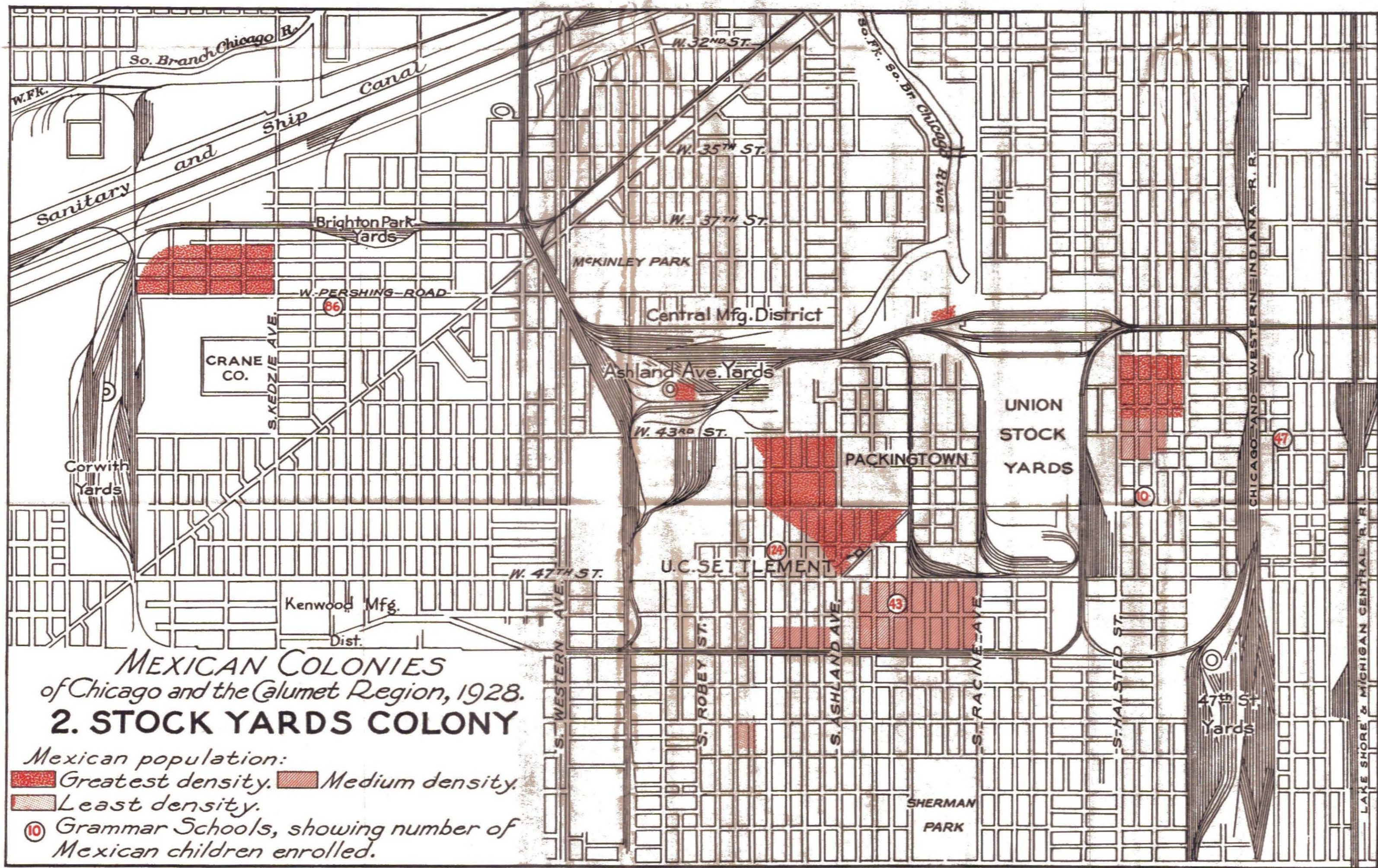
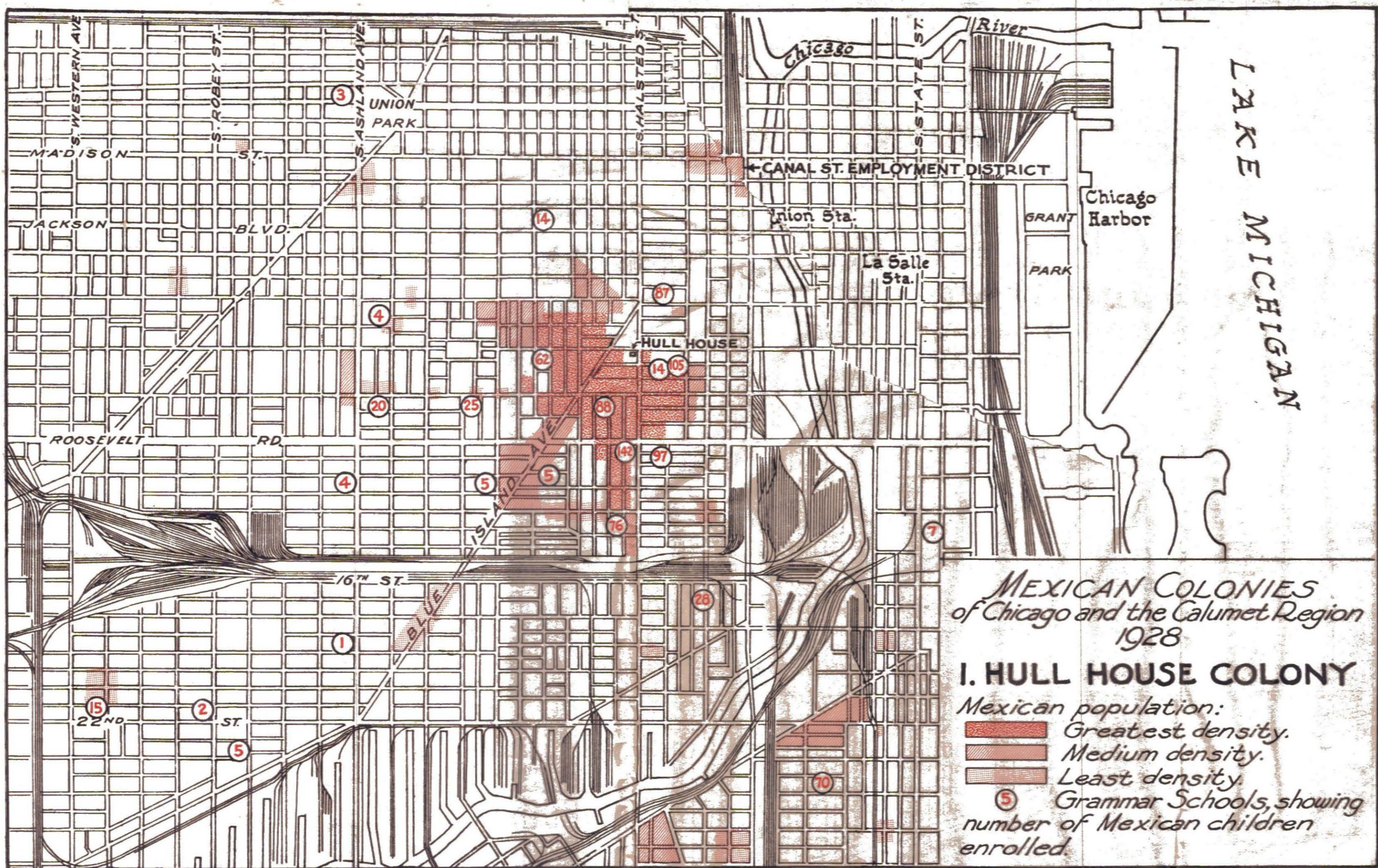
11. Gary colony (map 5):		
Froebel	239	15th and Madison Sts.
Pulaaki	29	19th and Georgia Sts.
Roosevelt	10	25th and Jackson Sts.
Franklin	6	35th and Georgia Sts.
Wallace	6	45th and Madison Sts.
Glen Park	5	39th St. and Broadway
Jefferson	2	7th and Jefferson Sts.
Clarke	1	Clarke Rd. & Industrial Highway
Horace Mann	1	7th and Garfield Sts.
<hr/>		
Total	299	
Per cent	11.5	
<hr/>		
Grand total, all schools.....	2,584	
Per cent	100.0	

* Chicago data by courtesy of Immigrants' Protective League, and of Anita E. Jones, in whose unpublished thesis, "Conditions surrounding Mexicans in Chicago" (University of Chicago, 1928), most of these figures appear. Figures for Thorpe and Phil Sheridan schools in South Chicago were taken from Nelson, *op. cit.*, 16, as shortly prior to our visits to those schools a number of children had left for the beet fields. Reports were requested of and received from all schools in which diligent inquiry suggested there might be any Mexican children enrolled. The figures furnished usually represent the number of Mexican children enrolled in the school on the day during the spring of 1928 when the authorities complied with the request. The following schools reported no Mexicans enrolled: Chicago—Anderson, Burns, Cameron, Carpenter, Fulton, Gary, Goothe, Hedges, Jones, Jungman, Komensky, Libby, Lowell, Marshall, Mulligan, Raymond, Schley, Stoew, Washburn, Wells; East Chicago—McKinley; Gary—Emerson, Roosevelt. Indiana Harbor figures were obtained from individual schools. Gary figures represent the Mexican children, ages 5-15 inclusive, shown by the yearly enumeration for 1927-28. The number of Mexicans aged 4-20 inclusive was 378.

† Not shown on accompanying maps.

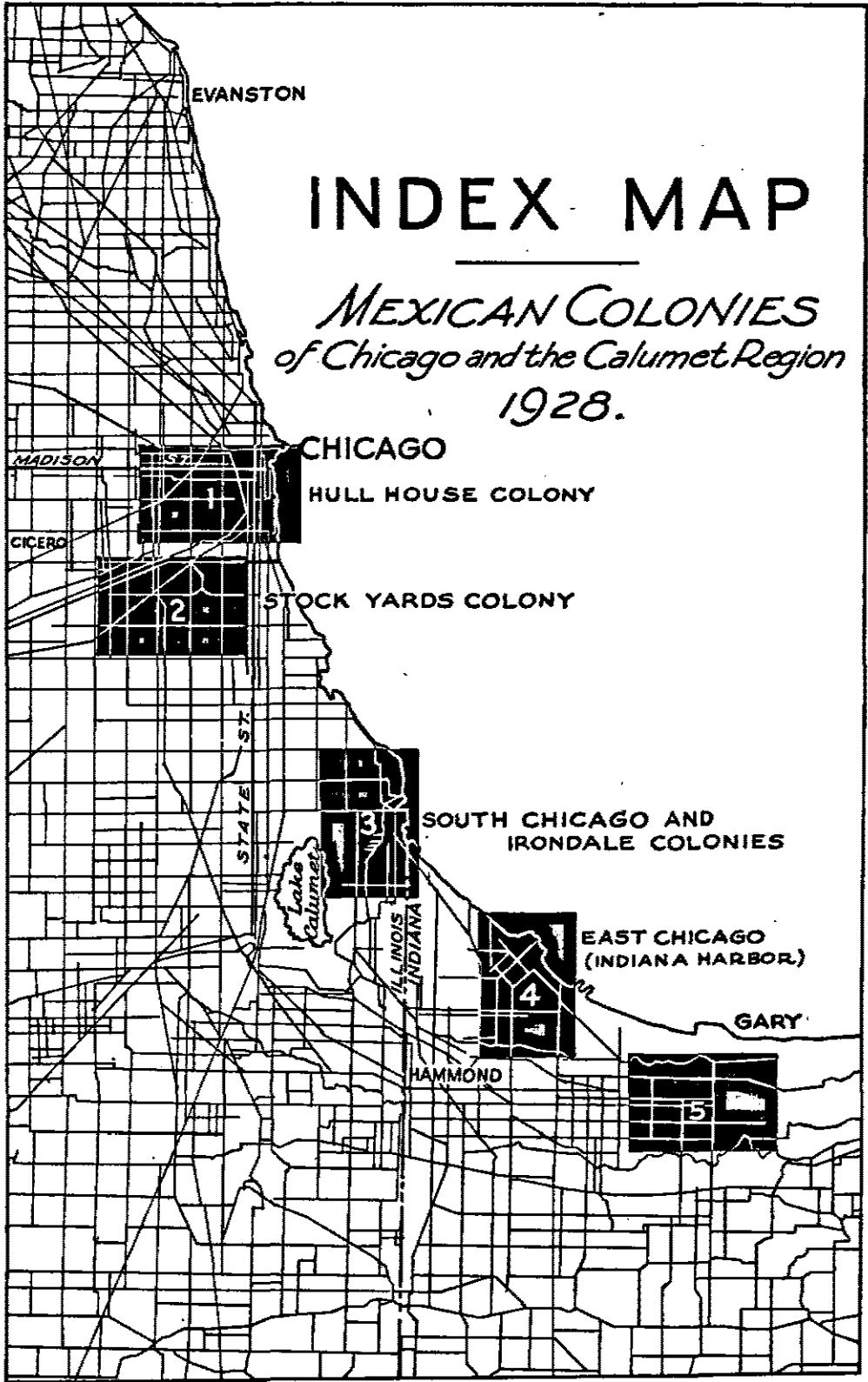
elementary school children, grouped according to the colonies from which they are drawn. These data are shown in red figures upon the maps.

The colony on the near west side which centers about the triangle formed by South Halstead Street, Blue Island Avenue, and Roosevelt Road (map 1), has been designated here as the Hull House colony. This description is justified not only by the fact that Hull House is situated within the area and that its renown has made it a landmark to persons everywhere, but also because it is a center of much of the organized social life of the Mexicans grouped about it, and even of those who live in other parts of the city. This colony is the oldest in the region and in 1920 the census showed it to be the largest in Chicago. The appearance of a Mexican family shortly after the 1904 World's Fair has been noted before. Undoubtedly there were others who came from time to time during the years which followed, but



**MEXICAN COLONIES OF CHICAGO
AND THE CALUMET REGION
1928**

MAPS 1-5 AND INDEX MAP



the colony of laborers did not receive an important impetus until late in 1916. This came from Mexicans brought to Chicago for railroad labor on the Santa Fe. The account of one of these Mexicans, corroborated in its main outlines by a social worker, tells the process by which the colony was built up:

We came here on November 23, 1916; we were 17 *solos* in box cars. But the box cars had bedbugs and were cold, so I got an apartment. I met a Mexican family named E— at 816 S. Clinton. They were acrobats in a circus and had lived in Chicago many years. In 1917 I sent money to my mother and sister for tickets to come to Chicago. I bought the furniture of a Mexican married to an American who was getting a divorce, and we hired a cook and started a boarding house for Mexican laborers at 415 S. Halstead. The E—s also had boarders who were mostly actors. When laborers went to them for board, they sent them to us. All of the boarders worked in the stockyards [my informant continued for two years to work at a roundhouse].

Some of my young boarders went south after they made some money, got their families, and returned to Chicago. They rented places they found empty near us, and started boarding houses. Some of their boarders did the same, and that is the way the Mexican colony was built here.

The vicinity of Hull House has for decades been an important immigrant-receiving area. It is a poor neighborhood, with low rents, a variety of miscellaneous industries scattered about offering employment to both men and women, and transportation readily available to the stockyards and other large industries. Indeed, in 1928 a small number of Mexicans employed as far away as the steel plants of South Chicago were commuting daily from the Hull House colony. The same reasons which have led other immigrant nationalities to take up their residence in this quarter—and, indeed, in other localities as well—have led the Mexicans in turn to do likewise.

In 1928 there were reported from this colony 713 Mexican school children, or 27.6 per cent of those reported in the entire Chicago-Gary region. This is clear evidence that the principal group of families was located in this quarter; it is not an accurate gauge of the relative sizes of the various Mexican colonies, since in some, notably the colony west of the stockyards, the proportion of *solos* was very much higher. The Mexicans resident in the Hull House colony work principally at the stockyards, for the railroads, at metal works, such as McCormick Works, and in a wide variety of industries which will be detailed later in the section on the Labor Market. In winter the colony is augmented by many who are seasonally unemployed, notably sugar beet workers who await the opening of the next season in Chicago instead of returning to the Southwest or to Mexico.

West of the Hull House colony is a scattering of Mexicans which even in 1920 extended to Ashland Avenue and beyond. Among them were laborers who formerly lived near Hull House but as circumstances permitted moved out to better quarters, and some lower middle class Mexicans. The eighty-seven children reported from schools in this vicinity comprised but 3.4 per cent of the total in the Chicago-Gary area. The dispersion of the group is indicated by the fact that eighty-seven children is the combined total reported from 11 schools.

Three colonies are grouped around the stockyards, two east and one west. The Archer Avenue and 43d Street colonies (maps 1 and 2, respectively) together reported 7 per cent of the Mexican school children of the entire area, and the colony west of the yards reported 6.5 per cent. The western colony (map 2), from Gross Avenue northwest, however, was probably larger than the other two combined; this is not indicated by numbers of school children because of the higher proportion of *solos* west of the yards. The origins of these colonies undoubtedly coincide with the employment of numbers of Mexicans in the packing houses (see table 3), although of course many Mexicans who work there have always come from other neighborhoods, and some who live close to the stockyards work in industries other than meat-packing. According to the 1920 census the stockyards colonies of Mexicans were next in size to those in the vicinity of Hull House.

West of Kedzie between 37th Street and Pershing Road, is the Brighton Park Mexican colony, which follows in historical succession earlier immigration of Jews in the nineties, and later of Poles. The Mexican residents are employed almost entirely at the Crane Company or the Santa Fe, both of which adjoin the colony. Railroad employment was the early factor in building up this colony, which by the 1920 census numbered seventy persons of Mexican birth. Since 1920 much larger numbers of Mexicans have been employed by the Crane Company. This plant began to employ Mexicans in 1920, getting them from South Chicago. It is estimated that the company employed about 100 in 1923, 75 in 1924, 355 according to a nationality report in 1926, and 250 according to an estimate in 1928. The Santa Fe employed about 150 Mexicans in this vicinity in 1923 and 60 in 1924. The Davis school nearby, which the Mexican children of the colony attend, reported 63 Mexican children in 1923, 57 in 1924, and 86 in 1928. The latter figure was 3.3 per cent of the total number of Mexican children of the Chicago-Gary region.

In South Chicago there are two Mexican colonies, the older and larger adjoining South Works of Illinois Steel Company, the younger and smaller Irondale colony adjoining Wisconsin Steel Works of the International Harvester Company (see map 3). Reference to table 3 establishes the origins of these colonies with approximate accuracy as 1916 and 1922, respectively. According to the census of 1920 the colony adjoining South Works numbered 57 white persons born in Mexico, and at that time the Irondale colony was non-existent. Both colonies received their greatest impetus in 1922 and 1923 from a shipment of a few thousand Mexicans coming from Kansas City and points in the Southwest. Between 1924 and 1928 the number of Mexican children at Thorpe school increased from 124, or 11 per cent of the total enrollment, to 298, or 27 per cent of the total. Of these 298 Mexican children, 166 were born in Mexico, 67 in Texas, and 65 in other states.¹⁵ In 1928 eight elementary schools in the area of the South Chicago colony reported 450 school children, or 17.4 per cent of the total in the Chicago-Gary region. In the Irondale colony one school reported 74, or 2.9 per cent of the total number of Mexican school children.

In Indiana Harbor the heaviest concentration of Mexican population is along Block and Pennsylvania Avenues, between the Pennsylvania and Baltimore & Ohio tracks (see map 4). The colony first settled here during the war, although its numbers in 1918 were reported to be but twenty or thirty. However, it was the first industrial colony of the region to be built up by heavy importations from the Southwest, which began the following year. Since its establishment the colony has expanded and moved westward across the tracks as shown on the map. The schools in this area reported 485, or 18.8 per cent of the total enrollment reported in the Chicago-Gary region. This is undoubtedly one of the largest concentrations of Mexicans in the region, and its significance is enhanced by the fact that it is situated in a fairly small community.

The Gary Mexican colony (see map 5) is concentrated most heavily between 9th and 15th Avenues, Broadway and Madison Street, but spreads out south and west in the immediate vicinity. There are also small dispersed clusters in three or four other localities; some are railroad workers who live at the scene of their work, some are persons who desire to live away from the main colony, or where better quarters are obtainable, and others disperse for other reasons.

¹⁵ Nelson, Raymond E., *The Mexicans in South Chicago* (unpublished study under direction of Dr. Arthur E. Holt, 1928), 16.

TABLE 13

NATIONALITY OF EMPLOYEES IN EIGHT LARGE PLANTS OF BASIC INDUSTRIES
IN CHICAGO AND THE CALUMET REGION, 1928*

Native-born†	Number	Per cent
White	16,902	34.1
Colored	7,379	14.9
Indian	4	†
Foreign-born		
Albanian	37	.1
Arabian	15	†
Argentinian†	2	†
Armenian	55	.1
Austrian†	738	1.5
Belgian†	14	†
Brazilian†	1	†
Chinese	3	†
Cuban	9	†
Czechoslovakian†	1,478	3.0
Danish	33	.1
Dutch	25	.1
East Indian	5	†
English	326	.6
English colonies†	592	1.2
Filipino	8	†
Finnish	13	†
French	23	†
German	933	1.9
Greek	627	1.3
Guatemalan†	1	†
Hawaiian	1	†
Honduranian†	1	†
Irish	681	1.4
Italian	493	1.0
Japanese	2	†
Lithuanian	1,335	2.7
Magyar	731	1.5
Mexican†	5,999	12.1
Norwegian	77	.2
Persian	5	†
Peruvian†	7	†
Polish	5,526	11.1
Porto Rican†	6	†
Portuguese	6	†
Rumanian	544	1.1
Russian†	927	1.9
Scotch†	436	.9
South Slavio†	2,356	4.7
Spanish	424	.9

TABLE 13—(Concluded)

	Number	Per cent
Swedish	673	1.3
Swiss†	28	.1
Syrian	18	¶
Turkish	21	¶
Uruguayant	1	¶
Welsh	45	.1
Miscellaneous†	70	.1
Total	49,636	100.0

* Data combined from nationality reports for the year, or for some date within the year 1928, of Armour & Company, Chicago plant; Illinois Steel Company, Gary and South Works; Inland Steel Company, Indiana Harbor Works; National Tube Company, Gary Works; Swift & Company, Chicago plant; Universal Atlas Cement Company, Buffington plant; and Wisconsin Steel Company.

† In data from plant nationality reports "U. S. white" and "American white" have been classed as "native-born white"; "native-born colored" have been similarly derived. "Czechoslovakian" includes 219 specified as Bohemian and 1,186 specified as Slovaks. "English colonies" includes 375 specified as Canadian and 204 unspecified but probably largely Canadian, 2 from Newfoundland, 1 from New Zealand, and 10 from West Indies. "Russians" include 27 specified as Galicians and 6 as Hebrews. "South Slavic" includes 2 specified as Albanians, 3 as Bosnians, 108 as Bulgarians, 1,209 as Croatians, 12 as Dalmatians, 5 as Herzegovinians, 2 as Jugo-Slavs, 222 as Macedonians, 19 as Montenegrins, 838 as Serbians, and 66 as Slovenes. "Miscellaneous" includes 1 from British Asia Minor, 7 Hebrews, 3 from South Africa, 2 from South America, and 58 unspecified.

‡ Nationality not specified.

¶ Less than .05 per cent.

The entire Gary colony reported 299 Mexican school children in 1928, or 11.5 per cent of the total for the Chicago-Gary area. The origin and principal maintenance of the Gary colony arise out of the employment of Mexicans in the steel mills (see table 3). While some Mexicans have been employed there for a good many years, the greatest impetus came during the years since the depression of 1921. The census reported 3,426 Mexicans and 85 whites born in Mexico, resident in Gary in 1930, or 12.3 per cent of the Mexicans in the region. In 1930, of the 9,007 Mexicans and 132 whites born in Mexico, residing in Lake County, Indiana, 5,343 and 21, respectively, were in East Chicago, the overwhelming majority undoubtedly in the section known as Indiana Harbor. The Mexicans constituted 18.3 per cent of those in the entire Chicago-Calumet area.

II

THE LABOR MARKET

In the rural Southwest, Mexican labor has been the dominant element in the supply practically ever since intensive agriculture developed. Indeed, in smaller numbers the Mexican preceded agriculture, serving originally as *vaquero* and *pastor* for *dueños* of his own nationality or as independent owner of his own flocks or herds. In Chicago and the Calumet region, however, he is a late comer; industries had already reached a high stage of development, and had been accustomed to receiving successive waves of immigrant laborers from Europe and, more recently, Negroes from the South. The wide variety of nationalities employed in the industries which Mexicans have penetrated is best shown in table 13, which represents a sample of approximately 50,000 employees of eight large plants employing Mexicans. In this established labor market the Mexicans are the most recent arrivals, starting at the bottom, serving as a highly mobile and fluctuating labor reserve, but year by year from 1923 to 1929, building up more stable groups of colonists.

The main influx, as was pointed out earlier, from the beginning has come by way of railroad employment, with important stimulation from the steel industry in the early post-war years, and again in 1922-23. From the first appearance of numbers of Mexican laborers in the region, however, some of them have spread out into other employments, notably into meat-packing, but also, in varying degrees, to a miscellaneous group of industries. It appears, then, from analysis of both historical and contemporary situations, that there are really four main divisions of the Mexican labor market in Chicago and the Calumet region, viz., the railroad, steel, meat-packing, and "miscellaneous" labor markets.

RAILROAD LABOR

Chicago is the principal middle western market for track laborers. From the employment district near the Northwestern Station¹⁶ "hoboes," or "gandydancers,"¹⁷ and Mexicans are shipped out in extra gangs and to sections not only in the immediate vicinity, but

¹⁶ The employment offices in this district are located principally along Madison Street for a few blocks west of Canal Street, and along Canal Street, and the parallel streets west of it, in the first block south of Madison. This district is variously referred to here as the Canal Street, or Madison Street, or central employment district. A secondary and much less important cluster of employment

to distant points lying west, north, east, and very infrequently, south. The flow of Mexican track labor is mainly from southwestern cities northward, with strong seasonal flood and ebb tides. The Chicago market, however, has risen to great importance because of its heavy seasonal shipments during spring, summer, and fall, and the annual accretions which make large numbers of this class of laborers available locally at any time. In order to build up the supply of Mexican laborers in the region, railroads have transported families north as well as single men. Some railroads give passes south to track employees who have remained continuously in their employ a certain number of months, but there is so much turnover that many do not qualify for passes. Also, many of the railroads do not run south of Chicago; and at least one railroad with southern lines has abandoned the practice. Said one roadmaster:

We used to pass the Mexicans back south after the season's work until about 1923. There were not many then and we had to cater to them. Now there are more and we don't have to; so we don't do it any more.

In 1927 for the first time, some Mexicans were shipped from Chicago into the Southwest for labor on the tracks, but shipment in that direction has been generally discouraged, partly because it was desired to build up the supply of Mexican labor available in the north, and partly because a very large proportion of Mexicans shipped south seek only transportation to the part of the country where they wish to spend the winter rather than to remain on the jobs which they accept. A labor agent reported that "about 60 per cent of the Mexicans shipped south leave the job after working a day or so."

The central employment district where common labor gathers is the most fluid labor market in the Chicago-Gary region. It is fed by Mexican laborers from a variety of places and industries, and sends them out to an almost equal variety. Railroads which tap the Southwest bring Mexicans to Chicago on their own lines; others secure them, when not available in Chicago, from Kansas City, St. Louis, Omaha, Minneapolis, and other places to which they have made their own way from farther south, or to which they have drifted upon the expiration of a temporary track job. Turnover is high, and there is a strong, ceaseless flow in and out from early spring to late fall. The

offices is located nearby on South Halstead Street for two or three blocks south of Madison Street.

¹ It was reported by some "old-timers" that the term "gandydancer" was derived from an old custom, probably from the "Old Country," of building a fire under a platform, the heat causing ganders standing upon it to dance first on one foot and then on the other. Since hobo track laborers lean on their shovels, standing first on one foot, then on the other, the corrupted term has come to be applied to them.

jobs are often of short duration, and at their conclusion or before, the laborers return to Chicago, soon to seek another job. The same laborer may be sent out to jobs by the same agencies half a dozen times or more during the one season. Employment may alternate between steel mill or packing house and railroad. Most of the men are either single, or have left their families behind. By the end of the railroad season they have either found winter employment or the prospect of it, and remain in the North, or they return to the Southwest or Mexico, to await there the revival of employment in the spring when again they may appear on Canal Street. As one agent observed, "Some Mexicans have been coming back regularly for track work here for the past ten years."

The agencies which ship Mexicans for railroad work are mainly of two types. Some are the usual employment agents who ship Mexicans for a fee. Often this is paid by the railroad, rather than by the men. Other agencies are commissary companies which supply men as a "side line." They are interested in keeping the gangs up to authorized strength in order to maintain at a high level the receipts from sales or board. Some of these companies do not charge fees; others do so at times when conditions in the labor-market enable them to do it. Deductions of the commissary companies for food en route to the job sometimes very closely resemble fees, although they are not so termed.

In the summer of 1928 at least four of the agencies on Madison Street catered especially to Mexican labor. About the same number catered to hobo track labor. Mexican boarding and rooming houses were located in the same building with three of the agencies catering to Mexicans, and a fourth was across the street. On Canal Street were seven agencies catering to Mexicans, and about ten others, some of which at times engaged Mexican laborers. On side streets were a few offices, some catering to Mexicans, but most of them not. The following description is taken from our field notes:

The agencies on Madison Street are located fairly close together, sometimes adjoining each other. This stimulates keen rivalry between the different agencies to get the men, and at times the fees. In front of these agencies there is always stationed a man to attract the prospective laborers' attention to the cards put up on display. The Mexicans are at all times of the day walking up and down, looking over these cards. As they pass along in front of the office the runner calls to them by some familiar name such as *compañero*, *amigo*, or *Pepe*, in fact anything to arrest their attention and make them stop. They then proceed to "buttonhole" them, or take them by the arm and show them the placards. "Where do you want to go? What kind of a job do you want? Do you want to board with a *compañita* or by yourself? We can give you anything you want.

Here is one of our cards; always keep it. Go upstairs and sign up for a *salida*¹⁸ tonight. You will be working in the morning, and have a nice place to sleep tonight."

Until recently G— had a tow-haired runner who was quite popular with the Mexicana. He spoke Spanish like an "old-timer" from the Rio Grande, and therein lay his popularity, in addition to the attractiveness of blond hair to the Mexicana. This *enganchista*,¹⁹ when not standing in front of the office, would go along the street recruiting labor. When a large order was given on short notice he would walk down the street and in a half-hour would be walking back with a delegation at his heels. I once counted eighteen men following him upstairs into the office. He enjoyed the confidence of the men on the street more than any other until [while our researches were yet in progress] he abused a trust and was sent to jail for larceny. Now G— has a young man from El Paso who is quite a success with the *compañeros*.

The S— agents are not so numerous or aggressive. One stands in front and gets them as they come along. Another is upstairs to sign them up as they come in. The quarters are rather bare and not to be compared with those next door which house quite a staff of people. The N— agency has numerous signs in Spanish advertising for Mexicans, but I have not heard their people speak anything but broken Spanish. At this place the Mexicans nearly always stop, read the signs, and pass on. They distrust an employment office where no Spanish is spoken because, as one said, "We do not know what we are getting into." Another said, "I once signed up with an *enganchista* who spoke no Spanish and it cost me \$8 for the job when I had already paid him \$1. He told me to sign something, and I did."

C—, an Italian, has numerous signs in Spanish which are not always correct in either spelling or diction. He frequently puts up signs such as: "*Un travajader serca por la ciudad.*" His Spanish speech is atrocious, even worse than the signs. To the Mexicans on the street, this represents a "half-baked" effort to approach them. When they listen to him they smile and wink at each other.

Some *enganchistas* are not ostensibly working for employment agencies at all. Such a one was a runner for a stage line, who said that he also obtained Mexicans for other stage lines, or for employment agencies which paid him part of their fees.

On the same floors as the employment offices, entered through the same entrances, are three Mexican restaurants. The prices are reasonable and the portions of food served are generous. For a quarter they have as much to eat as they want; it is Mexican food and very welcome to them. It amuses, and also makes one wistful to see them, when they have left one railroad job to go to another, or to some other place, relishing their *tacos* and *tortillas* and other things which they have missed at the boarding house of the railroad. It is here that one hears appreciation of the *comidas nacionales*²⁰ and criticism of the camp commissary, the cook, the foreman, the roast beef, and the *papas secas*.²¹

The remainder of the building, besides the employment office and restaurant, is sometimes fitted up as a rooming house for transients. I am told that there are quite a few steady roomers, but that most of them are men in town after leaving one job who in a day or two will be leaving for another.

Most of the Mexicans who are in the employment district during the day spend the night elsewhere. I have been up and down Madison and Canal streets after five, six, and seven o'clock, and seen very few Mexicans there. The hoboes are there, but very, very few Mexicans after dark. Most of them are either in transit

¹⁸ Departure.

¹⁹ Employment agent; literally, one who hooks or ensnares.

²⁰ National foods.

²¹ Dry potatoes, i.e., not served fresh and hot.

from one job to another or they live in other parts of town. I have often stood on Canal Street and heard the conversation of men who had left their jobs the day before, slept out in the country in the fields part of the night, and arrived in Chicago at five or six that morning, and were ready to go out the following night. Quite a number who come from the country go to the steel mills or the stockyards, and failing to find work there, come to the employment district again to go out on the railroad. I have talked with men from Gary who had lost their jobs there and then come up here.

Canal Street is the real unskilled Mexican labor market of Chicago, of which Madison Street is the offshoot owing to the lack of space in the one block of Canal Street. Of the seventeen agencies in this block, seven go after the Mexicans "tooth and nail," and at least three others ship them at times. Four of those which cater particularly to Mexicans adjoin each other, and the others are close by. They all have signs in Spanish and Mexicans walking past the four are constantly running the gauntlet of five or six *enganchistas*. Four of these *enganchistas* speak Spanish well. Three of them are Mexicans. One with whom I have talked is very intelligent and has seen better days in Old Mexico. He is much more successful in getting men for his office than the rest; these Mexicans, an uncultured and rough laboring class, are still the *peones* of Old Mexico who look up with awe and reverence to a *persona educada*, and are carried away by just a little better speech and language; they often listen to him and brush by the others. Two *enganchistas* are not Mexicans. They speak Spanish fairly well, but their lieutenants who do speak really well are much more successful.

The Mexicans are clustered on the sidewalk in the center between two sets of agencies that ship mainly hoboes. The Mexicans and hoboes rarely speak to each other unless they have seen each other before in some camp or section. When they do speak they call each other by some nickname, and rarely by their given name. Canal Street is quite a meeting place for Mexicans and their Mexican friends. I have often seen them meeting after not having seen each other for months, at times even years. They keep to themselves and talk with each other, standing up, leaning against autos, sitting on running boards and fenders, ash cans, and what not. There are pool halls and refreshment places in which to pass away the idle hours of the day until the hour of the *salida* arrives.

The Mexicans are frequently seen walking up and down Canal and Madison Streets the entire day, reading the signs, talking to their friends, discussing the signs and the jobs. They do not as a rule sign up early in the day, but leave it till the afternoon. Some of them walk past the same spot four or five times in half a day. New signs are always being put up and they are on the alert to pick out what suits them best.

STEEL AND PACKING HOUSE LABOR

In addition to this central district, which is a common reservoir in which unskilled Mexican laborers from a variety of industries and places gather, or more accurately, through which they flow, there are many labor markets in the Chicago-Gary region. Indeed, hiring is so dispersed that in a real sense every plant employment office is a labor market. Where there is a group of plants, or even a single large plant employing large numbers of Mexicans, colonies of Mexicans have sprung up; these feed the labor markets of the industries to which they are tributary. Particularly conspicuous are the labor markets of the steel and meat-packing industries.

The steel industry has built up around it a large resident labor supply. In a series of clusters it has stimulated colonization adjacent to the principal plants from South Chicago to Gary. The Mexicans, like the European immigrants and the Negroes who preceded them, have settled in these labor colonies. From them they go to work daily, usually to the nearest plant so long as work holds out. When unemployed, they visit the offices of other plants in the region wherever they think there may be an opportunity. If successful, they may "commute" some distance from their old residence to the new job.

When local labor supplies, and those which come into the steel district of their own volition, do not suffice, appeals for Mexican laborers are sent to outside labor markets. Before the Mexicans became numerous in the region representatives of several plants went as far as Kansas City and Texas in an endeavor to build up a Mexican labor market. Shipments of Mexican laborers were made both before the depression of 1921 and during the 1922-23 revival, principally the latter. But more recently it has been customary to resort to the local labor market on Canal and Madison Streets. One employment manager, at least, scouted as far as Monterrey, Mexico, exhibiting pictures of his plant, of housing, etc. Of course no contracts of employment were made there, for that would have been clear violation of the alien contract labor laws; but agents were ready to meet any comers at the border. The employment manager of a steel plant described his venture into the Kansas City market as follows:

In 1922 I went to Kansas City to get Mexicans because of labor shortage. A friend of mine who had been with the K— Company told me that there was a crowd at their gates every morning, so I went to Kansas City at once. I went among the crowd telling them what I had to offer in Chicago, and after about twenty minutes was called into the superintendent's office and told not to take away their labor supply. Then I went to an employment agent and through him got the Mexicans and some others. The whites weren't much good so I took the Mexicans largely. The turnover was very high at first. Without women and Mexican boarding houses the men wouldn't stay. So I brought up a woman to run a boarding house and helped her to get it started.

An account of another employment manager emphasized other details:

Between April and August, 1923, I went down to Kansas City to ship Mexicans. We used an employment agent who also obtained labor for a beet-sugar company to get our labor for us. We also shipped from Fort Worth. We advanced their transportation but deducted it from their first pay check. If they remained with us three months, they got it back. At first they were kept in bunkhouses we had used during the strike, but that arrangement has been abandoned. The other companies had their labor scouts near the Mexicans upon their arrival, and took many away from us.

The practice of taking labor away from another employer is of course common, although it frequently provokes resentment, particularly among farmers, who are scattered and whose needs though immediate are not continuous. But it is little resented by railroads; these are generally willing and even anxious that farmers in their territory should have ample labor, and in the Chicago-Gary region they have evidently preferred introduction of fresh supplies of Mexicans from the Southwest to measures to stop the drift to industry. To the employment managers of large industrial plants the building up of a common labor market is more important than the loss, perhaps only temporary, of a number of individuals they have brought into it.

The meat-packing industry, too, has built up its neighboring labor supply. It draws heavily, in addition, from the new "black belt" of Chicago and from the near west side. When local labor reserves run short, the packing plants, like the steel plants, resort to the markets on Canal and Madison streets. So far as I could ascertain, Mexican laborers were not imported to Chicago by packing plants.

MISCELLANEOUS EMPLOYMENTS

The scattering of Mexicans into many employments, evident since they first arrived in numbers in Chicago, has been a continuing process. The present Mexican population of the region, therefore, is characterized by a wide geographical and occupational dispersion, and also, owing in most cases to employment in large numbers by one plant or a group of adjacent plants, by localized concentrations. Since the principal employers of Mexican labor have been indicated in tables 1 and 3 it will serve convenience and clarity to treat in this section the employments of Mexican laborers not presented in the earlier tables, even though some of these may have been there classed as "miscellaneous."

In Chicago the miscellaneous employments draw their Mexican labor largely from the Hull House colony. Indeed, many of these plants are located within the colony and to the west or north of it.²²

²² In the present and immediately succeeding footnotes, plants employing Mexicans in 1928 are listed, followed by the approximate number of such employees, if known to us. Obviously such lists cannot be complete; however, it is believed that they include practically all plants which employed any appreciable number of Mexicans, and a considerable proportion of those which employed only a very few. Among these were: Marshall Field bedding factory, 75; Empire bedding factory, 2; Rubber factory, 1; Barrett Company, 22; Corn Products Company, 20; Deering Works, 15; Tractor Works, 45; Triangle Electric Company, 1; Beaver Paper Company, 1; an underclothing factory, 3; Griess Pfleger Tanning Company, 25; Stewart-Warner Speedometer Corporation, 12; Cracker Jack Company, 50; National Biscuit Company, 25; Sawyer Bros. Biscuit Company, 4; Birk Candy Company, 12; Curtiss Candy Company (all plants), 66.

Others are located south of the colony, east of Halstead Street, extending intermittently as far south as the stockyards. These include a confectionery plant, some metal plants and small packing plants, and one or two of the larger plants which employ Mexicans in small numbers.²³ Near the Brighton Park colony, in addition to those employed at Crane Company and in nearby railroad yards, were a few foundries which employed Mexicans.²⁴ A few plants in South Chicago besides South Works and Wisconsin Steel Works, employed Mexicans.²⁵ In Indiana Harbor, a foundry and a chemical plant were the principal employers of Mexican labor, in addition to the two steel plants, a cement plant, and the repair department of the express car company listed in table 2.²⁶ At Gary two metal plants employed small numbers of Mexican laborers.²⁷

In addition to the miscellaneous employments enumerated here, it is known that there are small groups of Mexican railroad workers here and there in the Chicago-Gary region. Those employed in maintenance of way of railroads have been included in table 1. Some Mexicans are also employed in other departments of the railroads, such as yards, roundhouses, and freight houses, who are not included here. An extremely small number were engaged in the construction industry; the number of Mexican bricklayers, for example, probably did not exceed a half dozen. A number of plants which had employed Mexican laborers but were not employing them in 1928, are not included in this treatment.²⁸ Nor are Mexican clerks and others employed in Mexican business establishments included.

While Mexican laborers have entered a wide variety of employments in the Chicago-Gary region, in most occupations they are of course but a handful. For example, the almost complete absence of

Bremertoli Radio plant; Sloan Valve Company; a number of small furniture and auto painting establishments; a number of hotels, and restaurants, including the Blackstone, Drake, Congress, Palmer House, Stevens Hotels, and Raklios restaurants which employed a few in the kitchen, as bell boys, or as porters; a few small bakeries, restaurants, and tailor shops, principally those catering to Mexican trade.

²³ Among these were: Peanut Specialty Company, 50; Zimmerman Federated Metals Corporation, 25; American Bridge Company, 30; Fruin Drop Forge Company, 15; Advance Packing Company, 1; Libby, McNeill & Libby, 6; Darling Packing Company (west of yards), 15.

²⁴ Among these plants were: Western Foundry, 5; Steel Castings Company, 8.

²⁵ Among these were: By-Products Coke plant, 21; Federal Furnace plant, 8; Talley Mold and Stove plant; Sherwin-Williams Paint factory, 38; Inter-State Iron plant; two small brass foundries employing about 15 and 8, respectively, and a brake-shoe factory employing about 50, and perhaps others.

²⁶ American Steel Foundry, 5; American Chemical plant; and perhaps others.

²⁷ Sheet mill, American Sheet & Tin Plate Company, 33; Gary Screw and Bolt Company, 20; American Bridge Company, 8; Gary Hotel, 5; Mattress factory, 2; and perhaps others.

²⁸ Illinois Malleable Iron Company, American Can Company, Union Drawn Steel Company, and others.

Spanish signs from the secondary employment district in the first two or three blocks of South Halstead Street indicates how little Mexican labor is sought for hotels and restaurants. Only one Mexican boarding house was observed in this district, and a lone agency catering to Mexican railroad and beet workers moved to Madison Street just as our researches commenced. Signs appealing for general farm laborers or skilled mechanics were never in Spanish. Except as beet workers, and two Mexicans whom an agent said he had once shipped to an Illinois farmer, Mexicans are apparently not used in agriculture.

The recruitment in Chicago and the Calumet region of laborers for the sugar-beet fields of the Middle West is a fairly specialized operation. Some workers, particularly single men, are secured through the general employment agencies in the central employment district. For the most part, however, the labor departments of the beet-sugar companies, or their labor agents, keep lists of the names and addresses of families who have worked previously in the fields of their districts, or who are likely to work there the following season. The contacts to ensure their availability in the spring are made by correspondence or by personal calls at individual homes. These families are to be found in all of the larger Mexican colonies from Hull House to Gary.

The seasonal fluctuations in numbers of Mexicans in the region, which were pronounced in the early years after their entry, have become less marked. With the increase in numbers of Mexican families in the area, the acclimatization of the Mexicans and selection of those who are willing to adjust themselves to northern conditions, the Mexican population has become much more stable in numbers and personnel. The winter decline in outdoor employment, particularly on the railroad tracks, sends large numbers of single men southward. Their numbers are partly compensated for, however, by the return of the sugar-beet workers to winter quarters.

Including all the known numbers of Mexican employees in Chicago and the Calumet region in 1928, and making allowances for those whose numbers are unknown, it may be estimated roughly that the number of employed Mexicans during that year fluctuated around from 13,000 to 15,000.

THE MOVEMENTS OF MEXICAN LABORERS

It is clear from the preceding description that although each division of the Mexican labor market relies partly upon individual reservoirs of labor, they also rely partly upon common, or at least overlapping sources. The various markets are linked together in

TABLE 14
 LAST PREVIOUS EMPLOYMENT IN THE UNITED STATES OF 554 MEXICANS EMPLOYED IN A STEEL PLANT AND 533 MEXICANS EMPLOYED
 IN TWO MEAT-PACKING PLANTS, CHICAGO, 1928, CLASSIFIED BY STATE AND BY THREE PRINCIPAL INDUSTRIES*

State	Employed in steel plant, 1928						Employed in meat-packing plants, 1928						Total by states	
	Previous employment:						Previous employment:							
	Railroad	Steel	Packing	Miscellaneous	Unknown	Total	Railroad	Steel	Packing	Miscellaneous	Unknown	Total	Number	Per cent
Illinois.....	159†	201	18	21	2	401	160†	11	163	83	7	374	775†	71.3
Texas.....	14	1	2	10	3	30	6	.....	3	4	21	34	64	5.9
Missouri.....	7	1	6‡	.....	5	19	5	.....	17‡	1	19	42	61	5.6
Indiana.....	1	23	.....	2	.....	26	1	3	1	3	10	18	44	4.1
Michigan.....	4	.....	.....	7	.....	11	1	1	.....	2	6	10	21	1.9
Kansas.....	10	.....	.....	1	.....	11	1	.....	6	1	1	9	20	1.8
Nebraska.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	3	.....	9	.....	4	16	16	1.5
Colorado.....	.....	6	.....	4	.....	10	.....	.....	1	1	1	3	13	1.2
Pennsylvania.....	.....	6	.....	1	1	8	1	.....	.....	.....	2	3	11	1.0
Minnesota.....	.....	.....	.....	4	.....	4	.....	.....	4	.....	1	5	9	.8
Wisconsin.....	.....	2	.....	.....	.....	2	.....	.....	1	.....	6	7	9	.8
Ohio.....	1	6	.....	.....	.....	7	.....	.....	.....	.....	1	1	8	.7
Iowa.....	1	.....	2	2	.....	5	.....	.....	.....	1	1	2	7	.6
California.....	2	1	.....	.....	1	4	.....	.....	.....	.....	2	2	6	.6
West Virginia.....	.....	1	.....	2	.....	3	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	3	.3
Wyoming.....	2	.....	.....	.....	.....	2	1	.....	.....	.....	.....	1	3	.3
Montana.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	1	1	.....	.....	.....	2	2	.2
Arkansas.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	1	.....	1	1	.1
North Dakota.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	1	.....	.....	.....	.....	1	1	.1
Oklahoma.....	1	.....	.....	.....	.....	1	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	1	1	.1
South Dakota.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	1	.....	1	1	.1
Utah.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	1	.....	1	1	.1
Unknown.....	2	5	.....	3	.....	10	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	10	.9
Total.....	204	253	28	57	12	554	181	16	205	47	84	533	1087	100.0
Per cent of total in the employment, 1928.....	36.8	45.7	5.1	10.3	2.1	100.0	34.0	3.0	38.5	8.9	15.6	100.0		

* Data obtained from employment cards of Wisconsin Steel Works and Chicago plants of Armour & Company and Swift & Company. A small number whose last previous employment was in Mexico are omitted from this table.

† Includes a small but appreciable number of persons from railroads with a Chicago terminal, when state in which last employed was not specified.

‡ May include some from Kansas City, Kansas.

varying degrees by the many individuals who go from one to another in search of employment, and by the habitual resort to the great common labor market in the vicinity of the Northwestern station of companies in need of more laborers than apply at their offices.

A cross-section of the flow of Mexican labor into the steel and meat-packing industries is presented in table 14. Examination of the last previous employments of 554 Mexicans employed in 1928 at a South Chicago steel plant reveals that 45.7 per cent of them had come from another steel plant located, in the great majority of cases, in the Calumet region. The next largest group, comprising 36.8 per cent of the total, had come from a railroad. Only 5.1 per cent had come directly from a packing plant.²⁰ The meat-packing plants, like the steel plant, reported the largest group as coming from other plants of their own industry, and the next largest group from railroads. From other packing plants, principally local, had come 38.5 per cent of the Mexicans employed, and from railroads, 34 per cent. Only 3 per cent reported last previous employment as in a steel plant. It is probable that applicants for employment are prone to report experience in the same industry elsewhere, even though it was not the *very last* previous job which they had. The effect of this tendency is to increase the number reporting last previous employment in steel or meat-packing, as the case may be, chiefly at the expense of previous railroad employment. Nevertheless, as is confirmed by observation and inquiry, the situation is revealed with substantial accuracy by the table.

The major flow of Mexican laborers into these two industries, then, is by way of previous railroad employment either in Illinois or on a railroad with a Chicago terminal. This is shown with striking clarity in the table, which reports 35 per cent of the Mexicans in these three plants from that source. The extensive inter-plant movement of Mexicans within each separate industry, shown by the high proportion reporting previous employment in the same industry and locality as that in which they were engaged in 1928, is clear proof of the fact that Mexican labor is part of the local fluctuating labor reserve. The smallness of the flow of Mexican labor between the steel and packing industries is evident from the low percentage which each industry drew from the other; the localization of the meat-packing industry at a distance from the steel mills accounts for this

²⁰ Of the Mexican employees of a nearby coke by-products company, 17 reported a railroad as last previous employer, 7 a steel plant, 2 a packing house, and one each had come from construction, a coke, and a cement plant.

relative immobility of labor from one to the other, probably more than any differences in the labor operations of the two industries. Whatever the causes, the fact is that the influx from the railroads divides to feed two separate labor pools.

The wide geographical dispersion of previous employments is also shown by table 14. Literally it was from coast to coast and from Mexico to the Canadian border; the majority came directly from another Illinois employment, but the minority came from widely scattered places in the United States. The occupational routes by which Mexicans entered their 1928 employment in three steel plants and two meat-packing plants (including the plants in table 14) are shown in table 15. This shows more fully the wide variety of industrial experience of a minority as well as the main channels by which the majority came. It will be noted that the combined total of Mexican laborers directly from "farms" and "beet farms," was 7.7 per cent. Those from "farms" were principally from cotton farms in Texas, or from sugar-beet farms in the Middle West. The use of *last* previous employment of course conceals the fact that most of the Mexicans came originally from agriculture. Furthermore, the figures in tables 14 and 15 apply to persons employed in the spring and early summer after sugar-beet work had begun; a winter figure would probably have shown a somewhat larger number of industrial employees drawn from beet work. However, it appears that sugar-beet workers have played a smaller part in building up the industrial colonies of this region than they played in Detroit prior to 1928.

Accounts from a few individuals will serve to illuminate the cold statistics of the movement of Mexicans into the region. The first account surveys Mexican emigration as seen from a Mexican *pueblo*, from the days of border contacts to the more recent movement directly to the North and East:

In the early days before Diaz was deposed and there was work enough in Mexico for all, one heard only of the states of Texas and California. The few Mexicans that left Mexico went there and wrote back from there. After a while we heard of New Mexico and Arizona, but beyond that there was no more United States to us. I remember distinctly with what great surprise we received a letter in our *pueblo* from a Mexican who had gone to Pennsylvania. "Oh, where can that be! That must be very, very far away. It must be farther than New York, close to England." It was not till years after the war that we heard of St. Louis, then of Chicago and Illinois. Things were very good, I heard, so I came here direct from Laredo.

Another Mexican, like many, had been lured originally by the war labor shortage, and had come by way of the Texas cotton harvest.

TABLE 15

LAST PREVIOUS EMPLOYMENT, BY INDUSTRY OR OCCUPATION, OF MEXICAN EMPLOYEES OF THREE STEEL PLANTS AND TWO MEAT PACKING PLANTS OF CHICAGO AND THE CALUMET REGION, 1928*

PREVIOUS EMPLOYMENT	1928 EMPLOYMENT			
	Steel	Packing	Total	Per cent
Railroads	800	181	981	40.5
Steel	500	16	516	21.3
Packing house	122	205	327	13.5
Farms†	110	6	116	4.8
Street and construction.....	75	---	75	3.1
Beet farms†	71	---	71	2.9
Foundry	50	---	50	2.1
Mining	46	---	46	1.9
Cement	41	2	43	1.8
Tanneries	19	---	19	.8
Oil fields	17	---	17	.7
Stone quarries	15	---	15	.6
Auto manufactures	12	---	12	.5
Coal mines	12	---	12	.5
Machine manufactures	---	11	11	.4
Flour mills	9	---	9	.4
Shoe factories	6	---	6	.2
Coke ovens	5	---	5	.2
Textile industries	5	---	5	.2
Chemical works	4	---	4	.2
Clerical	4	---	4	.2
Bakery	4	---	4	.2
Oil company	3	---	3	.1
Furniture factory	3	---	3	.1
Electric company	3	---	3	.1
Lumber and planing mill	3	---	3	.1
Miscellaneous†	35	28	63	2.6
Total	1,974	449	2,423	100.0

* Data from employment cards of Mexicans employed in the summer of 1928 at Armour & Company, Chicago plant; Swift & Company, Chicago plant; Illinois Steel Company, Gary and South Works; and Wisconsin Steel Works.

† Includes two each from candy manufacturing, carpentry, gas company, paint manufacturing, ranch, restaurant, shoemaking, Y.M.C.A.; one each from barbering, blacksmithing, brick company, bricklaying, fruit store, garage, grain company, grocery, laundry, Mexican government, musician, post office, salt company, street railway, teacher, textile manufacturing, watchmaking; and thirty unspecified. Since different plants did not report uniformly, some of those listed as "miscellaneous" by one plant, may have been listed under an occupational name by another plant. All specified in this footnote were employed at a steel works.

‡ "Farms" undoubtedly includes a good many from "beet farms."

In its continual movement in search of employment this case is typical:

I left Mexico early in 1918. Things were very quiet there then. In the United States labor was scarce and wages were good, so I came. With the need for *braceros mexicanos* they came over the border as fast as they could. They came

by train, by stage, by auto and wagon. Many came on foot. I came by way of Laredo from Matamoras. I worked as a cement worker in San Antonio. That was the best job I have had since I came to the United States; it was good work and good pay. When the time came for picking cotton, things were slowing down a little in San Antonio and I thought I could do better in the country. The pay in the cotton fields was very good then—\$3.50 a hundred pounds. I stayed in Texas till the middle of 1920. Things got bad then and I came to the North. My first winter I did not have work for a month and a half and it was bitter cold. At last after many sad weeks I got work with a steel company. But it was not steady and they took advantage of the hard times to bring down the wages of the men. I worked about half the time and was laid off the other half.

On one of my days off I came to Indiana Harbor where I had a friend who worked for the steel company and went to the employment office. The next morning I went again. Since I knew some English and had experience in steel mills I was put to work. I worked in my good clothes that day; I did not mind that but was tickled to death to get steady work.

He was still employed in the same mills when interviewed in 1928. Another Mexican had also entered the United States for the Texas cotton harvest, but with depression had returned to Mexico until late 1922. With business revival in 1923, he had signed with an *enganchista* in Fort Worth to work in steel mills at Indiana Harbor; 1928 found him employed in a nearby cement plant. The father of a Mexican schoolboy had come as a cigar-maker to Chicago after learning his trade in Tampa, Florida.

Some Mexicans have gone about the country with a desire to rove, as well as to seek work—*vagando y aventurando*,⁸⁰ as one of them put it. Others had come directly to Chicago from Mexico.

Enganchistas played an important rôle in the movements of many, particularly in their longer moves.

In 1920 I happened to be in Ciudad Juarez right across the line from El Paso. There I fell in with an *enganchista* from the Santa Fe. I went to work for the Santa Fe and in a year's time I was in Kansas City. When the work gave out there I went back to El Paso. There, in the spring of 1923 I fell in again with another *enganchista*. He represented some steel mill people in Illinois. I came to Illinois in a special train with hundreds of other Mexican laborers who had been picked up like myself.

In 1928 the Mexican quoted was working in a steel plant near the one to which he had been transported five years earlier.

A third Mexican whose entry had been by way of Texas cotton, had reached the stockyards district of Chicago after work in the sugar-beet fields of the South Platte Valley, Colorado, and of Minnesota, and steel work in Erie, Pennsylvania, and in St. Louis. A fourth

⁸⁰ Wandering and adventuring.

left Texas cotton for railroad employment in Nebraska, Kansas, and Montana. In Montana he tended sheep, after which he came to Chicago, then to Gary.

The streams of Mexican immigration to the United States flow in general from south to north. But a young steel worker of South Chicago, like many others, had crossed from one stream to another after arrival in this country. His employment and journeyings from his entry to the United States in 1918 to arrival in Chicago in 1923 included a copper mine in New Mexico, Los Angeles, Imperial Valley agriculture, Fresno grape-picking, San Francisco, sugar beets near Garden City, Kansas. Friends and relatives are frequently responsible for such shifts; in this instance, the presence of an uncle in the beet fields of the Arkansas Valley accounted for the shift from California.

Another way in which the same individual not infrequently enters different streams successively is by returning to Mexico, then, upon arrival again at the border, choosing a different route northward. A young Indian type from Michoacán who was employed in the steel mills of Indiana Harbor illustrates this:

When my parents died in 1912, I went from my town in Michoacán to Mexico City to get work to support my two younger brothers. In 1917 I heard about the United States, so I came. I went to work on the Pennsylvania Railroad, then returned to Mexico. But I returned to the United States and went to California. I returned again to Mexico, and came back to the United States. This time, in order to see another place, I came to Gary.

Only a very small proportion of the Mexican adults were born in the United States. A Texas Mexican in the packing houses had been an automobile mechanic in Cotulla, south of San Antonio. An interpreter in a steel mill was a Spanish American from Mesilla, just above El Paso. Another Spanish American, born in Rancho de Taos and educated at a Presbyterian school in Albuquerque, held a good position at an electric power plant. A third Spanish American, a common laborer seeking a job on Canal Street, represents a different type of native-born "Mexican" found in the Chicago-Gary area. After employment on cattle ranches in New Mexico and Texas he came to Chicago, worked on railroad sections in the vicinity, tried the beet fields, was a porter in a candy store, a dishwasher at the Stevens Hotel, and at the time of our interview was seeking a railroad job in Pennsylvania, possibly with an eye to subsequent employment in a Johnstown steel mill where a friend was working.⁵¹

⁵¹ See Field Notes, page 259.

There is a good deal of movement of Mexican laborers between the Chicago-Gary region and Detroit and vicinity, depending on reports of work available in either area. Indeed, the labor manager of a railroad charged, probably correctly, that runners for bus lines stimulated such movement in order to obtain more fares by spreading rumors, justified and unjustified, of employment available in the "other" area. Within the Chicago-Gary region and without, therefore, there is ceaseless milling about of those Mexicans, a large part of the total, whose employment is not steady. Employment, now here, now there, is the shifting magnet. Said a Mexican who worked in a packing house:

They come and go with the work. Some go to the best fields and others come from the railroads to work in the stockyards or the steel mills. When they stop work at one place they wait for some time to be put on, and if they fail to get put back, they go to the track or wherever else they may find work.

WAGES

The wage rates in 1928 of Mexican laborers in Chicago and the Calumet region were standardized only to a limited extent. A well recognized series of wage levels existed, however, with railroad track labor at the foot, packing house labor next above it, and labor in the steel mills at the top. The rates offered for track laborers in the Chicago labor market were not uniform. In general, railroads operating south and west of Chicago paid less than local railroads or those operating east of Chicago. The rates offered in Chicago on the southern and western lines usually ranged from 35 cents to about 39 cents an hour. Extra gang laborers on these lines were usually offered 35 cents an hour; small differentials, rising on at least one railroad to as high as 41 cents, sometimes favored section laborers and those with continuous service of varying duration. Local railroads almost uniformly paid 40 cents an hour; the Chicago Junction, however, which serves the stockyards district, paid 42 cents, or practically the same as the basic rate paid by the packing houses. The prevailing rate offered by railroads operating east of Chicago was 40 cents an hour on both track and section. Rates, both higher and lower than these, were paid to track laborers on some portions of the railroads with Chicago connections; the rates given here are only those offered to attract labor from the Chicago market.

The basic rate in the larger packing houses was 42½ cents per hour, but a considerable proportion of Mexicans received from 45 to

47 cents because they worked at numerous jobs which, because of their disagreeable or heavy character, or for other reasons, carried higher compensation. A number received wages which were above 47 cents. In the large packing plants those who started the week on Monday were guaranteed a minimum of 40 hours of employment during the week. For those engaged after Monday the guaranty was correspondingly reduced. For those Mexicans covered by the guaranty the minimum weekly earnings were therefore \$17.

The charge was made, particularly in the vicinity of the stock-yards but also in the steel district, that Mexicans worked for less than other nationalities. For example, an Irish-American policeman in the district made the specific charge:

They pay the others 42½ cents an hour; Mexicans will work for from 33 to 35 cents an hour.

Corroboration of the truth of this in some instances came from the superintendent of a small packing house who recited his own experience:

We pay Mexicans about 32½ cents an hour for common labor, and colored labor 40. But you know, it is the demand—if we need him and he won't work for 32½ cents, we pay 35 or 40 cents.

But in the large packing plants wage rates were standardized and the practice was to pay the same for the same job to persons of whatever nationality. The statement of an employment clerk in a large packing house was correct, so far as I observed:

In the smaller packing houses the Mexicans work for less than the other nationalities, but in the large packing houses they are paid the same.

Of course, undercutting may take place by the man's doing more for the same money, as well as by his doing the same work for less. One Texas-Mexican asserted that this was in fact what had happened in an operation with which he was familiar:

The Mexicans work cheaper, too. No, they pay the same, but we pull from 1900 to 2100 pounds instead of 900 as the truckers did before.

The correctness of this assertion, however, was not ascertained. Sometimes there was rivalry with national pride stirred. At a large steel mill Mexicans on tonnage were reported to have been unwilling to allow the shift of American workers to surpass them, saying among themselves, "*No nos dejamos—los gringos!*" But this is not what is meant by wage-cutting. The defense of his countrymen by a Mexican rounds out the picture of what takes place:

They say that a Mexican comes here to work for less. That is not so. He will work to make an honest living and to eat and clothe himself and his wife and children, but not "for less." He goes from place to place, first where there is work, then to where the work pays best. That is not working for less.

Mexicans, under economic pressure, do accept less than standard rates, which some employers offer to them even to the point of nationality discrimination. But there was no indication that in the Chicago-Gary region Mexicans followed a practice of offering their services for less in order to secure the jobs of others. The presence of a large number of laborers with low standards of living of course has a depressing effect upon wage rates, and it is in this more impersonal fashion that Mexican immigration exerts its effect.

In the steel industry basic rates varied somewhat according to whether the job was a "day" job or a "turn" or "shift" job; the latter usually paid a little better. Eight-hour jobs usually paid from 45 to 50 cents per hour, and ten-hour day jobs 44 cents an hour. Some metal plants paid basic rates of 39 and 40 cents an hour. A large foundry which prided itself upon its high wages paid truckers 44 cents an hour, but common Mexican labor in the foundry began at 49 cents and was advanced to 54 cents after one month.

Of course all of the skilled and semi-skilled Mexican workers (see table 21), and some who were rated as unskilled as well, received more than the minimum rates. In steel plants, groups of Mexicans working on tonnage rates frequently earned from \$6 to \$7 a day. Among the steel and metal plants, the smaller plants frequently paid less than the larger.

The range of pay of Mexicans in the miscellaneous industries was wide. Most of the plants visited paid from 40 to 45 cents an hour; a few paid more, and a few paid less.

Mexican women received less than men in the very few instances in which data were secured. A confectionery factory which started men at 45 cents an hour started women at from 30 to 35 cents. A packing house paid about the same basic rate to women. A candy factory which paid piece rates reported that the weekly earnings of Mexican women ranged from as low as \$12 to as high as \$35 or even \$40.

A very few Mexican women served as domestics in American homes. Rates of pay were usually about \$7 or \$8 a week and room and board. One reason for the absence of domestic servants was the heavy preponderance of young males. In Mexican boarding houses there were frequently domestic servants who also served as prostitutes.

No data were obtained on annual earnings of either men or women. The data on weekly earnings were meager. Weekly earnings ranging from \$12 to \$22 per week and averaging \$19 were reported by forty-four clients of a birth control clinic. These figures omit both the unemployed and the better paid workers, the former because there were no earnings to report, the latter because of the selective character of the group. Britten and Constable reported that in 1923 "the average income of the Mexican workers is less than that of the usual dispensary patient."²² Hughes, reporting on *family* earnings of 199 representative Mexican families in 1925, stated that 30 per cent earned less than \$80 per month, 56 per cent less than \$100, and 80 per cent less than \$125.²³ Frequently Mexican families include several workers, which makes comparisons difficult.

LABOR RELATIONS—ATTITUDE OF EMPLOYERS

MISCELLANEOUS INDUSTRIES

The majority of employers in Chicago and the Calumet region, outside of steel mills, packing houses, and railroads, do not employ Mexicans. With satisfactory supplies of laborers of other nationalities available they have not resorted to Mexicans, or, their initial experiences with them having been unsatisfactory, they prefer not to employ more. The attitude of such employers in either case is hostile to Mexican labor. Thus, an executive of a wire company said:

We use no Mexicans. We have more refined work and have not had to resort to the greasers. They use them for rough work and around blast furnaces.

Another executive disparaged them similarly, saying: "They're just cheap labor." At a third plant it was said:

We want intelligent labor; that is why we don't use Mexicans. X Company wants cheap labor; that is why they use them.

But as a matter of fact, the basic wages at both plants were the same. The state free employment bureau seldom handled Mexican labor. In 1924 one of its staff stated to Redfield that "none of the employers he had anything to do with would hire a Mexican and he no longer tried to place one. Many employers, when they called him up to apply for a gang of men prefaced further remarks by saying, 'But don't

²² "Our Mexican patients at central free dispensary, Rush medical college" (Chicago, January, 1925). Reprinted *Nation's Health*, VII, no. 7, 453.

²³ Hughes, Elizabeth A., *Living conditions for small-wage earners in Chicago* (Department of Public Welfare, Chicago, 1925).

send us Mexicans.'” Apparently conditions had changed little by 1928, for the agency still placed Mexicans rarely. The employment officer of a tannery, though he employs a few Mexicans, nevertheless tells a charitable agency: “If they are Mexicans, don’t send them”; and the gateman at a small drawn-steel plant said: “We used to have half a dozen Mexicans but they were no good. Maybe we didn’t get the best, but we don’t have any now.” The manager of a similar plant stated, “We choose men with homes and families first, so the Mexicans rank low in our scale of employees.”

Among employers with Mexicans on their payrolls in 1928 the usual wide range of attitude toward employees of that nationality was found. The doorman at a biscuit factory employing a very small number of Mexicans said: “They are too slow; it seems they’ve never seen machines before.” And an executive of a candy factory which employed Mexicans seasonally agreed that the Mexicans were “not as fast as other nationalities.” The employment manager of a speedometer factory with a dozen Mexican employees said:

No, we don’t want any more Mexicans. They don’t seem to be productive on piece work requiring nimbleness. I thought they would stand heat well in the anti-rust department, but they didn’t. They don’t generally leave because their piece-work earnings are low; we generally have to tell them to leave.

The superintendent of a bedding factory, however, which employed a high proportion of Mexican women on its sewing machines, found these Mexicans to be rapid workers.

The Mexicans are as good as any nationality except possibly the Germans. I like them better than the Italians. On the same machines we are now getting 35 per cent more output than we did in 1910. It used to be time work; now it is bonus work and we have better operatives. The Mexicans don’t have to be driven as much as the others. They will be spoiled in another generation like the others. The second generation of Italians and others is looking for easy work.

In between these unfavorable and favorable judgments there were more mixed views. The employment manager of a rug factory which used Mexicans for machine tending stated:

The Mexicans are good, bad, and average, about the same as the others. Perhaps they are a little slower on production on piece rates. The old Mexicans are dead stuff. We take only the young ones born or raised in this country.

A foreman at a railroad car repair shop observed:

Some of the Mexicans are very good. We can’t get good white labor at our common labor rate, 35 cents an hour. It all depends on what you pay; if you can pay only 35 cents, you can expect to get somebody worth not much more

than 35 cents. I would rather have a good white gang at 50 cents, but the administration tells us what to pay; they want cheap labor. We have a good Mexican foreman who gets the work out of the Mexicans.

At a confectionery factory it was said:

The Mexican men are either very good or very poor; they stay well or not at all. They are not so clannish as the Italians; they don't form gangs and fight among themselves. They work in heat, which they stand well.

On rougher, heavier work, comparable to labor in the steel mills, two employment managers with wide experience with Mexicans reported them as good as the average, or perhaps better. At a cement plant where many Mexicans are employed as machine tenders at piece rates it was stated:

The Mexicans are as good as the average of the workers who come from south and eastern Europe. They are as safe workmen as the average, and steadier than the average; there is less turnover and absence among them. They rarely quit except when they are laid off.

And an executive of a coke by-products company gave similar commendation:

I prefer the Mexicans to the others—Italians, Croatians, Serbs, etc. The Mexicans are cleaner in person and about their work. They are safer, too. The Mexicans are anxious to learn English and to get ahead. Some of the Croatians have been here fifteen years or so and don't speak English now. The Mexicans follow directions; they are tractable.

Those among the persons quoted above who spoke most favorably of the Mexicans were usually the employers of the largest numbers of them. Wider experience with Mexicans, and possibly the type of work for which they were used, probably contributed to the favorable judgment and a more favorable attitude was a factor in the employment of larger numbers.

RAILROADS

Very few railroads in the Chicago-Gary region were without some Mexican laborers. But at the offices of one of them the characteristic antipathy of those without experience was expressed:

We've been able to get along without Mexicans so far.

According to employment men handling Mexicans in the Chicago labor market, the principal merit of Mexican track laborers was their steadiness, their willingness to remain on the job. In this respect they were rated as markedly superior to both hoboes and Negroes, though the hoboes were usually regarded as better workers. Steadiness is an

advantage, not only to the railroad, but also to the commissary companies which board or sell supplies to the gangs. The following opinions of a Canal Street agent, a roadmaster, a track foreman, and a railroad construction engineer illustrate this viewpoint:

The Mexicans have it all over the colored; they are more steady. They don't lay off like the niggers when they have money.

The Mexicans are good steady workers; niggers may not work even if they are on the gang.

The Mexicans are good workers. They work steadily and you don't have to keep after them like the Negroes. The Negroes lay on the shovel too much.

The Mexicans are now our best available labor supply. They work hard and get the work out. You do not have to keep after them all the time. You can depend on them to be at work day in and day out. The hoboes do the work better but they are always moving around. They are not reliable.

Another Canal Street agent, commenting on the introduction of Negro and Mexican track labor on an eastern railroad which began during the war, said:

At first the Negroes did more work than the Mexicans. But now the Negro is "educated" and shirks; now the Mexicans are better. The gandydancers know track work better than 50 per cent of the foremen; but they simply aren't steady. A foreman who knows how, can get more work out of them than he can out of Mexicans. But the Mexican will stick 50 to 75 per cent better than the gandydancer. That's his chief merit; the white man can do more, but he's shifting.

Similarly, in a maintenance of way office which only four or five years before had opposed the use of Mexicans, it was stated:

We like the Mexicans very much because they stick. Some of the roadmasters now give preference to Mexicans in their requests for labor. There is a lot of overhead expense in handling hoboes. They work a pay day or two, then come in to get drunk, then ship out again. The hoboes are more experienced track laborers than the Mexicans, but less steady.

Others expressed views similar to those which have been quoted. But a maintenance of way engineer who agreed approximately with these, nevertheless ordinarily preferred hoboes.

The turnover of Mexicans is less than hoboes; the hobo is a better worker although he doesn't stay. We take the hoboes when we can get them; then we take the Mexicans. Or, if it is a desert place, we send the Mexicans because probably they'll stay.

Divers reasons for the unsatisfactory character of hobo track labor were advanced. The employment agent first quoted suggested that their unsteadiness arose partly from the fact that they will accept

the more lucrative employment of highway building where it is available, an employment which Mexicans had not entered in the North.

The Mexicans don't do hard road work here, but if we sent gandydancers out, they would slip over to it.

Lack of physical condition, ascribed variously to bad nutrition, age, and prohibition liquor, was also attributed to the hoboes by a roadmaster and an Italian employment agent, respectively:

The hoboes are not so strong and well fed any more.

The real old hoboes were better than the Mexicans, but now are not. After "probiash" the hoboes aren't worth a nickel; they are weak and have poison in their systems.

Other reasons for the unsteadiness of hobo labor, including unsatisfactory food, wages, and monotony, were given by two American track laborers at the hall of the maintenance of way union:

The boarding companies are known as "stomach robbers." They serve the cheapest cuts of meat that the stockyards have, kinds you've never eaten: pigs' noses, cows' lips, etc. There is plenty of food, but it is of bad quality and the men can't stand it very long. They have to come to town to get food and to forget it.

It isn't only the conditions and the food. Even where they are good, it is the life in the camps; seeing the same men all the time; getting up to go to work and after ten hours going to bed with nothing else to do; and the monotony of tamping ties. A man has got to come to town and raise hell or get drunk to forget it.

In Chicago terminal we could get plenty of white men, experienced men, at 50 cents an hour. But now these men either get other work or work only a little. They don't stay steadily on the tracks; they go up or they go down.

Some thought that "The Mexicans are all right to follow up with the shovel, but the gandydancers are better on laying steel." Others specifically asserted the contrary. Only two persons, an employment man in the steel industry, quoted later, and a minor official of an eastern railroad which used few Mexicans in his territory, expressed fear of Mexican treachery:

I think they are treacherous and untrustworthy. They are pretty dangerous characters; worse than the Italians in their worst days. You get white labor as long as you can; then you get the Mexicans. The whites don't want the camp life.

There was one complaint that even the Mexicans moved about too much, although less than hoboes. A Canal Street agent was one of four or five to raise this objection:

The Mexicans were steady, but this year they seem to be more shifting. They are becoming "short stake" men like the hoboes. They used to want all-year jobs and ask for sections. Now they are satisfied with short seasonal jobs if the rate seems all right. They will quit a track job at 35 cents to seek a job listed at 40 cents. They may find the 40-cent job was for a kind of labor they can't do, or that only a couple of men were wanted. Then they return to another track job, having lost time between.

This is a familiar criticism by farmers where wage rates are not standardized.

A larger number of persons thought the Mexicans about as good as any class of labor "available," opinion appearing universally to favor Mexicans over Greeks, sometimes to favor them over Italians, but rarely to regard them as equal to the Irish, Germans, and Swedes of former days. The Greeks seem to have been particularly obnoxious to their employers: witness the following statements by men connected with two different railroads—both of whom commended the Mexicans:

The Mexicans are much more trustworthy than the Greeks or Italians. Whenever we got all Greeks in one gang, we had to watch the Greeks and the foreman. They would either get in cahoots with the foreman or try to intimidate him to do what they wanted. Greek foremen were worse; they were crooked as snakes.

We like the Mexicans better than the Italians, and much more than the Greeks. They work much more. We have only one Greek foreman now on the whole road, and when he goes he will be the last. Our experience with them has always been bad. They get to work with the Greek grocers and store men, and mulct the men, the railroad, and everyone they can, including the boarding companies if they can.

In addition to steadiness, their willingness to accept conditions which other nationalities might reject and their lack of group cohesiveness in striking were pointed out as desirable characteristics of Mexican track laborers. For example, a labor agent reported:

The gandydancers won't stay in a camp if they don't like its looks, but the Mexicans will accept it.

A roadmaster stated:

The Italians began leaving and we began using the Mexicans in preference to the Italians. The Italians were always wanting something, 10 hours pay for 9 hours work, or higher wages, etc. The Mexicans find out what's paid, and if they take the job, they accept it. If they are dissatisfied and quit, they ask for their time and leave without bothering the others. We've even had cases of discharging a brother or a partner and the other one stayed. But the Italians! if you discharge one worthless skunk, the others may leave with him. The Italians were always leaving for something better.³⁴

³⁴ See also the section on Collective Action.

An Italian labor agent made similar observations concerning both Italians and Greeks, and added by way of commendation of the Mexicans:

Other nationalities talk about their country, their wives, etc., while working on the ties, but the Mexicans do not.

A paymaster expressed an opinion which though unusual in some details, was fairly representative in its general judgment.

The Mexicans do the work and say very little. If they are not satisfied, they come and get their pay and say nothing. The Italians are always suspicious and think we are trying to cheat them out of time and money. The Greeks come into this office drunk lots of times; the Mexicans never that I can remember. The Mexicans are as good or better than the Italians. They are much more reliable than the Greeks. The Greeks were always fighting, drunk, and kniving each other.

When it comes to building up a new track the Irish could do it better than the others. The old German and Irish crews could certainly lay out the ties and spike on the rails better than any I have seen. But they are all gone; they are policemen or firemen.

One may observe in the variety of opinions, the influence of the flow of successive nationalities through the occupation of track laborer. Not all of the opinions cited are in entire harmony with the following summary, but this runs through the views expressed like a dominant strain: The Irish were fine but they became municipal officials. The Italians, when other opportunities appeared, became dissatisfied and left. The Greeks were particularly aggressive and of course very rapidly passed through the occupation. The hoboes, of miscellaneous nationalities, were good but they would seize other opportunities for better paid seasonal employment, or simply move from job to job without personal interest in their work or ambition. The Negroes were good until they became "educated." And the Mexicans now were more ready than any other group to accept the conditions of track labor without protest, individual or collective.

Opinions on how to handle Mexican track laborers varied. At one extreme was the labor agent who said:

If the supervisor knows how to handle the Mexicans, they are the best track labor in the country today. If a foreman carries a gun for fear of the Mexicans, they know he's afraid of them, and they lay down on the job. You can rawhide the Mexicans, bawl hell out of them, and the next day tell them they are fine, and they'll work for you. But if a foreman don't know how to rawhide them, they just stand around.

Among those with whom I talked in the Chicago-Gary region, the preceding speaker was alone in his views. The more general attitude was that:

If the foreman speaks politely to them and knows how to handle them, he can get a lot of work out of them. If he tries to drive them with a pick handle he can't get much.

The special agent in charge of labor for an entire railway system expressed a similar judgment:

Mexican labor is better than Italians and Greeks if it is handled right. You can't cuss the Mexicans out or call them down in front of the others or they may quit and take the whole gang with them. It is best to take them aside and tell them their work is not satisfactory. When we began employing Mexicans we sent a man around to the foreman to advise them how the Mexicans should be handled.

MEAT PACKING

The large meat-packing plants of Chicago rely much more heavily upon colored labor than upon Mexican. The former are preferred in the semi-skilled and skilled positions; the Mexicans are used principally on the unskilled operations. Partly because the Negroes employed in 1928 were a more selected and experienced group than the Mexicans, the judgment of persons concerned with their employment was more favorable to them in matters of skill.

They are not as adept with the knife as the colored. When there is time, the Negroes can be seen practicing with a knife on operations where their friends are working, but the Mexicans don't do this. There are not many Mexicans on the endless chains.

There was also criticism that the Mexicans were generally not big enough for some types of work requiring strength.

We can use Mexicans if they are husky, for trucking, etc., but so many of them are little fellows. It is almost like hiring women. They are active enough but we need real men on some kinds of work.

Two small packing houses were particularly outspoken in their preference for colored employees over Mexican common laborers:

We take Mexicans only when we can't get anyone else; we prefer the colored. The Mexicans are lazy and shiftless on the average. They are not as active as the colored.

We have about fifteen Mexicans who are all right, most of them truckers. We have a Mexican oiler and a steam fitter who are skilled workmen and are good; they have some education. But the foremen say, "Don't send me any more Mexicans; send me some more colored."

The large plants were more favorable to the Mexicans than the smaller plants. If less ambitious than the Negroes, the Mexicans were satisfactory as common laborers, more regular in attendance, and less

likely to go south for minor reasons. The employment managers of two plants commented:

The Mexicans seem to have a little less absenteeism than the Negroes and to have a little more ambition than the low grade colored. The colored are satisfied with two or three days' work per week, but the Mexican wants more. But as laborers they are far below the whites. The colored are indolent; they go to sleep waiting for a job. They spend their money on railroad fare; I think they would go south if a [pet] dog died. The Mexicans don't go south so readily. We don't have much trouble with the Mexicans because of lack of sobriety.

The Mexicans are more regular in attendance at work than Negroes. The Negroes want only a little money and to dress well and to sleep; they're not ambitious for work. One foreman now says when requisitioning labor, "Send me a good Mexican or an experienced casing man." The Mexicans compare favorably with others as to output. But they don't seem to get beyond the job they're doing. They want more money, but don't want to learn other jobs; they like to stick to the old jobs they know. The majority of Mexicans who are discharged, are discharged for smoking, incompetency, or disobeying instructions. I've never discharged a Mexican for intoxication.

Three employment men pointed out the "adaptability" of the Mexicans, in that they would accept disagreeable work more readily than others, even than the Negroes. Interestingly, the Mexicans worked readily in temperatures of 10° below zero.

The Mexicans work in the hide cellars, freezers, and sweet pickle departments where there are disagreeable conditions, evil smells, etc. We found the Mexicans adaptable.

In some departments the foremen ask for them now: in the hide cellars, the sweet pickle, glue, and refrigerating departments. The Negroes say it's cold, and very few go. The Mexicans like the cold and ask for it. It pays a little better. They also work in the hide cellars and fertilizer department. They go there more readily than the colored; the Mexicans don't know the other [less disagreeable] departments so well yet.

STEEL MILLS AND FOUNDRIES

In studying the northward migration of Mexicans, their penetration into the steel mills is of particular interest. At most of the mills which employ them in large numbers they were regarded as satisfactory employees. The relatively more favorable judgments on Mexican laborers expressed in the steel than in the meat-packing industry undoubtedly reflects the greater dependence of the former on Mexican and of the latter on Negro labor. In the steel industry, as in others, it is probable that race antipathies of employers and relative contentment of employees of various nationalities as well as their productive capacities entered into these judgments. Illustrative of the more

cordial views are the statements of an employment manager and a rolling mill superintendent, half of whose department was Mexican:

Our foremen are getting to like the Mexicans. As the rolling department foreman said recently, "The Mexicans are all right; I'm more sold on them every day." The boiler-house foreman now won't have anyone except Mexicans. Italians are not good steel labor; not as good as the Mexicans. Mexicans stand the heat as well as anyone, or even better. They are getting into pretty good jobs in the steel industry.

The Mexicans are not inferior to the others in cleanliness. We used to white-wash around the Poles' houses because of uncleanness. The Mexicans use showers more proportionately than do the others. They always pay back our Good Fellow Club loans, and that's more than some of our whites do. And they are very grateful: one of them came back several times to thank me for a loan, saying his wife kept insisting that he return to thank me.

The Mexicans are the best class of labor we get now. They are better than the colored or the south Europeans, though not than the old north Europeans. They are a nice class of people to handle. If the American people will just treat them right, we'll have a fine class of people and a fine class of labor. They stand heat well and stand hard work. We find a number of big strong Mexicans who are as able as the others to do the work requiring strength. They are honest and trustworthy.

The employment manager of one of the largest works said:

The foremen liked the Mexicans from the first because of their unsatisfactory experience with the Negroes and shifting whites; they say: "Give us some more Mexicans." The Mexicans are better than the Negroes; they are no good. We replace the Negroes gradually by Mexicans, but the Negroes we retain are good workmen. The Mexicans are grateful and honest. I advanced \$5 to them in Kansas City for their lodging or food for the day before shipment; they came to me offering to pay back the 15 or 20 cents per man after they had received wages in Chicago. They have all paid back their loans from the Good Fellow Club. I think the Mexican is a "safe" man. He doesn't jump when the foreman talks to him as some of the Europeans used to jump; he moves over to do what he is told, but without jumping; consequently he is safer. The Mexicans study their rule books on safety carefully. Their absenteeism is not high. The Mexican wants to work. Our open hearth furnace is only an overflow furnace; but many Negroes will wait around just for that irregular work. But the Mexicans want steady work. They buy good quality things and put their money in the bank, or send it back to Mexico to pay their folks' debts, or repay the loans which they used to come to the United States.

A works superintendent observed:

The Mexicans are clean and well dressed. They are quick and alert; they get out of the way of things coming toward them. They may not be quite such good workers on heavy work as some Europeans because they are not so large and strong, but they are steadier. And they are not so servile as some Europeans. If I go out in the mill, they may look at me and say good morning, but they don't cringe and curtsy as some of the Europeans do. I don't like men who do it, just because I am boss. I want men who can stand on their own feet.

The general view of Mexican laborers in the large steel mills that have had the most experience with them, then, was distinctly favorable. More often than not they were regarded as superior to Negroes and southern Europeans. Mexicans were usually said to be honest, trustworthy, steady, clean, and safe workmen who stand heat well. The judgments might have been less favorable some years earlier before mechanization had progressed so far in the elimination of work requiring physical strength, yet this is not entirely certain. While the statement that Mexicans are often small was several times made in objection to them in foundries, one steel executive pointed out that "Some of the Mexicans are strong, even though not large"; and another called attention to the fact, already noted, that mechanization has greatly reduced the need for great physical strength. Particularly interesting in comparison with statements frequently heard concerning Mexican laborers in their own country or in southwestern agriculture that the more they are paid the less they will work, were the statements that absenteeism of Mexicans in the steel mills, with wages several times as great, is less than average for the plant. Figures available from one steel mill confirm this strongly. For the twelve-month period ending March 31, 1928, the average number of turns lost per month per man on the payroll was .949; the average for Mexicans was only .665. The average monthly separation rate, on the other hand, was 5.25 per cent for the plant, and 7.84 for the Mexicans, showing their greater mobility. In view of the fact that they are largely common laborers, comprising the elastic element in the labor supply, their higher separation rate is to be expected.

Another measure of the stability of Mexican employees is presented in table 16, which is a composite of data from a steel plant, meat-packing plant, and foundry. Nearly one-fifth of the Mexicans employed in 1928 had begun their service with their respective plants between five and six years earlier. Nearly two-thirds had begun service more than two years earlier.

There are of course employers who do not rate Mexican laborers so highly as the persons quoted above. At one steel plant comparable to the others, which employed a fairly large Mexican force, it was said, for example, that:

The Mexicans are slow and dull. They cause more than their proportion of fatalities. The Mexicans don't understand English and are of low intelligence; or, if not, the language difficulty makes them seem so. The south and east Europeans are better than the Mexicans. The Italians are good, though the Sicilians are too temperamental. We take Mexicans only when no one else is available.

The others have gone in for them; we have not. Perhaps they get some better Mexicans for that reason. They evidently decided they wanted to rely on Mexicans; we don't except when we have to. We may do it some years hence if we have to. Probably the reason is the different policy of different companies.

This attitude was atypical of steel men. The employment manager of another large plant took a middle view, both commending and criticizing Negro and Mexican laborers:

The Negroes shine in coke oven work where there is much dust, heat, etc. The Mexicans are not as good as the Negroes in standing the heat. They are not as strong as the Negroes.

The Mexicans are not very intelligent; they are about like boys. But the Mexicans will move up from menial labor like the rest. They are steadier, and as they get assimilated to American ways they will be better than the average Negroes—although the Negroes we have are good.

TABLE 16

LENGTH OF SERVICE WITH THEIR PLANTS OF 1,681 MEXICANS EMPLOYED BY THREE LARGE PLANTS IN BASIC INDUSTRIES OF CHICAGO AND THE CALUMET REGION, 1928*

Years	Year service began	Number	Per cent
Less than 1	1928	299	17.8
1-2	1927	317	18.9
2-3	1926	319	19.0
3-4	1925	134	8.0
4-5	1924	234	13.9
5-6	1923	308	18.4
6-7	1922	34	1.9
7-8	1921	4	.2
8-9	1920	22	1.3
9-10	1919	4	.2
10-11	1918	5	.3
11-12	1917	0	---
12-13	1916	1	.1
Total		1,681	100.0

* Data obtained from Chicago plant, Swift & Company; South Works, Illinois Steel Company; and McCormick Works; covering 93.4 per cent of all Mexicans employed. In combining the data from three plants it was necessary to assume arbitrarily that persons originally employed, for example, in 1926, had been employed between two and three years; although in individual instances this may involve some error, the distortion of the table as a whole is probably slight.

Reports on Mexican labor in large foundries were not so favorable as those from the steel mills. Employment men at two foundries said that they were not hiring more Mexicans in the foundries, although they might use them for other types of common labor. Said one of them:

We find the colored workers are better in the foundries. The work is hot and heavy, and there are no spells as in steel. We have a better selection among colored workers, for more of them are employed in other foundries than Mexicans [therefore, more Negroes have had experience]. But the Mexicans are better than the colored as to turnover and absenteeism. The Negroes want their money all the time; the Mexicans don't care if they never get paid. We have selected the strongest Mexicans and they stick here. They know that if they are once laid off they won't be taken on again here. The management here doesn't want them. We now have a good labor market, so we can replace the Mexicans with more desirable labor. They are slow-motioned; they don't get into piece work; they are not good on machines and in assembling work. Also, we have Polish, Austrian, and Lithuanian foremen who prefer their own people. Besides, the Mexicans don't assimilate as to language or citizenship. Perhaps one reason X— [at a steel mill] speaks well of them is that he brought them in and feels responsible for their success. They're not healthy and well fed; they are much better after they have been employed here a time and got fed up.

The observation that the Mexicans "are better workers when they get fed up" was made three or four times in the Chicago-Gary region; the same view had been expressed occasionally in other parts of the United States with reference to Mexicans engaged in track labor. It is probably founded on fact. The employment man at a third foundry, also with considerable experience with Mexicans, was not favorable to Mexican foundry labor:

We can't use small men in the foundry and many of the Mexicans are small. Some foremen say they can't get the production out of the Mexicans. When employment slackens, the Mexicans are the first ones off. They are not Americans. It's not a good time to replace with other labor, however, because you are likely to just be getting somebody else's inefficient labor.

At a small foundry with a half-dozen Mexican employees, however, the Mexicans were well regarded by the foreman:

My three laborers are as good as any I have. They are better than the Italians; they are not sassy; they do as you tell them. The colored are sassy, too. I like the Mexicans.

I have made three molders from laborers. One here now is a good molder, one of my best. His output is better than average. I would teach molding to any Mexican who asks. The trouble is that they are usually afraid of molten iron; that is why they stay on the tracks.

At another foundry it was stated that Negroes were employed there in preference to Mexicans because the Negroes had experience. "But from the standpoint of capacity and intellect the Mexicans are preferable."

The variation from plant to plant in proportion to Mexican employees depends on a variety of factors. Generally it was the larger plants which undertook to import labor when local supplies were diminished and which consequently enrolled the largest proportions of Mexicans. Also the types of labor operations at different plants vary somewhat and require different proportions of common labor; at the time of this study the proportion of Mexican immigrants at the grade of common labor was larger than in most of the other immigrant nationalities. The personal attitudes of management, whether preconceived or based upon experience, affect very materially the proportions of different nationalities in each plant. Thus, some prefer Negroes, and others prefer Mexicans for common labor. These attitudes are subject to change, as, for instance, that of one of the steel men whose very favorable opinion of the Mexicans was quoted earlier. In 1920, eight years before I talked with him, he had reported to a fellow employment manager that "The Mexicans do not prove satisfactory, but they are the best we can get. They are unsteady, slow, lazy, and want their money all the time." Objections of present employees to introduction of, or to working beside, another nationality, examples of which will be given later, are sometimes recognized by management, perhaps at times even exaggerated, and so they operate as a bar to its employment; more often, however, these objections are overridden.

The preference of management for different nationalities among its employees, for variety's sake, also sometimes plays a part. Of this preference, which applied sometimes to the plant as a whole, sometimes even to departments and groups, the following instances were noted in statements of persons connected with management:

At a foundry, it was said, "The Mexicans were first employed here to dilute colored labor." At a large steel products works the superintendent said, "When we got [up to 10 per cent colored] employees, I said [to the employment manager], 'No more colored without discussion.' I got the colored pastors to send colored men whom they could guarantee would not organize and were not bolsheviks, and when a Negro brought another Negro to the plant I told him if the new man wasn't as good as he was, I would let both of them go." Commenting on the figures which showed the proportion of Mexican employees to be similarly stabilized, he said, "You can say that this company has decided by malice aforethought to keep Mexicans at about a certain percentage of its employees." A packing house executive stated: "The first Mexicans that came to us came with a gang leader and insisted on going to work together in the 'freezer.' Then as soon as the gang leader got a better job, he moved them all away. So now we don't bunch them up any more." A foundry executive, whose plant in this region employed very few Mexicans, had a somewhat different policy: "We don't try

to favor any one nationality. We try to keep them balanced; we seem to get along better that way. But we do let them work in gangs in the same department." An employment manager of a plant which at the time was increasing its proportion of Mexican employees and decreasing the proportion of Negroes stated: "It isn't good to have all of one nationality; they will gang up on you, even the Scotch. We have Negroes and Mexicans in a sort of competition with each other. It is a dirty trick, but we don't have work that will break a man down, and we don't ask him to do more than he can. The competition is chiefly a matter of steadiness on the job, not taking off extra holidays, etc." A steel mill executive said: "The nationality reports are useful in times of labor trouble, and we try to keep the different nationalities scattered." An assistant employment manager in a large plant stated: "I believe in splitting them up. Then they don't get to feeling as though they owned the place and that you are depending on them. Some of our foremen like the Mexicans and ask for them. But we occasionally send them a colored or other man for the gang. We feel we have a right to do that."

With reference to these, and similar practices, it was broadly stated by a merchant in the steel district in 1928 and a social worker concerned with the unemployed in 1924, that the Mexicans were desired by industrial employers as a sort of "strike insurance":²⁵

The Mexicans come in and go out. The factories and mills want to have as many around as possible to prevent strikes; if there are a couple of thousand waiting for a job, those who are working won't strike.

Most of the large employers employ a few Mexicans; they usually employ a few of the newest, lowest class of laborers to help keep down wages and avoid strikes.

That the policy of maintaining nationalities in certain proportions at any given time is sensed by Mexican employees is indicated, for example, by the comment of one of them on his experience in the employment office of a steel works:

Of a group in the employment office they chose only one Mexican. They have a certain percentage of Negroes and Mexicans and they employ them only in these proportions.

The range of opinion among employers of Mexicans presented in the preceding sections reflects the various attitudes which prevailed in 1928. The attitudes are important per se; the rationality, or foundation in experience, of these opinions is not a primary concern here. As estimates of the ultimate industrial capacities of Mexican laborers with greater experience, training, and selection, they are not generally reliable, particularly those judgments which are adverse or set limits to the capacities of Mexican laborers. The favorable judgments, combined with the statistics of increasing use of Mexicans in

²⁵ See also section on Collective Action.

industries of the Chicago-Gary region, are sufficient to show that Mexican laborers have demonstrated their capacity in industry, which, under conditions of brisk labor demand, has competed with agriculture to attract their services.

LABOR RELATIONS—ATTITUDES OF MEXICANS

The "cash nexus" is the principal determining factor in the scale of job preferences among Mexicans in the Chicago-Gary labor market, although of course other considerations also partly determine the occupation of any individual Mexican. A Mexican clerk in a Madison Street employment agency indicated the general opinion which favors steel, packing, and track employment, in the order named:

The Mexicans like steel work best, but they have to know some English because there you work by yourself; but on the extra gangs on the railroad you don't have to know English. The Mexicans like the packing houses; if I had packing house jobs, and no other agency had them to offer, all the Mexicans would come to me.

The analysis of a steel worker is illuminating of the attitude of "foot-loose" single men:

It is not a question which industry they prefer, but mainly two other things. It is, "Where can I find work soonest?" and "Where do they pay the best?" Now when they come here they like to work for the X steel products company because it pays best; but if there is no work soon, they will work at the steel mills or the car repair plant. They keep away from the car repair plant [where wages are lowest] as long as they can. But even that is better than the track. The track is one of those places of last resort. As for the beet fields, they are only for those in despair and the greenhorns that come up from Mexico.

These judgments represent the dominant opinion. However, many individuals have reasons for both liking and disliking their particular jobs, in whatever industry, or indeed, for an entirely different scale of preferences for themselves. The variations, as well as the general opinions, will appear in the quotations which follow.

The general tenor of opinion concerning their work in the steel mills is illustrated by these statements of Mexicans:

They like it even though it is hard and hot. It is steady and pays well. The Mexicans like steel because it is warm in winter. It is too warm in summer, but they keep the job so they will have it in winter. Steel is the hardest, but it pays the best and is steadiest.

The work is very hot in the open hearth, but it is the best in winter. It pays well, sometimes \$7 and \$8 a day.

For many Mexicans, however, who constituted the elastic element in the labor supply, steel employment was not steady. Indeed, it was a young Mexican on his way to work at the very mills referred to in the first of the preceding quotations who made the complaint:

Wages [earnings] are low here. Yes, 52 cents an hour is good—if you have a job at all.

For others, the work was too heavy or otherwise objectionable.²⁵ Then there were those who thought longingly of the life on the family *rancho* in Mexico during times of peace. Three young Mexicans on their day off from the mills strolling along the streets of South Chicago, dressed fashionably in a manner reminiscent of the Filipinos of California, said they had come to the United States to make money and had done it but “the work was too heavy.” They would rather live in Mexico, even with less money, “when it gets quieter there.”

There were some who preferred employment at the packing houses despite some acknowledged advantages of the steel mills. Said one of them:

They like the packing houses better than steel because there is not so much hard work. In a [steel products] factory there is no eating for eight hours. They pay piece work in gangs and the others holler at him if one wants to stop.

Another Mexican pointed out other advantages of the packing houses, indicating appreciation of the effort to stabilize employment:

There is steadier work in the stockyards than at the foundries. You can get work at the stockyards after two or three days off, but not at the foundries. Also they guarantee forty hours of work a week at the stockyards. I never got a guaranty payment but I know some who have.

What some Mexicans found satisfactory, others did not like. For example, one laborer who had been working steadily for two years on the night shift in the freezer, said:

I like the work because it is regular and pays well. It is cold and hard, but I can stand it. We work from four in the afternoon till twelve, one, or even as late as three or four in the morning. It is very hard to sleep at times, but I get used to it.

But other Mexicans thought the freezer was “too cold,” or objected to alternate heat and cold. The disagreeable character of some jobs at the packing houses and other places was noted but acceptance was more or less obligatory.

The first Mexicans in the packing houses worked in the glue factory. It was a smelly job but they had to take it.

²⁵ See, for example, pp. 260, 261, 266.

Even work on the tracks suited some best, particularly if steady work on a section. The man who spoke most enthusiastically about track work was one who, having experienced the hardships of unemployment, found security for his family at one of the box car camps in the Chicago area:

I like the work at the steel mills. It pays well; it is very hot and heavy but I could stand that. Then I was laid off; I did not have work for three months and I was desperate. Finally I landed here; I have been here four years.

The track work does not pay so well but it is steady. Out here we get our coal and water free. That makes it very nice in the winter. I remember very often how we would suffer from lack of heat in the winter. In the summer we have ice and that is a great luxury. We have no rent bill to pay and that makes it very much better than in town. There is always plenty of fresh air and sunshine and the children like it here because they can play in the open country.

The complaint that work on the track was too hard in comparison with other occupations was made to us only by a Mexican who was then operating a small restaurant. The liberty of track work was praised by one who preferred it in this respect to industry:

There is one good thing about working on a railroad section. On most of them you can puff a cigarette once in a while, but if you work in a factory, it is "No smoking" all over the place. I don't envy those at the packing houses or steel plants even if they have steady work. I like a little liberty.

This was a point of some importance to the group gathered in the pool hall on Canal Street who "reminisced" concerning the practices of different foremen:

There was one foreman on the Northwestern who would not let us smoke while on duty. He told us we were being paid for working and not for smoking; if we wanted to smoke, we had a lot of time after the work was through. You can imagine how much time we have after working ten hours, then two hours for our meals, and by the time we wash up it is time to go to bed. We work pretty hard and have to turn in early or they will be carrying us to the hospital.

Yes, they are afraid that if some official passes by on the train and sees us smoking they will think that is all we do. Those fellows never did a lick of hard work in their lives; that's why they think smoking on the track is a waste of time. Let them do it once and see.

But, as a Mexican with a family who worked on the track acknowledged, "The town Mexicans sort of look down on us. They are much more prosperous." Or another, who had worked in many parts of the United States from Texas to the steel mills of Pennsylvania, and who had enlisted in the United States army during the war, observed:

Now if I still want to do rough and unskilled work I can always ship out any night or day to the railroad camps or the beet fields. But that is a waste of time and gets you nowhere.

The preceding quotations, like others applying to jobs in steel and packing industries, emphasize that, together with the rate of pay, steadiness of employment was a great desideratum with the Mexicans. To a large proportion of them in the Chicago-Gary region unemployment and under-employment were realities which they had constantly to face and frequently to experience. Both men with families and those without were affected. A young single Mexican, an Indian type hand shoemaker from Michoacán whom I met on the streets of South Chicago, had found no employment at his craft, for in the United States shoes are made by machine; he had worked varying, but considerable lengths of time in the sugar-beet fields, on the tracks, in a steel mill. His complaint was like that of many another in a similar situation:

I want same work for two, three years in same place. Then I can buy clothing and food. If I haven't money I know another check is coming. I want work because I must have money in winter. If I have no money, I die of cold or starve in Chicago.

There were also the pathetic efforts of age and youth to circumvent by subterfuges the selective practices of employment men and thus to secure work. A Mexican on Ashland Avenue told his story:

Here they will not give an old man work. I am strong but my hair and mustache are gray. Once I fooled them; I put my cap over my ears, down, and I got a job. But they soon let me go. There is little for an old man to do. I clean some pool parlors and get my meals and *refrescos* free. I live with some friends; they are kind to me.

When the father of a family died in the beet fields of Michigan, the family came to Chicago, where they soon became a charge upon the charities near the stockyards. However, the oldest boy, 16 years of age, was eager to contribute to their support. Said his mother:

Porfirio thinks that he could find a job if only he had a suit of overalls and jumper. He says that all the men at the packing house wear overalls and jumpers. Overalls and jumper would make him look bigger; he is as big as most Mexican men.

There was a tendency among Mexicans in the Chicago-Gary region to drift away from employment in the sugar-beet fields if they could secure industrial employment. There were the usual attractions of industry and urban life and we heard the familiar complaints against sugar-beet work and the conditions surrounding it: that it was arduous, the earnings low, the housing bad, the relations with employers unsatisfactory. Their unemployment during the winter was also a cause of distress. It was such an important factor in bringing them

upon the charities, that at least one district worker, and probably others, advised them against return to the beet fields. As this manager of charities in a district with a large Mexican colony said:

When the Mexicans come to us we say, "Try to get yourself a steady job. Don't ever go to the beet fields again. Your children are out of school, you have no furniture, and no winter jobs." We recommend the stockyards to them. We would also like to get them away from seasonal railroad work. If they work steadily for the same railroad they can get work in the winter, but if not, we try to get them a factory job.

As long as there is labor demand with seasonal fluctuations, and assuming that the advice is followed (probably it often merely reinforces an existing preference), the effect of this counsel is to increase the Mexican colony in the city and to bring fresh seasonal recruits from the Southwest the following year.

Food was a problem of labor relations only for those Mexicans who worked on extra gangs of railroads, or as single men in the beet fields. On some extra gangs the commissary company provides board; on others, the men buy supplies and do their own cooking, sometimes individually, sometimes cooperatively in small groups. Whether or not board is furnished is, therefore, a very important, sometimes deciding factor in acceptance or rejection of a particular job. With a variety of tastes, cooks, and companies providing board, there was an equal variety of opinion, ranging from high praise of some camps to bitter condemnation of others. Two track workers looking over the listings of jobs of the Canal Street agencies gave us in succession the range of experience and preference:

I have worked in some pretty good camps. In Missouri at one camp where the board was fine, the foreman was a jolly good Irishman, who came to talk to us and learn Spanish after supper. We had a good Chinese cook and he certainly knew what we wanted and gave it to us. On the other hand, I have been in other camps where the food was so poor it made us sick. There was one camp out of St. Louis where the food was so bad all of us had stomach trouble all the time. Many had to leave on that account; I stayed ten days and then I left. In the other camp most of us stuck till the extra gang broke up.

I prefer boarding, on the whole, to eating meals by yourself or with some others. You are always sure you will eat and you nearly always get enough. If you go it alone, it always takes some time and I would rather have that time to spend smoking and resting in the evening. When I am through with my work I want to be through and not have to work more even if it is for myself.

His friend who came up during the conversation was of an opposite viewpoint:

It is my idea that when you go out to work on the track [with extra gangs] or the beet fields, you can always take care of yourself best. In the first place, it does not take over ten or fifteen minutes to fix up something for yourself. You

can always make some bread or tortillas, fry some chops, or make some good soup. You can buy good Mexican things from stores you know and have your choice for a nice meal. It is always best on the section, if you are near town, to board with a family of Mexicans you know, even if you have to walk. That solves your troubles and you always eat well with them. There are always some around; it is easy to find them.

Sometimes there was the problem of preference for accustomed foods mingled with the complaints of camp board. For example, four Mexicans along Canal Street liked their Italian foreman on the section where they had last worked but they objected to the food:

They must think we are Italians or Greeks; if it wasn't macaroni and spaghetti, it was roast beef and potatoes. Never any gravy with the meat; everything was dry and never any fruit. No wonder Pancho got sick eating that stuff. I hope I never have to eat those dry roast beef sandwiches for lunch any more.

No special effort was made to ascertain the attitudes of Mexican laborers toward the miscellaneous industries which employed them. A variety of reasons including both preference and necessity have led Mexicans to seek such work. Without suggesting generalization, one man's experience of a type which perhaps would not readily come to mind may be cited:

I like the work at the candy factory. It is very light. I do not like the work at the stockyards; the odor there is terrible. The candy factory is hot but there is no bad odor; everything is kept spotlessly clean.

An opposite situation was described by the employment manager of a tannery.

There was a high turnover among the Mexicans when they were on our wet work, in the hide rooms, etc. They didn't like it and stayed only a short time. They stay all right on our finishing work.

There was also objection to the dust in the atmosphere at a cement plant, just as some objected to the dust and smoke of some steel work.

In the industrial life of laborers, the foreman is a very important man. Frequently he is the object of the Mexicans' criticism.⁸⁷ At the packing houses, for example, there was complaint, which, while couched in the plural, had especial reference to a certain foreman:

The work is very hard and disagreeable in the packing plants; years ago it was much better, but now they drive you too much. It's too much on the go all the time. All the nationalities have to work hard, but it seems to me that we Mexicans get more than our share of the grief and abuse. The foremen know

⁸⁷ See also II, 15.

that we know very little or no English. They make us work extra hard and we get the bad jobs. Then they curse us more than the rest, because they think we do not understand. But they make a mistake; we resent it deeply.

When this complaint was mentioned to the plant employment manager, he corroborated it as to the particular foreman, indicated that the company had meted out discipline for it, and cited another illustrative grievance:

I know the foreman; he curses them all. We have laid him off for a week several times. He is one of the best foremen we have; he makes money for the company.

One Mexican who could not talk English came back to me during the morning, asked for paper, and wrote out his grievance. The foreman, thinking that this man and the other Mexicans with him could not understand English, had told another foreman to give them such a job that they would quit. So instead of using them for moving wool, a light job for which they were hired, he sent them to the vat room and gave them heavy, disagreeable work. The result was what the foreman desired—namely, the men quit. But the foreman was reprimanded for doing this.

Complaint was also made once of foremen of their own nationality:

They are hard taskmasters and drive you all the time. I do not mind working but I will not be servile to them. And they want you to be servile. I am not used to that.

Complaints were also made against foremen in a cement plant:

At the cement plant the dirtiest and hardest work is given to the Mexicans. There have been fights inside the mill and the Mexican goes to jail.

It is significant that Mexicans in the Calumet steel region, like those in Bethlehem,²⁸ sometimes noted a difference between the foreman and those above him to whose discipline he was subject. A steel worker observed:

The *mayordomos* make distinctions. They give the Mexicans the heavy work and the Poles *suave* work with better pay. The office makes no distinction.

Another steel worker in another portion of the region, a small Indian from Michoacán, gave two further illustrations, both of grievances, and of the distinction in the mind of the Mexicans between foremen and company:

The company is all right but they [the company] never know what the foreman do. When you are employed, the safety man from the office tells you to do certain things even if the big boss from the office tells you to do something else; but some of the foremen tell you to do it anyway. If you don't, he gives you your time. But if you tell the superintendent who has to sign your slip, he gives the foreman hell and sends you back. But in four or five days the foreman may move you around and tell you there is no more work to do.

²⁸ II, 15.

A lot of the foremen take \$5 or \$10 from men to get them good jobs at the mill. That is the way the new men get good jobs and we get moved to other jobs. The company is all right. If you go to the company and tell them he gets hell. They discharged two foremen a week ago for taking money.

And another Mexican, referring to the sale of jobs, similarly exonerated the company:

They do not like it; they frown on it. They have publicly disgraced their foremen and discharged them for doing it.

A detailed account of selling a job to Mexicans was told by an American:

They told X that he would get a job at the steel plant if he would ask for the job and act as if he could speak no English. He did so and was taken into a room and told that if he would pay \$10 a month they would fire someone else and give him a job.

Protest was made against a foreman who was said to have made a place for his son as crane operator by reducing to common labor the Mexican who had held the job.

The instances cited of foremen who cursed their Mexicans, gave them "the dirtiest and hardest work," and sold jobs were typical of the complaints.³⁹ Giving of tips in the form of money, liquor, labor on the foreman's house, sale and purchase of raffle tickets, were also cited to me as means by which jobs were retained under pressure of some foremen.

The good and bad opinions of foremen at the same plant were mixed, yet comprehensible:

They say the *mayordomos* at the steel mills are devils. I worked there for a while; they were all right then.

The foreman is very good to my boys and they like him very much. They think he is a fine man; he likes the Mexicans very much.

I work at the cement company. They treat the men right there. You do not have the foreman on top of you all the time. You are told what to do and you do it. As long as you do no one bothers you. I sweep up piles of rubbish and cart them off.

On the track also, there were foremen for whom there was praise and others for whom there was condemnation. Of the latter, two were the subject of the following remarks on Canal Street:

³⁹ Sale of jobs at Ford's in Detroit was also reported to us. Extra Ford badges for sale at \$10 each—with prices higher when the traffic would bear it—were exhibited to us. The usual method of first obtaining them was for a qualified applicant to go through the routine of obtaining employment several times, using a different name each time. The management knew of such practices and made efforts to check them.

Do you remember that foreman who had us work in his garden and clean up the house after hours? If you didn't do it you didn't have to, but you certainly paid for it on the job the next day. He never asked the Italians or the Irish to do it. It was always us and he called us "*amigos*"! He certainly was a hard one to get along with; I left him after the first week.

Do you remember that old Irishman we worked for on the? You remember how he would always work us ten, fifteen minutes over, each night, and it would never show on our check. Well, the last fellow I left on the did the same thing. I stayed only four days with him; I should work for nothing! They can't get away with it with me any more.

An account of opposite type was of loyalty to an extra gang foreman in Kansas:

A rail on our track was found by the roadmaster to be one inch from the end of another, so he fired the American foreman. The Mexicans liked the foreman and struck unless he should be returned. The roadmaster tried to get the men out of the cars, but they asked for their checks before they would get out, so he gave us our time.

Other illustrations of both favorable and unfavorable attitudes toward foremen in various industries might be cited.

Employment agents, whether American or Mexican, are popular targets of attack by Mexican laborers and the Mexican press in the United States. This was true in Chicago as it was along the Río Grande. The most vigorous charges which we encountered in Chicago appeared in *Mexico*. The following editorial attacked the employment district as centers of demoralization of Mexicans:

For the third time we raise our voice to warn the resident Mexican colony of this city to close to the public the notorious employment offices of Canal Street, which are nothing but dens of marihuana smokers, guarded by dangerous thieves; centers of vagrancy and gambling both.

We don't want the perversion of our people to go on for any reason, leading them to the basest degradation and giving an appearance of scant culture in the eyes of North Americans.⁴⁰

In a later editorial the employment practices themselves were the subject of complaint. Although the editorial singles out an agency staffed by Mexicans for special recommendation, it was hardly two weeks later when a respected Mexican labor agent was accused of fraudulently obtaining \$3,000 in fees from his countrymen for work which did not exist.⁴¹ Later, however, a court in Mexico acquitted the agent of this charge.

⁴⁰ March 7, 1925.

⁴¹ October 27, 1928.

We hear from time to time complaints about the tricks of which many Mexicans who come to this city to look for work are victims, and to get which they find they have to go to employment agencies. The system of collecting for a job which afterward is not given to the applicant is not exclusive with Chicago, nor is it anything new for us to be surprised at. The fact is that the victim pays for the work offered him, whether he gets it or not, the latter being most common.

We recommend that those seeking work in this way walk with feet of lead and not go on being fooled. The only way to stop these shameless swindles is to avoid the places where they are committed. Let them pay for work when they have it, and be sure that it isn't something hollow; until then, hands out of your pockets!

We do not want to say that this scheme is used by all the employment offices. There are many places where no one is deceived and all agreements are fulfilled. We know of one of these at 631 West Madison Street, where the entire personnel is Mexican and all proceedings are strictly honorable and what is promised is done.

Shun the places where they promise much and give nothing.⁴³

There was also the charge against two steel plants that they maintained an unnecessarily large flow of Mexican labor from Canal Street agencies. A Mexican who made the complaint against one said:

I work at the X company when there is work [i.e., when hired]; and for me that is only three or four days in each half month. I am getting desperate. I can't support my family on just that. If things do not improve, I will have to ask for aid soon. If I could work regularly that is all I would ask for.

Some work there regularly but many are laid off and put on from time to time. I think it's because the bald-headed old fellow is working in cahoots with his brother in Chicago, who has an employment agency up on Canal Street. He sends down Mexicans after charging them \$5 for the job. They come down, work two or three days, and are then laid off; more come down, and so it goes. The town is full of men without jobs. They even fire some of the old-timers to make way for these employment agency men. I don't think that is fair and right to us. I have been here since 1921 and I worked steadily until last year when that fellow got into the employment office. I'm sure the superintendent does not know of it.

A statement about the same company volunteered independently by a reliable labor agent in the Madison Street district was corroboratory:

The X company keeps a flow of Mexicans. They make them get their jobs through the office of a relative of the man in the employment office of the company and then split fees. They won't hire them through the plant office; they may even let some go to make places for others employed through the Chicago office.

The plant superintendent to whom I reported these statements expressed emphatically his readiness to discharge the employee responsible for the offense if he could be accurately identified.

Against another large plant it was charged that there was devious connection between living at a certain Mexican boarding house (which closed a few days before our arrival), purchases on installment of

⁴³ October 10, 1928.

shares of stock of a certain bank, and ability to obtain and hold a job at the plant. With reference to the boarding house it was reported, "The Mexicans who stay there get a job. If they leave, they are fired." I was informed of this not only in the Calumet region, but heard the same account by a Mexican in Brownsville, Texas, who had previously worked at the plant. To social workers, who, upon complaint of a group of Mexicans, had taken up with the management of the mill this and other forms of exploitation, a hearing was granted, and the superintendent offered to discharge guilty employees. On the day of the hearing, however, not a single Mexican complainant would appear as a witness, and the hearing ended without proof of the charge, the executive warning that the next time a complaint was presented, the social workers should be sure of their facts. A Mexican, when questioned afterward concerning failure to appear to support complaint, said: "We're afraid. I have a family and children and if I go they'll take my job from me."

But even were there no question of personal dishonesty, the important fact of the maintenance of a large casual reserve about the industries remained. Mexicans, particularly those with families, hesitated to leave this casual fringe and clung to its precarious opportunities, lest they sink with their families to the even more casual railroad labor market:

The constant uncertainty of work is one of the things that makes this part of town so unsettled and uncertain. They are always putting on new men and letting them off. They go on and off, not one or two at a time, but in great numbers. There are a lot of men who work there every other day and some less. They do not like that as they can barely live and they dare not leave because the only other place they can go to is the track or the beet fields.

I have always lived in the city. I can be shipped any night to a job on the section or to the beet fields. That would separate me from my family and they need me and I want to be with them. Since we have lived in the city for so long we have made a home here and bought things here and there and while we could all move to a section it would be a great deal of trouble and expense. The work on the section might end any day and we would have to move our effects back to the city. That might repeat itself over and over again. I do not like to see it start. Work in the city so far has kept our family together and that is why I would wait a little to get it here.

While the outcry against unemployment and under-employment even as early as 1928 was insistent and at times despairing, there were also those who found irregularity and seasonality of employment not unacceptable. This was particularly true of *solos* on the track many of whom like to move about the country with the seasons. Said

one of them who, during five years, had worked from Texas to Michigan:

Track work is nice in the summer but I would rather be in the city or down south in the winter. I usually land a job down there during that season. You can always get a job on the section or the extra gang, so I don't worry.

It is probable that we made contact among the Mexican sugar beet workers with a selected group likely to yield more than the average proportion of dissatisfied persons, for the employment does offer the attractions of family labor, and this doubtless would have been expressed more frequently had this investigation been conducted in the beet fields during the season of employment. A Mexican social worker reported, "Some Mexicans like beets because they can have chickens and pigs, etc., and live like they live in Mexico." In the immediate presence of the competing and superior attractions of city and industry, with winter unemployment often the last memory associated with beet-field labor, and many of the beet workers already departed when we made our inquiries, the unfavorable aspects of that occupation loomed largest. Agents handling sugar-beet laborers of course opposed the drift cityward. One agent was reported to have disparaged as "wise Mexicans" those who after experience in the United States would no longer accept beet work.

Another agent who handled sugar-beet and railroad laborers proposed even government action to stop the drift to industry:

The government should not allow the Mexicans to work in steel and other industries. They take jobs there that belong to white men. The Mexicans should be kept for migratory labor. The Mexicans are getting independent; when they can work in steel and other industries they won't work on the railroads.

The attitude of Mexicans toward the hours of the working day and week varied. Some Mexicans complained against the ten-hour day. As one Mexican observed:

They complain against ten hours' work, but in Mexico they work longer hours for less money.

While naturally none wanted unemployment to the point of distress, there were those who did not care to work regularly every day, and there were those who did. Said one of a group of young Mexican steel workers:

Some Mexicans work seven days a week, because they wish to, but we prefer to work six days. Some prefer three or four days and seem to like to promenade on the streets the other days.

An employment manager all of whose jobs were of eight hours' duration, said:

We used to get a good many Mexicans from X company, especially when they had the 12-hour day.

The leader of a group of track workers, seeking jobs on Canal Street, advised his followers:

Let's look around first and see if we can't get something for eight hours. All they have around here call for ten hours and I don't like that. And work Sunday, too. They must think we are men of iron that need no rest. We are not slaves but they seem to think so. Well, let's go.

But there was also a Mexican who, like the workers Judge Gary cited against abolition of the 12-hour day, complained against the reduction of hours from 10 to 9 per day, not because of shorter hours, of course, but because of reduced pay. After citing increasingly strict employment practice at a cement plant in respect to knowledge of English, physical examinations, and possession of immigration papers, he added:

Then to top it all they have cut the hours. Before, we worked ten hours and made \$4.40, and we could live and get by. Now they have made it nine hours and we get but \$3.96. It's a hard life for us, indeed.

Many Mexicans worked on the night shifts; these were less desired than day shifts, and one Mexican, weighing work and pleasures, told us that he gave up his job rather than accept night work:

I did not like to work nights, so, when the week came for me to work nights, I laid off. I suppose some other needy fellow with a family worked in my place. I did not work for them I would lose out on the dances and parties.

In order to improve industrial relations, various plans have been established in some of the plants in which Mexicans of the Chicago-Gary region are employed. There was evidence from statements of Mexicans that some of these were appreciated by them.

The guaranty of minimum weekly employment at the large packing houses has been noted earlier. An Indian from Michoacán knew that his steel plant had "a good plan, to take 7 per cent of your money, and the company gives some if you stay, and in five years you will have over \$2,000." At another steel plant we were told, "We have insurance benefits, which cost us \$1 a month; it's pretty good. And we have a Good Fellow Club to which we pay 35 cents a month. It helps with the doctor if we are sick." A foundry, noted among Mexicans for its good wages, also made other appeals to their loyalty: "X company is one of the best companies for anybody in Chicago. They gave \$500 to bury a Mexican [perhaps for his sickness also] and they give a 5 per cent bonus at Christmas."

A very few plants employing Mexicans have employee representation systems. So far as could be ascertained there had never been any Mexican representatives. One reason is undoubtedly the customary provision that employee representatives must be citizens of the United States. Extremely few Mexicans qualify under this rule. The obstacle of language is of course another factor. A Texas-Mexican referred to his department in a packing house:

The Mexicans voted for a colored representative even though most of the people in the department were Mexican. There was a Mexican candidate but he could not speak English.

However, Mexicans could usually vote for representatives and at one plant at least they had utilized the representation plan to appeal some of their cases.

Occasionally American citizenship was required or was regarded as a ground for preference in employment. This was generally accepted stoically by the Mexicans; for example:

And why should they not prefer their own people? They must protect them and give them their best jobs even though they be inexperienced. After all, the native sons were here first. They do it in all countries.

One large plant required Mexicans seeking employment to show evidence of legal entry into the United States but this practice was very exceptional.

The fact that many Mexicans had entered the United States illegally doubtless increased their timidity in raising protests. The account of an Indian-type steel worker to this effect is typical of what a good many have done upon successive entries to this country:

When I came to the United States the first time [1917] I had no money. There was a woman in Juarez who had money but could not read and write [and therefore was ineligible because illiterate]. So I got a boatman and he rowed us across the river. The next time I came the same way but the third time I got papers.

If you have papers you can have more protection here. They should not let Mexicans come in without papers; they can't have the same protection and they become victims of injustice. They don't dare to protest.

No evidence came to our attention that employers in the Chicago-Gary region deliberately took advantage of the lack of papers as farmers, particularly those close to the Río Grande, not infrequently did.⁴³

⁴³ The following excerpt from *El Heraldó de México* (Los Angeles), reprinted in *Mexico*, July 25, 1928, recounts a typical and true complaint, in which the offender may be either American or Mexican.

"There are many authentic cases where testimony has been presented against Mexicans by the very ones who induced them to make their illegal entry. We recall among others the case which took place in a town in Texas. Ten Mexican laborers

RACE RELATIONS IN INDUSTRY

In some of the industries of Chicago and the Calumet region color of skin was an important factor in determining the employment of Mexicans. At a confectionery factory the employment manager stated: "One reason for not hiring Mexican women is that if they are very dark, they look dirty. The boss is particular." And the doorman at a biscuit factory which employs a very few Mexicans and no Negroes announced emphatically, "Our Mexicans are white." This recalls the date ranch owner and restaurant proprietor in Imperial Valley, California, who would not employ Mexican pickers or dish-washers.⁴⁴

Dark color appears as a handicap to employment not only in food industries, but in other factories where the person in control of employment has strong feelings upon the subject. In these cases the handicap barred darker Mexicans but the lighter Mexicans were accepted. The employment manager of a textile factory said:

We take the light-colored ones; we want to avoid anything that isn't first-class and looks as though it might be colored.

In some instances the strong race antipathy toward Negroes actually increased the employment opportunities of Mexicans: for example, at a large steel plant it was intimated that the race feelings of an executive were the reason for increasing the proportion of Mexican employees and limiting the number of Negroes, but no color distinction was made among Mexican applicants for employment. At another steel works the unwillingness to employ Negroes was ascribed to the attitude of white employees. Here, however, the color line was applied, as in the instances first cited, to bar employment of darker-skinned Mexicans. The employment manager explained his practice:

had been led by various contractors [Mexicans?] to enter this country illegally. They worked for three months on a cotton ranch, and when they were not satisfied with the wretched wage they were paid, they tried to cancel their contract. Whereupon they were immediately denounced to the immigration authorities, who in fulfillment of their duty, proceeded to deport them.

"As can be seen, the contractors consented to the presence of our workers while they were willing to be exploited, but as soon as they demanded a fair wage they sought their expulsion."

Also see Whalen, William A., "Mexican border problems" in U. S. Dept. Labor, Bur. Immigration, *Problems of the Immigration Service* (Washington, 1929):12. "Protests over the low wages paid or high prices charged them for necessities [by the ranch commissaries] are often met with the threat that they will be turned over to the immigration authorities unless they submit to the existing conditions." The immigration officers aid in collecting any wages due a man before deporting him.

⁴⁴I, 88, 89.

When I hire Mexicans at the gate I pick out the lightest among them. No, it isn't that the lighter-colored ones are any better workers, but the darker ones are like the niggers. When some of our contractors who came from the outside to do work for us used Negroes, I noticed the attitude of our men when they ate in the company cafeteria. So I chose Mexicans instead of Negroes, and in order to minimize feelings of race friction and keep away from the color line as far as possible, I employ only the lighter-colored Mexicans.

He added that if he had employed Negroes, it would probably have been necessary to have another cafeteria, another set of toilets, etc. However, at the company cafeteria of another large plant in the region I saw both whites and Negroes eating in the same room and observed nothing more than a very informal and indefinite sort of grouping by themselves. Other examples like those cited, show the undercurrent of feeling. The following statements are from executives at three plants which employ respectively a few hundred, thirty, and no Mexicans; note the relation between the tone of the remarks and the number of Mexicans employed:

Our men show some disinclination to work beside colored. Where we see it we guard against it by not placing them there. To some extent this is true of the Mexicans.

We took Mexicans in preference to the niggers. Yes, even though the niggers are better workers. A few of our men didn't want to work next to the Mexicans at first, but that was several years ago.

We haven't any Mexicans; our workmen are practically all Swedes and object to the Mexicans.

In the preceding instances of preference for lighter-colored Mexicans the preference has rested admittedly on antipathies of "race," held by either foremen, management, or both. Two executives, one, the superintendent of a large steel products plant, the other, the employment manager of a large steel works, asserted that the light Mexicans were in fact superior to the dark:

The light colored ones are better than the others.

The Castilian Mexicans are more intelligent than the darker Indians.

Another steel plant employment manager thought he could detect Negro blood in a less desirable type of Mexican applicant:

You can tell those with Negro blood. They seem to be thicker through the temples and duller.

Other employment men, however, asserted that there was no relation between the color of individual Mexicans and their qualifications as employees.

Underlying the antipathy which becomes associated with such racial characteristics as color, were evidences of economic hostility in which the Mexican national group appeared as a competitor of earlier immigrants. To some extent this hostility is the lot of each new immigrant group, whether different in color or not. As a minor executive said:

The Mexicans are getting the same treatment as the Swedes and others used to get. They feel as though the jobs are being taken by the Mexicans.

Statements from a watchman, an employment clerk at the stockyards, and even a Negro,⁴⁵ confirmed the existence of this feeling:

White men won't work at common labor! It's a lie! They will! But Mexicans and colored just from the south will be given work while men with families, property, and a letter from the Chamber of Commerce won't be given a chance.

The Lithuanians object that the Mexicans are employed when they are not taken on at the packing house. They sometimes say, "Why you give the Mexicans jobs and you don't hire us?"

It is better for the American white man and colored man not to have the Mexicans here. They get the jobs.

Further evidences of the economic basis of friction were the charges discussed earlier of direct undercutting of wages, or the apprehension of competition from a group with lower living standards, even though its members might not directly underbid. The latter was the burden of the complaint of two American union track laborers:

The Mexicans get the scale but they keep the scale low. They live on what we would starve on. They are a bad thing for the working man of this country.

Disunity among nationalities in times of industrial conflict also aroused animosities. Harking back to the steel strike of 1919, for example, was the reported statement of an employment manager:

The Mexicans have trouble here because they consider them as strike breakers.

The Mexicans were sensitive to the race handicap to which they were frequently, though by no means always, subject. In the matter of promotion there was complaint by a Mexican at a steel plant:

I don't think there is a single Mexican foreman; at least I have never heard of any. [The writer, however, met a Mexican foreman of Spanish type from that mill.] There are some assistants. They give the preference to the *gueros*.⁴⁶ There are many Mexicans who speak English, but even they do not get ahead.

⁴⁵ Also, note that Oscar de Priest, the colored Congressman from Chicago, actively favored application of the quota law to immigration from Mexico.

⁴⁶ Blondes, or whites.

It is very doubtful whether as yet race has been an important handicap to promotion of Mexicans, although it has militated against their initial employment. However, it may be a real factor in retarding promotion occasionally now, and perhaps in the future will be more potent. For example, a minor employment official of a large plant stated:

The rise of the Mexicans depends somewhat on whether they are allowed to go beyond a certain point. It might not go very well to have Mexicans giving orders to white men, although it is all right on labor gangs.

But an employment manager in another plant observed that some Italians worked satisfactorily under a Mexican straw boss.

On the railroads, where Mexicans had longer experience and better preparation for promotion, race was probably a more important present obstacle in 1928 than it was in industry. A railroad executive in Chicago, expressing what I had occasionally heard in other parts of the United States, said, "The prejudice of the other workers prevents the Mexicans from rising as fast as they otherwise would in our shops."

The rank and file of Mexicans were familiar with race discrimination when getting a job. We were told by Mexicans that "We can get jobs better if we are white like you. But I am dark; they don't talk to me." Instances of denial of Mexican nationality in order to secure employment were not uncommon, although they were usually a cause of shame to those who did it, or of opprobrium from others. The following statements by two Mexicans are representative:

I am ashamed to say that in order to get work which wasn't on a railroad I used to say that I was Spanish. I had to do this [for example] at a factory near the municipal pier in Chicago. While I was there they fired four Mexicans as soon as the foreman found they were Mexicans.

I was ashamed to tell the employment man I was Mexican; I was afraid.

That Mexicans seeking employment sometimes claimed to be Spanish, was also reported by employers.

Of particular interest was the fact that Negroes sometimes try to "pass" as Mexicans in order to secure employment. At a biscuit factory we were told:

Some niggers try to pass themselves off as Mexicans where they know Mexicans are employed [and Negroes are not]. About fifteen were here the other day. They knew a few Spanish words, but no niggers will get by me.

We witnessed an attempt to pass as Mexican on Canal Street, where colored laborers do not gather.

Two dark-skinned men stopped in front of me, read the sign, and began to discuss it. The *enganchista* approached them the minute he saw they were interested. In pidgin English he began to talk to them. "Ship tonight Minnesota? Nice cool there. *No mucho calor*. Gusta? Vamos upstairs."⁴¹

They seemed satisfied and started up. From inside the auto stage I was leaning against came a voice calling to the *enganchista*, "Oh, Charley, come here a minute; are you sure those fellows are Mexicans? Ask them again." "Sure they are; I asked them. Aren't you Mexicans?" "Sure." Then the man inside the bus hailed the laborers over to him and said, "You are no more Mexicans than I am. If you go up to Minnesota you will only be back in Chicago inside of four days. You can't pass off as Mexicans on this office. Now get." And so they went away.

I asked this man, "What is the matter? They look like Mexicans." "They are not, even if one of them has straight black hair. They're Negroes trying to pass off as Mexicans. They can't do that with me. If they go up there they will only be fired the minute they arrive. Nobody will work with them, not even the Mexicans. They have to work by themselves."

In the industrial hierarchy, the Mexicans come into contact with Negroes and Europeans on their own occupational level; their immediate superiors are usually European immigrants who have preceded them to the United States; and in the offices and in higher positions are the "Americans." For the reason that the Americans are seldom in positions of competitive equality with or immediate superiority to the Mexicans where personal friction is likely to result, the Americans are seldom objects of complaints arising from industrial relations. A Mexican in Indiana Harbor noted the absence of Americans from the lower ranks of labor:

The Americans won't do the hard work. If you give them hard work they quit. They have the nice jobs.

This recalled the remark of a Texas-Mexican in Dimmit County, Texas, "When a Mexican is going to work he works; the American is going to dodge work." But there was slight resentment against the state of affairs. Only one complaint included Americans:

Even the real Americans do not give us a chance at times; the others, never.

Evidently this grievance referred to Americans in a plant employment office who were said to be exploiting Mexicans. More characteristic was the remark, "[With the Americans we] have not had any trouble at all."

Friction with fellow employees, or discrimination by foremen, were usually charged to Europeans—Poles, Irish, Italians, Greeks, etc., and from them generalized national antipathies were prone to arise. The following statements by Mexicans are illustrative:

⁴¹ Not very hot. Do you like it? Come on upstairs.

At the mill there was a fight between a Mexican interpreter and an Italian. The Europeans want to make things hard for the Mexicans; they say all the trouble comes from the Mexicans.

The Polish foreman is a devil. He will work the Mexican like a dog. We get all the hard work to do and the Europeans get the easy work. They are mean and swear at us all the time. They will not let us go to the toilet between hours. The Europeans do what they want.

The Mexicans say that they give the best jobs to the white people even if the Mexicans are just as good.

I have worked in Ohio and Michigan just lately. There are a lot of Mexicans there, but too many Serbians and Bulgarians. I never had any fuss with them, but the Italians are hard to get along with.

At the steel plant they treat them rough, call them swine, etc. There is a Greek foreman; he doesn't call them by their name when he tells them to do something. All his worst and hardest jobs are given to the Mexicans.

The statement of a Mexican that "It makes no difference what nationality your fellow workmen are; whether they are hard or easy to get along with depends on the individual person and not on the race," was characteristic as to personal philosophy, but atypical as observation of fact. There were of course individual foremen of various European nationalities who were liked, but likes led to generalization apparently less readily than dislikes. Characteristically, the Mexicans felt themselves, as natives of the American continent, entitled to preferential treatment over Europeans rather than adverse discrimination:

We get the worst jobs and no chance to go ahead; the others get it. We that are next door neighbors and from the American continent are slighted in favor of these Europeans.

This feeling only aggravated resentment against Europeans.

The Mexicans, like other peoples, generally prefer to work with their own kind, but it is management and the attitude of other nationalities on the same occupational level, that determine largely whether their preference is recognized or not. The attitude described earlier of the employment man who said, "I don't want men in groups; I scatter them," is fairly common in industrial plants.⁴⁸ "Americanization" is undoubtedly accelerated by this enforced contact with other nationalities during work but this is not the principal reason for the practice. Management has its own reasons and is able also to cite the attitudes of the various nationalities toward each other in support of its practices. Thus, a North European worker said definitely, "No, I wouldn't want to work with the Mexicans," and a

⁴⁸ See also pp. 93, 94.

Polish youth of the second generation said, "I work in a place where there are three Mexicans working. They work by themselves on the third floor. I would quit if I had to work with them." But he added the tempering remark, "they are of the better class, though, and pretty nice fellows." That Mexicans at times exhibit similar antipathies toward those socially below them is illustrated by the remark of a Mexican, influenced doubtless by previous residence in New Orleans:

When I came from Mexico in 1910 I went to New Orleans. There were a lot of Negroes there and I did not like it. I have never liked them and try never to get work near the Negroes. They are *gente mala y grosera*.⁴⁹

The practice of separation, like its opposite, of mixing, is by no means rigidly adhered to, especially in common labor gangs. On the track, gangs composed entirely of Mexicans, Negroes, or hoboes (themselves a mixture of Europeans and Americans), are common. This segregation is influenced by the fact that the gangs not only work together but share the same living quarters. When sufficient numbers of a single race group are not secured, the gangs are frequently mixed. But the possible mixtures are limited. As an experienced commissary official said, "We can mix the Mexicans and hoboes, or the Mexicans and Negroes, but not the hoboes and Negroes." In industry, where working together does not necessitate living together, Negroes, Mexicans, and "whites" are frequently mingled.

COLLECTIVE ACTION

The earliest importation of Mexicans into Chicago for industrial labor was, as noted before, by a malleable iron company on the north side in 1916. Whether the occasion of the importation was an impending strike; whether the importation occasioned a strike; or whether there was any strike at all, but rather a neighborhood protest, or perhaps both strike and protest, are questions on which the available evidence is either hazy or conflicting. That there was friction, however, is amply clear, and in view of its significance as a first contact, the evidence will be presented rather fully.

Evidently some of the Mexicans who had been brought in were either Texas-Mexicans or had lived in the United States long enough to learn English. This appears from the contemporary case record dated May 31, 1916, in the files of the Immigrants' Protective League:

⁴⁹ Bad and coarse people.

Called at 2864 N. Ashland Avenue, rooming house for the Mexicans, owned by the X Company. Interviewed several English speaking Mexicans. Said they were sent out by an El Paso employment agent, were assured that there was no strike on, came here three days before strike was called. When strike broke out they all quit work. Told their foreman that they did not come here to "scab" on the Americans. Were out two weeks. Some had left the city and others went back to work. Said they were practically forced to go back, the Americans would have nothing to do with them, and also refused to take them into the union. Some of the skilled workers belonged to union in Mexico [or Texas?] and carried union cards.

The entire group (35) seemed to be quite intelligent. . . . They spoke freely about the strike. Said they were very unhappy and would like to go back to Texas. Spoke with neighbor who is working for same company and who belongs to drivers' union. Also stated that Mexicans started to work before strike broke out. Said they came about the 27th of April and strike was called on 31st. Spoke well of men.

When engaging the Mexicans in El Paso, an executive of the company had wired:

We are not operating a union shop and we have no strike on so that men need not be afraid to come here. . . . Have no strike but want to increase force.

A junior executive who had been at the plant in 1916, when shown the preceding memorandum and questioned in 1928, denied that the Mexicans were imported as strike breakers:

There wasn't any strike; I won't admit that we brought Mexicans in as strike breakers. That was just their excuse for not wanting to stay. And comparatively few of the first groups did stay; they vamoosed. The president owns property in Chihuahua. In 1916 when we needed labor, he saw an opportunity for Mexican labor, so we brought it up. But for us it's been a sad, sorry experience. The Mexicans want their own food. We had an American cook for them and put a third story on our building to make a rooming house for them.

The people living around a factory are always hostile to it. They don't like the noise, etc., and blame the company, although they came in after the company and didn't have to live there. A lot of these ignorant Germans called the Mexicans "niggers."

The significance of the last remarks on the racial hostility of neighbors was confirmed by a comment of an employment manager of a neighboring plant, who also recalled the 1916 importations:

Yes, I remember the labor shortage when X company brought the Mexicans. Rates went way up; they've always been a cheap wage company. Yes, I remember the trouble when the Mexicans came in. There was no strike when they came but the people both in the factory and in the neighborhood objected to them. Was it color? Yes, that was it; they didn't want another race.

It appears, then, that in this first contact there were elements of most of the principal types of friction found in contemporary contacts of Mexicans and Americans—friction with employer, employees of other nationalities, the American union, and the neighbors.

In September 1919 the Calumet region was in the grip of the nation-wide steel strike. When the strike was called, there were already a number of Mexicans on the payrolls of several of the large steel plants. At the two plants on which information was obtained, most of the Mexicans went out on strike. As one executive recalled, "The Mexicans mostly followed the lead of the Spanish, and there were a good many radicals among the Spanish." A Mexican, who had been working in 1918 as an interpreter at the other plant, became an agent to secure Mexican laborers during and after the strike. His statement is of particular interest, since an executive of this company said that their employees, when canvassed before the strike, stated they had no grievance against the company, but that when the strike began, because of the mass picketing by the others, they couldn't get near the plant.

The workers at the mills had been ready to go on strike but waited only for the end of the war. Soon after the Armistice they struck. The Mexicans went out, too. The mills were deserted; the Serbians and Slovaks who had made plenty of money in the mills during the war left the country right after they struck [to return to Europe].

The companies sent me to get our Mexicans to work for them. I got some at Chicago, others at Omaha, Kansas City, a few at St. Louis. I even went down to El Paso and some cities in Texas. They were coming up here for over a year. We got some Mexicans for the Crucible Steel Company of Lorain, Ohio, and for Midland, Pennsylvania. There were other companies in Pennsylvania that got the Mexicans about that time. My steel company got about two or three thousand men that year.

Having pictured the Mexicans in the dual rôle of strikers and strike breakers, he defended them in the latter capacity as conservative workmen, neither wage-cutters nor easily imbued with the radicalism which he implied was behind the strikers in this instance:

Mexicans are not as a rule strike breakers. Neither are they radicals. They are hard workers. They look for work, get it, work hard at it. They want a fair day's work for a fair day's pay. They do not work for less. But they will not listen well to some people who tell them not to work so hard or to loaf on the job. They are used to work and to work for what they get. They are not used to soldiering on the job. It does not go in with what they have been taught or brought up to respect. Radical ideas do not sink in easily. They may listen to them but they do not understand them thoroughly. If they do what the radicals tell them, they do so without knowing that which they do; it is just mechanical action.

A plant employment man related his experiences with a gang of Mexicans secured locally during the strike:

During the strike we had an office on Madison Street and got men, including the Mexicans, who came mainly from railroad work. My first experience with the Mexicans was not very satisfactory. A padrone offered to bring his gang over from the track if all would hire to work together. I needed men, so I took them. But they were not experienced and were not very satisfactory.

In the stockyards strike of 1921, the Mexicans were again in a double rôle. Those who were employed at the time "went on strike the same as the others." Other Mexicans helped to take their places. An employment man described some of his local activities, which, in addition to the importation of Negroes from the South, succeeded in breaking the strike:

I wanted the strike of December 12, 1921, to take place; I wanted the experience of going through a strike and I prepared for it. I had my scouts out among the Italians and the Mexicans. I got the Mexicans from the railroads. I got them over from X plant in bunches of twenty. We brought the Negroes over on the elevated at 4 A.M. Our waiting room was always full; after we had hired, we sent the rest over to Y plant, or, guarded by a police cordon, over to Z plant.

As a result, the strike was broken. That was what we wanted them to do and we give them credit for it. After the strike we let them [the Mexicans] out to let the old men back. No, we did not fire them [but we did not re-hire them if they left].

An employment man referred to similar post-strike practice by a steel plant.

X company got the Mexicans to break a strike in 1919. They had a twelve-weeks' strike and then let the Mexicans go and took the others back.

While the remarks are doubtless founded on fact, the great decline of Mexicans on the payrolls of all industries in 1921 was caused principally by the acute depression of that year; the Mexicans as the last hired, were naturally the first let go. Furthermore, while some Mexicans who took the places of the strikers were doubtless dispensed with in the manner indicated, others who had struck probably secured their old places again. Therefore, the data appearing in table 3 do not afford a comparison with the above statements.

The contacts of Mexicans and trade unions in Chicago and the Calumet region in 1928 were extremely slight. In none of the industries which employed numbers of Mexicans were there any unions, or, if they existed, they were of no appreciable strength in the grade of labor to which Mexicans generally belonged. Thus, the Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees had strength, but not among track laborers. A local union official complained:

The Mexicans? I can't tell you anything good about them. We have only eleven Mexican members in Chicago. They are in because their foreman is a good

union man and sees that they are in. But mostly foremen don't do that. The Mexicans know what organization is, all right, but they don't join here. We had a Mexican interpreter go around with me and they would pay me dues, but they would not pay him when he went alone. There had to be a white man along.

References to "whites" and "Mexicans" were frequent, but the status of the Mexicans was clearly not with the colored:

The colored have to have separate locals in our organization, and can't send delegates to our convention. The white delegates represent the colored locals. But the Mexicans join with us; they are considered white in the union.

Another reason for the paucity of Mexican union members was the fact that very few were skilled mechanics, and of those who were, a number worked in "unorganized" industries such as meat packing and steel. The Chicago machinists' local union reported "about six" Mexicans who had transferred their memberships from Mexico and presumably had learned their trade in that country. American citizenship was not required for membership. In the building trades unions citizenship was required; this is an obstacle to membership for Mexicans are very reluctant to become American citizens. The carpenters', painters', and sheet metal workers' Chicago locals reported no Mexican members; the bricklayers' local reported "about eight" Mexican members who had come in on transfer from California or other parts of the United States. The American Federation of Railroad Workers reported that at least among its skilled membership there were no Mexicans. The situation in the auto-painting trade, in which it was estimated that from twenty-five to fifty Mexicans were engaged, was described by a union official:

There are three union rates, 95 cents an hour for chassis cleaners, \$1 for rubbers, and \$1.25 for straight painters. The Mexicans work for even less than 85 cents as chassis cleaners. They come into the union when the shop is organized, but don't take much interest in the union, even though they can talk English. The Mexicans and colored work for less in the shops which we can't unionize.

Citizenship, or declaration of intention, was required for membership; only eight Mexicans had been union members and but two were members in the summer of 1928.

Most of the Mexicans who were in the Chicago-Gary region in 1928 had not known unionism as part of their immediate experience or observation in their own country; in the United States they belonged to a highly mobile class. A Mexican who had left Mexico in 1918 before the rise of the C. R. O. M.⁵⁰ explained:

⁵⁰ Mexican Federation of Labor, which arose after the revolution of 1920, and attained considerable membership among agricultural workers in some places. By 1930 its membership was very greatly reduced.

In Mexico the unions exist only in the large cities. Mexico is still a nation of ranchers and small townsmen; therefore, there are few unions. Mexicans come here to work wherever they can find it and where it pays best. Here they move to find those conditions and are not steady. To belong to a union you have to tie yourself down to a locality pretty well; Mexicans like to move when it suits them. Here there is no steel workers' union. If there were, I think the Mexicans would join.⁵¹

Another aspect of the individualistic background of Mexicans, and their efforts individually to establish job security in the new country appeared from the statement of another Mexican:

A Mexican bricklayer was going to be fired because he didn't belong to the union. But the foreman liked him and introduced him and got him into the union. He was one of the best bricklayers and he always wanted to move the cord before the others were ready. The others told him at lunch that this was a union job, and to protect the rights of the laborer, not to kill them, etc. But he said: "I am used to go this way; when I go slow, I feel lazy." The union men don't like him.

The Mexicans want to show the foreman they can produce work and so keep a steady job. Here in the United States the Mexicans push themselves; in Mexico the other [Mexican workers] push them. In Mexico the old workers make the new ones work harder, because they work in pairs, and the new ones must keep up. When they come to the city here it's the other way.

Apprehension of race discrimination at the hands of unionists was another factor:

The Mexicans don't like the unions very well; they don't like the high fees, and then after they are members they feel that because of *distinción*, they are not sure of a job even if they have a union card.

Besides, there was an economic differential against an industry which is supported entirely by a Mexican clientèle, such as Spanish printing. That fact, and the lack of traditions of union loyalty, were cited by a Mexican who, with an occasional assistant, operated his own printing press:

The Italian customers ask for the union label on their work and I have lost jobs because I did not have the label. A union man asked me to join the union; but if I did, I could work only eight hours or have an extra shift if I worked more than eight hours, and would have to pay the union scale. But the Mexicans can't pay union prices for papers.⁵² The Mexicans want cheap work and cheap prices; they don't want high-class work.

⁵¹ They did join the coal strike in Colorado in 1927, led by the I.W.W., and have formed labor organizations of their own in Imperial Valley, California, and among the sugar beet workers of Colorado and the Middle West. As noted before, they went out with the strikers in the steel and packing strikes of 1919 and 1921.

⁵² In 1927 a Los Angeles labor official reported an identical situation in the printing and bakery trades there; a Mexican market for both products and the labor which produced them existed at a lower level than the market for similar products for American consumption. This so hampered efforts to enforce union rates of wages in the Mexican market that although the employing bakers were forced to agree to union conditions, the American union itself soon found it necessary to relax the terms which it had the power to impose upon the Mexican bakers.

He also stressed the cut-throat competition to which he was subject from his countrymen, which will be detailed later in the section on Mexican Business Men. Of course, Mexicans did not deliberately choose lower wages nor reject unionism if it possessed strength. A linotype operator setting the Spanish language, for example, was anxious to learn English, and willing to join the union since it was necessary, indeed he was apprehensive lest he be denied admittance:

I do not know English well enough to work in a regular American shop. Then, there you have to belong to the union. I would not mind that but it is hard to get in. They restrict the membership and it is always good to know someone and I know nobody. Some day I will study English and make a serious effort to get into one of the shops downtown; they pay better.

A young Mexican woman, who prior to her marriage had been a member of a garment trade union, and who had strike benefits when she struck with them, was loyal to her organization and announced that she "would not work in a non-union shop now." Other notable individual instances of Mexicans with union experience were encountered. One had been a union boiler-maker in Texas. When the railway shopmen's strike of 1922 appeared lost, he came north, where he was working in 1928. Another Mexican had left the shops in Cheyenne, Wyoming, under similar circumstances. A third Mexican, born in Texas, had been editor of *La Unionista*, the Spanish language union organ in San Antonio for the Mexican track laborers. They too, had lost their strike after the war and in 1928 he was eking out a living at track work and on a Mexican paper in Chicago.

The general attitude of employers of Mexicans in the Chicago-Gary region was hostile to trade unionism. Two persons went farther and apprehended a danger in the customary mutual benefit societies which Mexicans organized. One, a labor agent of a beet-sugar company which recruits Mexicans in the Chicago-Gary area, was reported as saying:

It is too bad for the Mexicans to organize. I am absolutely opposed to the Mexicans organizing, regardless of the object. These organizations begin innocently with literary purposes but they soon develop along Bolshevistic lines of thought.

The other was an employment man in a large concern having many Mexican employees:

The Mexicans have societies, and of course if they organize one way, it is but a step to organize another way.

This is, of course, exactly what happened in Imperial Valley, California.⁶⁸ Much greater unity of labor demand and of race among laborers prevails there, however, than in Chicago and the Calumet region.

In the almost unanimous opinion of railroad men and agents who handled track laborers it was held a desirable characteristic of Mexicans that they seldom struck in gangs. The following opinions are representative:

A Mexican will never kick; if he doesn't like it, he just leaves.

They don't strike in groups. Other nationalities like the Greeks and Italians used to quit in groups; if one was fired or quit, he would call, "Come on, boys," and all would go. If the Mexicans don't like the foreman, wages, or the job, they just walk away.

The Italians were all clanny and we never knew from one minute to the next when a whole gang or section would quit and leave the timekeeper and foreman high and dry by themselves. The Mexicans don't do that.

Similarly, a steel mill superintendent felt confident that his Mexicans would not unite:

My department is about 50 per cent Mexican but I am not afraid they will unionize or cause trouble. Some of the South Europeans and Scotch are communists now, and followers of Ramsay Macdonald, and discontented with everything. But I don't believe they can make any headway among the Mexicans. Of course when there is discrimination against them, especially the colored, it gives the agitators a chance.

To these speakers the absence among Mexicans of the habit of striking seemed something almost innate. The employers cited earlier who proportion the nationalities of their employees and "scatter" them, seemed not to attribute such a quality to them or to any particular nationality, except possibly Negroes because of their long prevailing unsatisfactory relations with unions of white workers; these employers preferred to rely upon diversity.

The fact is that Mexicans do strike in gangs sometimes, both on the railroads and in agriculture. In the basic industries of steel and meat-packing they have appeared upon occasion in the rôle both of strikers and of strike breakers. However, primarily because they are mainly unskilled workers in unorganized industries, and secondarily, because a few who might otherwise join a union are barred by the requirement of American citizenship or are deterred by the depressed economic condition of industries catering exclusively to Mexicans, and

⁶⁸ I, 45.

because they lack traditions of unionism, Mexicans played no real part in union labor in the Chicago-Gary region. Indeed, because of their scarcity, union officials frequently had difficulty in answering whether there were any Mexicans at all in their organizations, and if so, how many.

Very little evidence of contact between Communists and Mexicans came to our notice. We saw a handbill inviting Mexicans to a meeting held under Communist auspices a year or two prior to our investigations. In 1927, the *Daily Worker* (Communist) ingratiated itself with the Spanish language newspapers by taking up the cause of a Mexican alleged to be a victim of the police. *Mexico* acknowledged its thanks by declaring that the *Daily Worker* "showed interest and justice like no other organ," and referred to "the capitalists, eternal enemies of the cause of the proletarians."⁵⁴ Four months later under the title "A Message to Laborers" both capitalists and labor leaders were attacked in markedly "left" fashion by some outside writer.⁵⁵ *Correo Mexicano* published in full an anti-imperialist manifesto by C. E. Ruthenberg of the Workers' Party, but the Mexican publisher of the paper was undoubtedly interested more in opposing imperialism than in furthering communist aims.⁵⁶ Probably he was entirely unaware of the latter; certainly he was not in the least communistic in sentiment. In April, 1928, *Mexico* began a series of articles under the auspices of the Trade Union Educational League (Communist), which attacked both the American and the Mexican Federation of labor (*C. R. O. M.*). But it is doubtful whether the editors of *Mexico*, and almost certainly not the readers, were aware of the Communist origin of what they printed. Occasionally *Mexico* carried articles supporting the I. W. W. led strike of 1927 in the coal fields of Colorado, and the organization of the Colorado beet workers in 1928; occasionally it gave vent to vigorous attacks on employment agents and employers. But a good index of the general tenor of its obviously non-Communist, non-I. W. W. protests is a poem which it published, *Odio al rico* (hatred for the rich), closing with an appeal "before God" for Divine support.⁵⁷

⁵⁴ June 1, 1927.

⁵⁵ September 28, 1927.

⁵⁶ December 4, 1926.

⁵⁷ May 9, 1928. In the same issue was a strong attack on divorce.

III

THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC LADDER

Most of the charitable relief extended to Mexicans by Americans in this region comes through private organizations—in Chicago, the United Charities. So many of the needy Mexicans are “non-residents” that they receive little county aid. The statistics of Mexican cases “under care” of the United Charities during the years 1919–20 to 1929–30, inclusive, are presented in table 17. Since Mexicans, accord-

TABLE 17
MEXICAN CASES “UNDER CARE” OF THE UNITED CHARITIES OF CHICAGO,
1919–1930*

Year	“Total cases”	Cases “under care”		
		All cases	Number	Per cent
1919–20	-----	-----	0	0
1920–21	-----	-----	0	0
1921–22	11,114	4,945	49	1.0
1922–23	9,437	3,507	16	.5
1923–24	11,239	4,092	87	2.1
1924–25	12,022	4,202	102	2.4
1925–26	11,855	3,917	112	2.9
1927	14,343	3,471	112	3.2
1928	11,805	2,595	74	2.9
1929	13,287	2,765	79	2.9
1930	27,125	6,687	228	3.4

* Cases are classified according to nativity of head of family; Texas-Mexicans, therefore, are not included as Mexicans here. The reader is cautioned against drawing conclusions from the apparent historical decline prior to 1930 of cases “under care,” for there have been changes in definition during the period included here; total cases have increased during the period.

ing to the census of 1930, were but .6 per cent of the total population, it is evident that since 1924–25 they have approximately from four to six times the proportion of charity cases to which their numbers in the general population would “entitle” them. This is because they are practically all laborers and poor, and many of them are to be found in the under-employed marginal reserves of industry and the seasonally unemployed reserves of agriculture.

In addition to the organized charities, some charitable aid has been extended by Protestant mission churches. This greatly incensed Catholics, who also gave some charity through their churches, for they regarded it as religious proselytizing with charity as the bait. This

attitude was of course found in other parts of the United States; there was the typical (and doubtless true) story of the recipient of aid who attended the Protestant mission, but upon the approach of death called the priest. In 1924 the version was that the particular Mexican also attended mass in the morning before attending the mission.⁵⁸

Sometimes in cases of distress American and Mexican railroads and American charities have aided financially in repatriation; sometimes the American government, by deportation, has done so.

The Salvation Army, too, had given aid. The one recipient of its charity whom we met was enthusiastic:

When first we came here we suffered for food and heat until the Salvation Army in Hammond found that we were in want, and they helped us until my husband found work. They had to help us for two weeks. They sent us a fine Christmas basket and toys for all the children, coal, and everything to make us have a comfortable time in this cold climate.

"Unemployment of the railroad and sugar-beet workers, and sometimes sickness, too, constitute the biggest charity problem among the Mexicans." This statement by an executive of the charity district in the Hull House colony, which reports more Mexican cases than any other in Chicago, emphasizes the importance of seasonal unemployment as a cause of dependence of Mexicans. The beet workers particularly have been a group conspicuous as recipients of relief since 1921.⁵⁹ Labor contracts in the principal Middle Western beet fields have for several years provided an alternative price of \$5 more per acre if return transportation was waived by the laborer. A good many choose this alternative, and come to the Chicago-Gary region for the winter. The situation of those who finally come to depend on charity was described as follows:

The beet workers' families may end the season with about \$90 net. The word goes around that there are work and good wages in the North. They come here with a blanket roll and nothing else. They can get two or three rooms for \$8 per month. The landladies will leave the Mexicans a vermin-infested bed and a stove;

⁵⁸ Redfield notes. In Kansas City, Missouri, it was reported to the present writer in 1929 by both a Protestant mission worker and a social worker that the competition in charity between Protestant missions and Catholic agencies had been demoralizing to the recipients from the standpoint of relief, and unsettling, rather than convincing, religiously. The social worker stated that the Protestant mission worker "is ready to quit charity. He says it is no use working with the adults; now he has afternoon classes for the children. Last year he gave a lot of charity and a number of Mexicans joined the church. Then they went over to the Catholic church [with both religious and material inducements]. There is too much competition in charity."

⁵⁹ Redfield notes.

perhaps the preceding Mexicans have left them when they left. During November and December there is sometimes work for some of them on the railroads. The city of Chicago won't employ Mexicans for snow shoveling. Their labor men say, "They demoralize a crew." Perhaps the fact that they can't vote is also responsible. During January, February, and March there is little work available; perhaps one out of ten of these Mexicans may get on at the stockyards. Railroad workers, too, accumulate in the cities during the same season.

This surplus of seasonally unemployed recurs annually, and, added to the cyclically unemployed, reaches considerable proportions in periods of depression such as 1921 and 1930-31. In the winter of 1929-30 a report, found upon investigation to be greatly exaggerated,⁶⁰ was broadcast from Harlingen, Texas, that several thousand Mexican laborers were needed; the condition in Chicago, aggravated by the beginnings of depression, was such that on January 31, 1930, the Immigrants' Protective League wired the Chamber of Commerce, "Can ship 500 Mexican families immediately if secured transportation and work. State wage and duration of work."

On the whole, however, the Mexicans are not regarded as a serious charity problem. As an executive in Gary said, "The Mexicans are not such a problem for us; they take care of themselves pretty well." This care which the Mexicans take of themselves is not only individual, but group care.

The readiness of Mexicans to aid their countrymen in need, has been noted in other areas in the United States. This characteristic, and the lengths to which they would go in extending aid, were objects of frequent comment in the Chicago-Gary region, by both Mexicans and Americans. An American social worker with much contact with Mexicans of the Hull House colony said:

The Mexicans are awfully kind to each other. Even with a house full of children they will take in another family. Many times—too many times—I have seen this. They say: "But they're *poisanos*."

An American religious-social worker cited as an instance of this type of aid a family of six, with earnings of \$16 per week, which took in another family of four or five for six months until the other father found a job. A Spanish-American in another portion of the region observed:

Mexican friends take care of Mexican men who are out of work. I have heard Mexicans who do this say: "My boy may be stranded some day, and I hope the Lord may take care of him." Sometimes they expect to be paid, and sometimes they don't.

⁶⁰ See *Hearings before the committee on immigration and naturalization, House of Representatives, 71 Cong., 2 sess., on H.R. 8523 et al., p. 368 ff.*

But even aid of this type was not entirely without limit. A young unemployed Mexican said feelingly:

My brother earns \$3.60 a day. But he has a family and I have shame to stay with him long. My friends help some, but they pay \$3 for a room and bed, and can't help three, four, months.

A Mexican described similar practices when not even friendship or acquaintance preceded them:

The Mexicans meet a destitute family on the street and invite them in. They come and live on the floor; they pay neither rent nor for food. In this way they stay from two or three days to a month or even more. For example, in 1922 or 1923 a man and wife with children were living in two rooms. The man met a family from the beet fields without money whom he had never known before. He took them to his house because they were without money. There is a good deal of this sort of aid.

Loans or gifts of money, either in cash or as payments of rent or grocery bills due, are frequently made to countrymen in distress; and they are made by relatives, boarders, or complete strangers. The familiar device of the subscription list is sometimes used. In a Mexican newspaper of Chicago, for example, there appeared the following invitation to contribute for the return to Mexico of a destitute countryman:

Aged Mexican who has recourse to his compatriots in asking aid. The aged Socorro Castro, living at 4736 Wentworth Avenue, appeared in our office and revealed to us his critical circumstances. He is seventy years of age, and is incapacitated from earning daily bread for his family. Winter is at his door; he has no recourse; he wishes to return to Mexico, and believes that through the medium of the Mexican consulate he may obtain his transportation [in Mexico], and he asks, through us, that the Mexicans help him. All who wish to contribute toward the expenses of the journey of this destitute old man will do the favor of sending their contribution to *El Heraldó de las Américas*, 20 E. Jackson Blvd., Room 1103. The subscription is opened. Sr. Luis Martínez, \$5.00; Sr. F. Tenorio, \$25; Sr. A. Pesquierra, .50; Sr. M. Rodríguez, .50.⁶¹

Popular subscriptions of this type were noted for purposes as various as repatriation, burial,⁶² legal defense of countrymen accused of homicide,⁶³ assistance to a Mexican gone blind,⁶⁴ the purchase of a champion's belt for the Mexican wrestling champion who had come to Chicago.⁶⁵ The last subscription was patriotic in character rather

⁶¹ November 15, 1924. Redfield notes.

⁶² *Mexico*, February 2, 1929. Under the auspices of the Club Cultural Latino-Americano \$51.90 was raised.

⁶³ *La Noticia Mundial*, September 4, 1927; November 20, 1927; December 4, 1927; *Mexico*, March 22, 1930.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, July 21, 1928. The Sociedad Fraternal Mexicana of Waukegan appointed two collectors to take up a subscription and gave a benefit dance.

⁶⁵ *Festividades*, September and November, 1925.

than benevolent. Probably the element of patriotism was present to a degree in all forms of mutual aid extended. It was evoked notably in subscriptions for legal defense of countrymen accused of killing a Pole, one of which was proclaimed in the press under the title "The spirit of solidarity of a colony." The individual subscriptions are usually numerous and small; the names of the subscribers are published with the amount of the subscription, to even as low as 5 cents, set opposite the name. For defense of those accused of killing the Pole, 135 subscribers raised \$65.82, the individual contributions ranging from a maximum of \$2 to a minimum of 10 cents.

The *Cruz Azul* carried on relief activities, giving food, clothing, and other aid.⁶⁶ Two cases taken from a list published in the press will illustrate its work:

A single man, a baker by trade, out of work for ten months. He said he had not eaten all day long. Aid: He was given an order for \$3 worth of provisions on the *Tienda Colorada*, and a card to the Immigrants' Protective League.

A married man with three little children. Has not been able to work for a long time. His family needs food. Aid: He was given provisions and a card to the superintendent of the Illinois Steel Company. October 13: Yesterday he began to work at the Illinois Steel Company.

Another form of mutual aid is by assisting one another to get jobs. This may be a matter of giving information and advice, or of interpreting, or of speaking an effective word to the foreman or employment manager. A Mexican who was seeking work and who knew no English, wished that his fellows would aid him more; perhaps the fact of competition of other unemployed Mexicans seeking industrial employment accounted for their lukewarmness at that time.⁶⁷ At any rate, one who knew Mexicans well, asserted, "The Mexicans are great on helping each other to get jobs." In fact, this is one of the well recognized ways by which Mexicans establish themselves.

Mutual aid is also extended in more organized fashion through the various *mutualistas* to be described later, which assist in time of illness, death, or other stresses. A charity executive in Chicago remarked, "We find that the Mexicans do get on even if we don't help them; we don't know how they do it." The answer is largely the mutual aid described, given "to an extent far beyond that practiced by the Poles, for example."⁶⁸ It is also partly the habituation

⁶⁶ *Mexico*, November 6, 1930, p. 4.

⁶⁷ See p. 267.

⁶⁸ Redfield notes.

of Mexican laborers to low living standards, to acceptance of whatever happens, and to timidity or pride.

The attitude of Mexicans toward charity as reported in the Chicago-Gary region is strikingly different from that reported in Los Angeles and vicinity. In the latter area accounts of the pauperization of Mexicans were freely told me in 1927 by both charity workers combatting it, and by outsiders. In Chicago and the Calumet region, while there are some such cases, the general opinion was of an opposite character. It was an American charity executive who said:

Most of our Mexicans are cases that have been reported to us either by social workers, settlement houses, or landlords. The latter will often go around to look at their houses or collect rent, and find the Mexicans destitute or in need. They are very shy and not on to the ways of this country. In Mexico there is little organized charity, and when they come to this country and are in need they do not know there is a place to help them out; so that is why the landlords and other people report them. The Mexicans are usually glad to be helped with groceries. In cases of sickness where the man has been unable to work we often help them with their rent. Charity does not pauperize the Mexicans; they get away from it as soon as they can. But the other nationalities around here—some of them are just beggars. The Mexican—as soon as he gets well, or as soon as he gets work, is gone; we hear no more of him.

An early report (1925) declared enthusiastically that

The opinion of the organizations dealing with them was that they were intelligent, cooperative, self-respecting, and self-sufficient as soon as the immediate problem or problems facing them were relieved. . . . The better cooperation which the Mexicans seem to have showed was probably the result notably of the efforts of social service organizations and clinic workers, but was also a part of the alertness which is a characteristic of the mental equipment of the Mexican.⁶⁸

Particularly when Mexicans were first colonizing in Chicago they did not readily approach the charitable agencies. The following were comments of social workers; the first only was by a Mexican:

At first the Mexicans did not know of charity, but now they know; and if a man can't find work soon, he goes to charity.

The Mexicans are very humble people and don't expect any help and are thankful when they get it.

They won't go alone to ask for charity; they have *verguenza* (shame). As soon as the Mexicans get work they are independent of charity.

I like the Mexicans. When they come for charity I don't feel as though I need to look to see if they have a gold mine hidden away somewhere.

Fear of deportation on account of becoming a public charge was cited as a reason why some Mexicans refrained from asking relief in

⁶⁸ Britton, G. H., and Constable, K., *Our Mexican patients at central free dispensary, Rush medical college* (Chicago, January, 1925):3, 5, 6. Reprinted in *Nation's Health*, VII, no. 7, 453.

Chicago; in southern California a larger proportion had resided in the United States the five-year period which conferred immunity from deportation on this ground. But in 1931 some destitute Mexicans in Gary were so ready to return to Mexico that they were finally willing to accept even deportation as a means of getting there, although they knew it might forever bar their return to the United States.

We encountered two instances of opposition to the charities. One Mexican husband, from motives not entirely clear, refused to receive charity even though his family needed it, and another objected to the supervision exercised by the charitable agency, saying, "They come and watch your house."

There were, of course, instances of Mexicans who took advantage of a charity. A Mexican social worker replied to questioning:

Some are spoiled, but not only Mexicans. They see someone else aided, and so they try to see if they can get some too. I was told of one case of a Mexican family which was helped by the charities and used the money to buy land in Mexico. But I knew an Italian woman aided by the charities who at the same time hired a Mexican scrub woman.

Another Mexican, ashamed of one of their own leaders, admitted:

Mrs. X [the American charity executive] does more for the Mexicans than any Mexican in the colony, but instead of appreciating it, Y [a Mexican] tells the Mexicans that they should clamor for her to do more. But she is saving the money which has been collected [by the community chest] for times when it is more needed. Some of the Mexicans say the Americans are trying to take their money [subscriptions to the chest] or to laugh at them. They don't know their own friends.

A Mexican expressed his pride that his countrymen in the United States do not beg:

A Mexican will starve or steal before he begs. He is proud and will work his fingers to the bone before begging. You cannot say that of the other peoples. In Chicago I have never seen a Mexican asking for money on the streets or begging for food from house to house like I have seen Poles, Italians, and others do.

During three years of field research I never was asked for money by Mexicans, and except in their own country, never saw them beg; not infrequently, however, I was accosted by American "panhandlers." In the Chicago-Gary area instances of pauperization and abuse were mentioned to me only when I specifically raised the point and then were related as highly exceptional; they were not recited readily and often as they were in the vicinity of Los Angeles.

In Chicago there were evidences of sincere appreciation of the work of the various social agencies among the Mexicans, unmingled

with abuse of their aid. For example, a woman explained why she did not share her husband's desire to return to Mexico:

I like the United States. The United States is good protection for me. If my babies are sick, the Welfare takes care of them. I can go to the dispensary. The nurse and doctor come, and when there is no money we don't pay. It is better here than in Mexico.

Even the bitter sting of race discrimination could be forgotten in the presence of friendliness and help. In the offices of the Immigrants' Protective League at Hull House we were told:

We heard of this Hull House even as far as South Chicago and they speak of it in the railroad camps outside the city. We remember those things more than the taunts of ignorant Americans. . . .

MEXICAN SOCIETIES

Mexican societies in the Chicago-Gary region are numerous and varied in type. In 1928 there were approximately thirty-five societies in the entire area—twenty-three in Chicago, eight in Indiana Harbor, and four in Gary. Of the societies in Chicago, five were located in South Chicago, two at the University of Chicago Settlement west of the stockyards, and the remainder in the vicinity of Hull House.⁷⁰

The principal type of society was the familiar *mutualista*, existing on dues of, say, \$1 per month, and dispensing sick benefits of doctor

⁷⁰ The following societies, of the general character indicated, were ascertained to be in existence in 1928; date of foundation, when determined, is given in parentheses after the name; the exclusion of some from enumeration above is more or less arbitrary, depending partly on the completeness of data at hand:

Chicago: Sociedad Benito Juárez (1917), Sociedad Ignacio Zaragoza (1921), Sociedad Miguel Hidalgo Y Costillo (1925), Sociedad Hispano-Americana (1924), Sociedad de Obreros Católicos, *mutualistas*; lodge No. 170, of the Alianza Hispano-Americana (1927), fraternal-benefit; Club Anáhuac (1926 or earlier) and Club Atlético Y Social Cuauhtemoc (1926 or earlier), Club Recreativo Ideal (1928), recreational and social; Club Cultural Latino-Americano (1928, with which the Club Recreativo Azteca was combined), Sociedad Feminil Mexicana (1927), cultural and social; Masonic lodge Hiram No. 6 (1928 or earlier); Comisión Honorífica (1926); Sociedad de Esfuerzo Cristiano "San Marcos" (about 1925), Friendly Club at St. Mark's church (1926), (in 1929 a Club Recreativo was formed, and the Cruz Azul was revived, but these, three theosophical lodges, and some spiritualist societies, are not counted above); South Chicago: Sociedad Obreros Libres (1922), Sociedad Caballeros de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe (1927 or earlier), *mutualistas*; Sociedad Santo Nombre, Liga Epworth, Union Bautista de Jovenes (1927), Sociedad Recreativa Feminil Guadalupeana (1928 or earlier), Liga Mexicana de Jovenes Christianos (1928), Masonic lodge Lux in Umbra No. 50 (1928), chartered, like the other lodge, by the Rito Nacional Mexicano in Mexico City; Indiana Harbor: Sociedad Mutualista Benito Juárez (1924, separate from society of similar name in Chicago), Sociedad Mutualista Cuauhtemoc (1925), Circulo de Obreros Católicos San José (1924), Sociedad José María Morelos (1926), Sociedad Feminina Mexicana (1928), affiliated with Sociedad Benito Juárez, *mutualistas*; Hijos de México (1928); Comisión Honorífica (1926); Cruz Azul (1921?); (Sociedad Santa Cruz, Club de los 13, Club Deportivo Internacional, and Feminil "Tesoro del Hogar," existing in 1929, not included); Gary: Sociedad Josefa Ortiz Dominguez (1928), Sociedad Hidalgo (1928), *mutualistas*; Caballeros de Guadalupe (1928 or earlier), Hijas de María (1928 or earlier).

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I like the United States. The United States is good protection for me. If my babies are sick, the Welfare takes care of them. I can go to the dispensary. The nurse and doctor come, and when there is no money we don't pay. It is better here than in Mexico.

Even the bitter sting of race discrimination could be forgotten in the presence of friendliness and help. In the offices of the Immigrants' Protective League at Hull House we were told:

We heard of this Hull House even as far as South Chicago and they speak of it in the railroad camps outside the city. We remember those things more than the taunts of ignorant Americans. . . .

MEXICAN SOCIETIES

Mexican societies in the Chicago-Gary region are numerous and varied in type. In 1928 there were approximately thirty-five societies in the entire area—twenty-three in Chicago, eight in Indiana Harbor, and four in Gary. Of the societies in Chicago, five were located in South Chicago, two at the University of Chicago Settlement west of the stockyards, and the remainder in the vicinity of Hull House.¹⁰

The principal type of society was the familiar *mutualista*, existing on dues of, say, \$1 per month, and dispensing sick benefits of doctor

¹⁰ The following societies, of the general character indicated, were ascertained to be in existence in 1928; date of foundation, when determined, is given in parentheses after the name; the exclusion of some from enumeration above is more or less arbitrary, depending partly on the completeness of data at hand:

Chicago: Sociedad Benito Juárez (1917), Sociedad Ignacio Zaragoza (1921), Sociedad Miguel Hidalgo Y Costillo (1925), Sociedad Hispano-Americana (1924), Sociedad de Obreros Católicos, *mutualistas*; lodge No. 170, of the Alianza Hispano-Americana (1927), fraternal-benefit; Club Anáhuac (1926 or earlier) and Club Atlético Y Social Cuauhtemoc (1926 or earlier), Club Recreativo Ideal (1928), recreational and social; Club Cultural Latino-Americano (1928, with which the Club Recreativo Asteca was combined), Sociedad Femenil Mexicana (1927), cultural and social; Masonic lodge Hiram No. 6 (1928 or earlier); Comisión Honorífica (1926); Sociedad de Esfuerzo Cristiano "San Marcos" (about 1925), Friendly Club at St. Mark's church (1926), (in 1929 a Club Recreativo was formed, and the Cruz Azul was revived, but these, three theosophical lodges, and some spiritualist societies, are not counted above); South Chicago: Sociedad Obreros Libres (1922), Sociedad Caballeros de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe (1927 or earlier), *mutualistas*; Sociedad Santo Nombre, Liga Epworth, Union Bautista de Jovenes (1927), Sociedad Recreativa Femenil Guadalupeana (1928 or earlier), Liga Mexicana de Jovenes Christianos (1928), Masonic lodge Lux in Umbra No. 50 (1928), chartered, like the other lodge, by the Rito Nacional Mexicano in Mexico City; Indiana Harbor: Sociedad Mutualista Benito Juárez (1924, separate from society of similar name in Chicago), Sociedad Mutualista Cuauhtemoc (1925), Circulo de Obreros Católicos San José (1924), Sociedad José María Morelos (1926), Sociedad Femenina Mexicana (1928), affiliated with Sociedad Benito Juárez, *mutualistas*; Hijos de México (1928); Comisión Honorífica (1926); Cruz Azul (1921?); (Sociedad Santa Cruz, Club de los 13, Club Deportivo Internacional, and Femenil "Tesoro del Hogar," existing in 1929, not included); Gary: Sociedad Josefa Ortiz Dominguez (1928), Sociedad Hidalgo (1928), *mutualistas*; Caballeros de Guadalupe (1928 or earlier), Hijas de María (1928 or earlier).

bills, medicine, and, say, \$1 per day for a limited number of weeks after the first week of illness. The Benito Juárez society in Chicago for a time provided group insurance for its members, which it purchased from an insurance company. Collections of individual subscriptions for various purposes were sometimes sponsored by the societies, usually for relief in case of illness or death. At least one society provided a loan fund, built up by voluntary contributions of members, thus forming a sort of credit union. Some of the *mutualistas* were sponsored, officially or unofficially by religious organizations, usually Catholic churches, or in two instances in Gary, by the International Institute of the Y. W. C. A. Most of them, however, were of entirely independent origin and affiliation. In at least one instance where dissension arose, a Catholic society was subsequently "disowned" by the local church authority, and the Sociedad Hispano-Americana of Chicago outgrew its origins at a Baptist mission. Some of the societies were social and recreational, a few simply athletic, and a few were "cultural," i.e., they perhaps maintained a library and conducted programs on topics of interest. Discussion of politics and religion was customarily barred in the non-religious societies. Societies frequently carried on activities of more than one type: for example, most of the societies, whatever their primary purpose, maintained some social activities, usually occasional dances; some combined social and athletic, or cultural and athletic activities; and contributions to the defense of *paisanos* in legal or other difficulties were sponsored by societies of almost any type.

In addition to these societies, there were usually in each major colony—Chicago, South Chicago, Indiana Harbor, and Gary—annual committees to organize the patriotic celebration of the national holidays, particularly the Sixteenth of September. This practice is customary wherever in the United States Mexicans are found in groups. The simple spontaneous process was described by a Mexican in Chicago:

For the Sixteenth of September celebrations someone calls a meeting and at the meeting a committee is elected to take charge of the celebration.

The "someone" who calls the meeting seldom fails. Sometimes these committees were formed of representatives of the existing societies, sometimes entirely independently of them. There were also three Mexican spiritualist societies, one organized in 1927 in the Hull House colony and another in South Chicago, which early in 1929 divided,

one group meeting near the stockyards.⁷¹ Three spiritualist organs, *La Estrella* (the *Star*), *El Siglo Espiritual* (the *Spiritualist Century*), and *El Herald del Espiritualismo* (the *Herald of Spiritualism*), were published. In the major colonies there were also Mexican bands, whose members were usually uniformed; they practiced assiduously without remuneration other than the pleasure derived and the homage rendered by the Mexican colony upon the occasion of their public appearances. In 1929 a Club Pro-Vasconcelos was formed to advance the candidacy of José Vasconcelos for the presidency of Mexico. A society called Unión Nationalista Mexicana, actively sympathetic in 1928 with the clericals in Mexico was, like the Club Pro-Vasconcelos, an echo of politics in Mexico, and an indication of the immigrants' retention of interest in the affairs of the mother country.

The formation of the Unión Nationalista Mexicana to further the cause of the clericals was soon answered by the organization of a Mexican Masonic lodge which showed a particular interest in affiliating with it the leaders of various groups in the Mexican colony.

The number of members claimed for the various societies ranged from twenty to one hundred twenty. Most of them were much closer to the first figure than to the second. Mortality among societies diminished further their influence among the Mexicans.⁷²

The career of many of the societies has been marred by dissension and instability, yet a number have shown marked ability to survive. Most of the elements of dissension will appear from examination of the history of some of the societies.

The first society in the area was Benito Juárez, organized at the close of 1917 by Mexicans working for the Rock Island Railroad in the vicinity of 37th and Wentworth Streets. Its aims were both beneficial and recreational. In 1918 the society was incorporated. With the coming of business depression in 1920-1921, involving unemployment and the return of many to Mexico, the society disintegrated.

⁷¹ Unpublished papers of Robert C. Jones describe the spiritualist societies in greater detail.

⁷² The following societies which had been active earlier, were inactive, so far as was determined, in 1928:—Chicago: Cruz Azul (1925 or earlier, revived in 1929), Centro Cultural Manuel Acuña (1926 or earlier, disbanded 1927), Sociedad Protectora del Cautivo (1925), Centro Femenil Educativo Azteca (1926 or earlier), Comisión Mexicana Independiente (1926 or earlier), Comité Pro-Cultura (1926 or earlier), El Centro Benéfica Amado Nervo (1925 or earlier), Círculo Latino (1926 or earlier); the Sociedad Fraternal Mexicana (1923 or 1924) became a lodge of the Alianza Hispano-Americana in 1927, and Club Recreativo Azteca (1925) merged into the Club Latino-Americano; South Chicago: Sociedad de Santo Nombre (1927 or earlier); Indiana Harbor: Pro Patria (1922, disbanded 1923); Gary: Sociedad Protectora Mexicana (1921-1926).

The significant story of its revival with middle class aid, and the splitting off of a group of laborers is related by a printer.

In 1921 the society was almost gone. Only the president and treasurer remained. When they ran out of money to pay the state, they called a meeting of their friends to reorganize the society. The president tried to get the best Mexican people. He was himself a cigar-maker with a small business. He brought in doctors, lawyers, and the like. I joined at this time.

The laborers then didn't want to come in with the doctors, lawyers, etc. They said they didn't like the principles; that the Benito Juárez people were so high that they had no principles [i.e., would make no efforts] to help the poor Mexicans, only to have good times. So the laborers and those with trades left and formed their own society. In this way the *Sociedad Ignacio Zaragoza* was formed in 1921.

In 1922 the Benito Juárez society established a benefit scale of \$100 for loss of arm, foot, or eye, and \$10 per week for six months. Sick members were to receive \$1 per day after the first week for a period of six months, and doctor bills were to be paid. Dues were fixed at \$2 per month. In 1925, group insurance was purchased, and the other benefits abandoned. Half of the dues were used to pay for the insurance and the remainder for charity and other purposes.

But the middle class and professional men failed to provide stability of existence, and in 1928 the society was again in need of "reorganization."

Now the doctors, lawyers, etc., don't come to the meetings, and only the president and secretary are left. Bulletins of the society were printed in 1922 and in 1926, but they never paid for the last bulletins. I told them to pay my dues and insurance and charge it off the printing bill, but they didn't; they said they had no money. Now we are all behind in our dues, and would have to pay back dues to rejoin. The society may reorganize.

The first Mexican society in Gary dates from 1921, when the International Institute of the Y. W. C. A. began active social work among the Mexicans.¹³ Following relief and recreational activities and the formation of a club, or "knitting class" of five girls, an attempt was made to form a women's club. The account of the organization of this club, and especially how the lead unexpectedly but significantly was taken by the men, is revealing:

Worker had attempted for some time to form a club among the women and met with some enthusiasm. But the night of the first meeting, most of the women sent their husbands to represent them, on account of babies, meals, and lunches for boarders, etc., and in this manner the club got under way and continued. It turned into a men's club.

¹³ Unpublished memoranda in the files of the International Institute, Gary, entitled "The Mexican colony, 1921-1926 inclusive," dated November, 1926, and "History of the Mexican colony, 1927-1928 inclusive," dated November 22, 1928.

The society became known as *La Sociedad Protectora Mexicana*. In 1926, upon the instigation of the Mexican president, a women's branch called *La Sociedad Mutualista Feminina* was formed.

But dissension and fluctuating fortunes ran throughout the lives of the societies. Of the first society it was said:

From that time to this, 1926, there has been a club in Gary, a club that has weathered the storms of six years, although it has frequently been submerged under waves of opposing opinion or steered out of its course by poor leaders. Nevertheless it has always come into harbor, even if with an unrecognizable aspect. But shortly thereafter the society suffered collapse.

The *Sociedad Protectora Mexicana* continued to exist until the fall of 1927; during the winter of 1926 the president . . . and the treasurer . . . were accused of embezzlement and were arrested by one of the members . . . and were found guiltless at the trial. However, in the meantime the credit and reputation of the society suffered, and too, the new president was a drinker and was not trusted by his people. A committee of members of the society . . . [including the president] approached [the Spanish-American] minister at Gary Neighborhood House for assistance in restoring the society to its former plane.

The Spanish American minister was elected president and a Mexican social worker was made chairman of the women's division. For a time there was prosperity and debts of \$600 were cleared up. But soon a cry of religion was raised, which proved fatal.

It seemed advisable to leave Roumanian Hall which was being rented at a high rate and move to the cottage belonging to Gary Neighborhood House which rented for \$25 a month. This proved disastrous as certain factions soon began to accuse the Protestant membership of "running" the club.

The Catholic interests of some members took rather definite form.

Then some people tried to get the club to donate money to the *Caballeros de Guadalupe* [Catholic society].

Naturally this proposal seemed unreasonable to others. The Spanish American minister resigned from the presidency, hoping to quiet the religious conflict, but the wounds were already too deep. The society struggled along and finally disbanded entirely, moved out of the cottage, and stored the furniture. New societies arose, however, from the ashes of the old.

In October 1928 a group of people still interested in seeing the Mexicans of Gary organized called a meeting and formed the new society known as *Sociedad Hidalgo*. The women of the original society came to the Institute and asked if they might come there and organize a separate club of their own. With the help of the Institute workers they organized in October 1928, naming themselves *Josefa Ortiz Domínguez*, and naming . . . a former member of the Institute staff as their advisor. The aims of this club are "social" and "benefit."

The first Mexican society in Indiana Harbor, excepting the Cruz Azul, was a *mutualista* called Pro Patria, established in 1922. After somewhat less than two years it expired. In 1924 the Benito Juárez society was formed, also as a *mutualista*. Dissatisfaction within, said to focus on the smallness of the benefits, led to a division, the dissenters founding the Sociedad José María Morelos in 1926. In 1928, a Sociedad Feminina Mexicana was organized in affiliation with the Benito Juárez Society.

In the meantime other societies were formed, including the *Círculo de Obreros Católicos San José* in 1924; but in 1929 peace had departed. There were two other societies claiming to be the Catholic societies, the right of the San José society to call itself Catholic any longer was reported to be under attack by local church authority and by Mexicans who said that its members "talk against the priests," a member of the San José society was suing a member of another society, and the directors of one of the societies claiming to be the rightful church society were bringing suit against their enemies of another society. In 1928 I talked with the Mexican who the following year was the storm center; at that time he had but recently come to the city, and told us that, having chosen carefully to cast his lot with the most promising society, he was going to bring unity to the societies of the city! At that time he expounded the causes of dissension prevalent among Mexican societies:

The Mexican societies are divided by the fact that too many want to be leaders. All want to be generals and none soldiers. Another difficulty is the conflict between the Catholics and the anti-clericals. . . . The anti-clericals may be Catholics, too, but not in the political sense. A third factor is business competition, to get or remain in control of the societies for reasons of prestige and to aid one's business, for example, the printers.

Interestingly, all of the factors which he mentioned were involved in the turmoil which ensued within a year.

Statements of informed Mexicans and newspaper comments may be added to the historical examples already cited to reveal factors of disunity and instability. One Mexican stressed the poverty and the irregular and shifting employment of many Mexicans which affect their relations to any society:

It is very hard to organize societies and collect the dues. They do not work regularly; they have to move with the work. If there is no work they fall behind in their dues. It is not long until they are in arrears to the sum of \$7 or \$8. Now the question presents itself: Here is \$10; shall I buy a pair of shoes and

some stockings and shirts that I need, or shall I catch up on my dues? The answer is only natural. There have been many societies which have come and gone in Chicago as a result of this.

He further pointed out the heavy drain on funds of a few illnesses for which benefits are given, or of even deliberate malingering:

At times no one has been sick; other times one or two cases have exhausted their funds and the society broke up. There was one case in which a member played sick and the money went to him till it was all gone.

A Spanish priest also described financial limitations as breeders of discord:

These mutualistic societies are small in membership and . . . cannot exact great contributions. Fifty cents a week is about the maximum they can ask and receive. As long as nobody is sick or needs help for a while, the society can go on well. But as sometimes happens, in the second or third month some do get sick, others injured, and the first two or three cases take up the existing funds of the society. That is bad, but what is worse, follows. Because of the lack of funds there are often disagreements, misunderstandings, which lead to discord and recriminations on the part of those dissatisfied with the officers. Then the eventual break-up.

Others spoke of dissatisfaction over administration of finances, which, whether justified or not, caused dissension, and even the break-up of societies. The initial collapse of the Cruz Azul in Chicago was ascribed to this by a leading and informed Mexican:

The Cruz Azul lasted one year. They gave dances, parties, and took up collections from Mexican business men. Bakeries gave bread and groceries, and people gave clothes and shoes. But so many poor people wanted help that there was not enough, and some had to be refused. Then the Mexicans thought because there were so many who couldn't get help that no one got help. So word was passed around: What do they do with the funds? So no one wanted to take charge any more and have such things said about them.

Attacking as financially jealous a group within both the Cruz Azul, and subsequently the Sociedad Hispano Americana, a Mexican newspaper of the time stated under the title "The Obstructionists":

Apparently the agitators and destroyers of the Mexican societies have started activities again. They succeeded in making the Cruz Azul . . . disintegrate. Now they have started on one of the most serious societies we have in Chicago. . . . Since these obstructionists have not been admitted to any societies but the one they control, they are trying to get the Club Hispano-Americano to unite with them, arguing that they are trying to form one consolidated society. They only seek the dissolution of it and notoriety for themselves. The Mexican colony knows about the most monstrous crime we have ever heard of, to kill wickedly an institution of charity because the Board of Directors refused to give them blank checks already signed. This is the real origin of the ill-will of those destroyers of institutions.⁷⁴

⁷⁴ *Correo Mexicano*, October 15 and December 4, 1926.

A very intimate glimpse of what seems to be a similar attack appears in the account of the meeting of a society in 1930:

Then when it came to choosing the secretary, among the nominations was the name of Sra. A. . . . This distinguished lady asked leave to speak a word explaining why she could not accept the charge, since for some time she had been constantly annoyed by the telephones, and anonymous people accused her of untrue things, for example that she was rich from manipulation of her secretaryship.—The meeting demonstrated by applause to Sra. A. how satisfied it was with her work.⁷⁵

In Indiana Harbor it seemed necessary to reply in the newspapers to a published attack on a lodge of the Alianza Hispano-Americana, said to contain "falsehoods and calumnies, which are clearly a case of vulgar envy or bad faith. . . ." ⁷⁶

In Chicago a Mexican mechanic with good education stressed the gulf between classes of Mexicans as a factor for disunion which was noted earlier in the Benito Juárez Society:

The lower classes don't want to join with the middle and upper classes. In Mexico we have these people for cheap servants. They are very nice people but not educated. Here they dress up better but they don't feel comfortable with the upper classes because their speech is not correct.

A Mexican grocer in Indiana Harbor made the same point:

It is hard for them to go to the meetings with the higher classes. There are a few leaders but the rest are ignorant. They feel embarrassed if the high class Mexicans go where they are. . . . Our aim was to unite the whole colony. First, we learned that we needed instruction, books, etc. But the *peones* did not care for instruction. We found that they needed clean hands, clothes, etc. But the *peones* said they did not care; they said because we were clean we were trying to be better than they; they said they did not need to be told how to dress.

One Mexican suggested that the traditional feelings of Mexicans from some states in Mexico against those from other states also aided in keeping the Mexican colonists disunited. Another Mexican, president of one of the Mexican societies, charged that interested persons sought to keep the Mexican societies disrupted and discredited in the eyes of both Mexicans and Americans. At an open meeting of Mexicans, he said,

Let us ever be on the alert to oust from our midst those who would plant and sow the discord, the ill-will, the break-up of our friendships and our purposes. There are many who would join us, agree with us, later only to take hold of the reins and by disgraceful acts discredit us not only before our own people but amongst Americans. For it is to their benefit and to their advantage that we

⁷⁵ Mexico, October 28, 1930.

⁷⁶ Mexico, March 9, 1929.

remain disunited. There are powerful interests here in Chicago and elsewhere who look with jealous eyes on our efforts to unite and better ourselves. It is more than often that their emissaries come amongst us to disorganize and disrupt us. When they do come, let us pick them out, and step on them hard and cast them out.

No other evidence of active hostility from outside the societies came to our attention, nor did any other Mexicans in this area suggest it.

A Spanish priest, notwithstanding the rifts which have been observed in societies even under religious auspices, in South Chicago,⁷⁷ Indiana Harbor, and under semi-religious auspices in Gary, thought that religious auspices were an advantage to the societies; like a priest in western Colorado he told us that they should organize "in the shadow of the church." He added a belief in racial instability:

It has been my experience in the United States that other than the religious societies in Mexican colonies do not succeed so very well. When I first came here I was quite enthused over their mutualistic societies and their efforts to help one another; since then I have changed my mind from experience. In the first place, they limit their memberships to Mexicans alone, and where there are not many, the society is small. Where there are many Mexicans, there are many societies, so the individual society is small anyway. I do not know why it should be, but the Latin race has that tendency to be so divided and split up, and not capable of any great united efforts like the other peoples undertake and do.

A Mexican near the stockyards was similarly frank about the difficulty with which his people sustained their efforts at organization, although he did not suggest that this was because of any racial characteristic:

The Mexicans start societies with enthusiasm, but don't continue. Each one is too much for himself.

Since the rise of Mexican colonies in this region, repeated efforts have been made to unite the various societies; the failure of these adds to evidences of disunity apparent in many individual societies. At least as early as 1924 there was public talk of uniting the Mexican societies of Chicago. The first attempt to take tangible form was the establishment on March 30, 1925, of the *Confederación de Sociedades Mexicanas de los Estados Unidos Americanos*. Under the leadership of a Mexican, A. J. Fink, at 1616 West Taylor Street, representatives of nine societies in Chicago, Indiana Harbor, Joliet, and Waukegan united.⁷⁸ The confederation lasted about a year and a half, when

⁷⁷ Nelson, *op. cit.*, 28.

⁷⁸ Mexico, April 11, 1925. The societies were:—Chicago: Benito Juárez, Sociedad Hispano Americana, Obreros Libres, Sociedad Fraternal Mexicana, Club Anáhuac; Indiana Harbor: Benito Juárez; Joliet: Sociedad Mutualista Moctezuma, Comisión Monorífica; Waukegan: Club Atlas Mexicano.

because of internal dissension between societies and the same difficulties which individual societies encountered, it broke down. *Mexico* announced the impending doom of the confederation in these words:

After two hard years the Conference seemed to be approaching a satisfactory condition, had it not been for certain evils brought on by persons not accustomed to these struggles of organization, individuals not prepared for aims so elevated as are necessary in our environment. We have a number of important facts which convince us that a real disaster is taking place in the unfortunate institution.⁷⁹

During its existence, the confederation was active in defense of Mexicans in legal difficulties, in combatting public social discriminations against Mexicans, and in other ways assisting Mexicans to meet problems arising in the new environment.

Patriotism and anti-imperialism, broadened to include all Hispanic Americans, lent fervor to a new appeal for unification the following year:

Another important point in our journalistic program will be that of cooperation for the unification and closer relations of all the Hispanic American countries so that united and strong they can offer firm resistance to the imperialistic pretensions of the foreigner, whoever he may be.

From Mexico to the southern border of Patagonia, including the Antilles, is all for us like one immense Fatherland with one great heart that beats with the same feeling, and with one great mind fired with the supreme ideal of the race. . . .

But above all, cooperation and better intelligence between all the Hispanic Americans of Chicago will occupy our attention most, since it is this that will make them stronger and more respected, and will place them in a better light in the opinion of outsiders.

To be completely successful, we must try, in the first place, to have all the various Mexican societies welded into one single society, and then proceed to the unification of the other brothers for the sake of the race, the language, and the customs, which, today scattered and separated, are priceless ciphers in the great numerical quantity of the Hispanic American colony in Chicago.⁸⁰

In 1927 hopes of unification of the societies in Indiana Harbor were expressed in glowing terms:

In Indiana Harbor the seed has fallen into the furrow which will germinate a frank spirit of sane cooperation and a noble discipline. The aureola of prosperity which will bring the light of union to all the resident colony can be glimpsed.⁸¹

But the hopes did not materialize. Again in the spring of 1929 a *Confederación de Sociedades del Condado de Lake* was formed in Indiana Harbor, but it failed to include some important societies, and

⁷⁹ August 21, 1926.

⁸⁰ *La Noticia Mundial*, August 7, 1927.

⁸¹ *Correo Mexicano*, February 19, 1927.

dissension had never been so rife as it was during the summer of 1929.⁸²

In 1928 a Comité Pro-unificación de la Colonia Mexicana was initiated in Chicago by some lower middle class Mexicans. This was greeted by the press with characteristic enthusiasm and patriotism:

A labor more noble and Mexican you could not have attempted.⁸³

A month earlier, the retiring president of a society holding a public meeting at Hull House had voiced the usual appeal for unity:

In this district bounded by Canal, Madison, Ashland and 16th there are over six thousands of Mexicana. Where there exist six societies of Mexicans there should be only one. Let us unite into one strong society to protect each others' interests instead of being divided as we are. Why must we suffer this curse of disunity which lays us so open to the attack of our enemies. I am but an old man; it is up to you young people to do this. If an old man can feel this way, why is it that the young, energetic blood does not bring once and for all an end to this disunion? Let it be a mutualistic society, a social one, or one of both [types], but let us have but one.

Again in the fall of the same year a move for united action under title of Centro Mexicano was made; again, despite previous discouragements, hopes were raised.

Naturally although we have seen all the projects and good intentions fail which have originated with the different groups who in different forms have tried to make the colony understand our great need of remedying our collective status, the mere announcement of the aims of this committee makes us have the new hope of soon seeing the large Mexican colony occupying a place of dignity and honor among the various foreign colonies which lend color and pride to this modern Babylon called Chicago.⁸⁴

In 1929 once more the call to organize was raised, this time under the slogan Pro Patria Y Obrero. The statement of aims, widely inclusive yet often vague, is more than ordinarily revealing:

Strengthen the friendly relations between the local and nearby societies, mediate in a friendly way between them; encourage the reciprocal interests which develop the great ideals of social betterment, such as culture, morality, economic

⁸² The roll of societies joining the confederation, formed on the initiative of the first four, was as follows: Cuauhtemoc, Morelos, San José, Hijos de México, Club de los 13, Banda de Obreros Mexicanos, Feminil "Tesoro del Hogar," Club Deportivo International.—*Mexico*, September 4, 1929.

⁸³ *Mexico*, July 21, 1928. Similar patriotic appeal followed an earlier enumeration of the Mexican societies of Chicago (*Correo Mexicano*, September 6, 1926): "The preceding fills us with pride, but we manage to demonstrate that Mexicans know how to be united and fraternal." Similarly, when the Comisión Honorífica was established (*ibid.*, September 14, 1926): "We Mexicans in a foreign land should give proof that we know how to be brotherly, for when one is a good brother, one is a good son."

⁸⁴ *Mexico*, December 5, 1928.

development, and study of all the social problems of marked interest as Mexicans and laborers, but prohibiting the discussion of political or religious questions. To attain this, interchange of ideas will be favored, by means of private discussions within each society or else public ones; working for the establishment of a library; to foster the idea of savings, so that it can be the means of aiding the attainment of the economic independence of the organized laborers and of the colony in general.

By what is indicated you will see how many hopes we entertain that the local and neighboring societies will soon form the greatly desired union, so that the aspirations of each particular society will be realized. We have no doubt that you will give us your moral support and lend us a hand to help solve better the problems which confront us as Mexicans.⁶⁵

Underlying the efforts of the Mexican population to organize are the desire for social and recreational contacts with countrymen, for mutual aid in times of necessity, whether financial stress or what is conceived to be legal or social oppression of Mexicans. All attempts to unite face the instability of shifting membership which is inevitable in a population which is shifting. Other factors of dissension and instability already noted—class differences among Mexicans, with the wide gulf which this implies, personal jealousies and ambitions, disputes over use of funds, religious and political differences which often have their roots in Mexico, and poverty—all have served as obstacles. Yet some societies persevere, some go into eclipse and "reorganize," thus maintaining a thread of continuity, and the glowing hopes of unifying the organizations of the colony remain perennial.

The societies, although actively participated in by only a small minority, play an important rôle which directly and indirectly affects the life of the entire colony. Many more Mexicans use pool halls as their social centers. The small *librerías* or book stores serve as gathering places where Mexican politics from the days of Porfirio Díaz to the assassination of Obregón were discussed. Groups which more or less informally come together at settlement houses, churches, night school classes, or elsewhere offer social contacts to many. The largest numbers are attracted to patriotic celebrations or occasions such as the public appearances of the various Mexican bands. But these gatherings lack the intimacy, cohesion, and continuity which, despite their failures, the societies afford.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, September 8, 1929.

LAW OBSERVANCE AND ENFORCEMENT

Opinions concerning the proneness of Mexicans to violate law have an intrinsic importance irrespective of their foundation or lack of foundation in objective fact. In this section both opinion and fact are examined, so far as possible.

Some persons thought the Mexicans dangerous:

The Mexicans kill one another about once a week.

The Mexicans carry guns and have a bad part of town. I would not go down in their part of town after dark for anything.

About a week ago they rounded up about thirteen and took them to jail. They were upstairs in that building and were doing something, what I do not know, but you could hear them. Every once in a while they would throw an empty bottle at someone passing on the street below. About two months ago they had a riot down 87th Street and it took three Cadillacs of police and a couple of motorcycles to stop them. They are always shooting or stabbing each other. It's fierce.

Others were more temperate. It was a policeman who said:

They are not criminals at heart and we have less trouble with them than with other nationalities. They are not robbers and thieves. Carrying a weapon is the greatest [not most numerous] offense and getting drunk is the second. The other people peddle out the poison [i.e., liquor] and the poor devils drink it.

But even he was apprehensive of danger when placing Mexicans under arrest. The more friendly accounts stressed a belief, not held by all, that the Mexicans kept their disturbances to themselves.

Mexicans were generally ready to admit the charges against their own countrymen, but usually not without observing that other nationalities, too, had similar transgressors:

I think South Chicago has a very bad name as a Mexican colony among the Mexicans themselves. At night sometimes it is like a revolution here.

The Mexicans have earned their reputation. When the Irish or Poles drink they do it at home and stay home; they bother no one. But the Mexicans drink and then go out; they go on the street and holler and yell. *Qué escándalo!* And then they fight with other Mexicans in their houses and on the street. The police come and take them in and put them in jail; but what [else] can they do? *Es triste!* The worst of all are those *malos hombres* that carry a knife or gun around. Some of them are Mexicans. They make trouble all the time. It is very bad for all of us who are quiet and want to live well with their neighbors. They think all the Mexicans are like that. They always tell us that. But I laugh and keep still when I see some of those *cabezas de nieve* [white-heads] going to jail; they have some bad ones themselves. But we Mexicans are bad and have a bad reputation.

They [the Poles] say we are drunk and low. They are not better than we, but they are worse. They say we are not fit to associate with. We do not want to associate with them, with people who allow their women to appear drunk in public and act like wild women. They raise hell in this town. The Mexicans do their drinking inside; the Poles go out into the street hollering and cursing. In the house where I live there are some Poles who live on the first flat. There are five women and seven men; none of them married. They get drunk three times a week and raise Cain till 3 or 4 in the morning. They bang the chairs on the wall and break the dishes. In the winter if I chop some wood upstairs for kindling the women come upstairs cursing and yelling at me. You never hear of our Mexican women acting that way or swearing. The Poles are a disgrace.

The keen observation was made by an Irish woman that the effects of quarrelsomeness depend not so much upon any inherent predisposition to quarrel as upon the weapons used under the accepted national code:

The Mexicans, you know, don't bother other people, but they raise hell amongst their own. That's too bad. One month ago there was one fellow shot at 8925 Green Bay. Only two weeks ago one fellow carried a knife and tried to stab another fellow on this corner. They keep the police busy watching them and seeing that they keep order. You know the Irish get rowdy or mad and give each other a black eye, but they wouldn't kill each other. That's too much.

An American pointed out the additional effect in accentuating the bad reputation of Mexicans of selected and perhaps accented news of their misdeeds which appears in the papers:

The Mexicans get a bad reputation through their drunkenness and court cases, which are played up by the papers and are the only things we hear about the Mexicans. Of course whites get drunk, too.

The available statistics on offenses by Mexicans in Chicago are presented in table 18. It appears that 1.4 per cent of the persons arrested during the two-year period 1928-1929 were Mexicans by nativity. "Mexicans," irrespective of country of birth, constituted but .57 per cent of the total population of Chicago, and Mexicans by *nativity* were even slightly less numerous. Therefore, it is clear that Mexicans were arrested in numbers far beyond that to which their proportion of the total population would "entitle" them. This was even more true in 1930 when the percentage of Mexican arrests rose to 1.85. Compensating factors are noted below which mitigate the force of the bare statistical comparison; there may also be noted here the additional fact that Mexicans throughout the entire period of the comparison were much more frequently victims of unemployment than was the general population. Also, it will be observed from the table that the proportion of charges against Mexicans for felonies, viz., nine-tenths per cent, is much less than that against them for

TABLE 18

ARRESTS AND CHARGES AND CONVICTIONS IN THE MUNICIPAL COURT, OF MEXICANS AND AMERICAN WHITES IN CHICAGO IN 1928 AND 1929*

ARRESTS	1928	1929	1928-29
Total	150,885	194,999	345,884
American white	92,802	111,081	203,883
Per cent American white...	61.5	57.0	53.9
Mexicans	2,147	2,699	4,846
Per cent Mexicans	1.4	1.4	1.4†
CHARGES			
Felonies			
Total	21,279	20,215	41,494
American white.....	12,437	12,206	24,643
Per cent American white	58.4	60.4	59.4
Mexican	175	202	377
Per cent Mexican .....	.8	1.0	.9
Misdemeanors			
Total	147,503	192,211	339,714
American white	90,951	108,960	199,911
Per cent American white	61.7	56.7	58.8
Mexican	2,103	2,625	4,728
Per cent Mexican	1.4	1.4	1.4
Both			
Total	168,782	212,426	381,208
American white	103,388	121,166	224,554
Per cent American white	61.3	57.0	58.9
Mexican	2,278	2,827	5,105
Per cent Mexican	1.3	1.3	1.3
CONVICTIONS, MISDEMEANORS			
Total	34,912	45,094	80,006
American white.....	21,272	25,838	47,110
Per cent American white....	60.9	57.3	58.9
Mexican	826	1,000	1,826
Per cent Mexican	2.4	2.2	2.3
PER CENT CONVICTIONS, MISDEMEANORS			
Total	23.7	23.5	23.6
American white	23.4	23.7	23.6
Mexican	39.3	38.1	38.7

* Data from annual reports of the Police Department. "American colored" are separated from "American"; therefore "American" in the report is given as "American white" in this table.

The same individual may have been charged and convicted of more than one offense and therefore counted more than once in these items. All data are based upon arrests made in 1928 and 1929. Data on charges and convictions for felonies did not permit comparison.

† The percentage of Mexican arrests rose to 1.87 in 1930; in that year, of 183,434 arrests, 3,433 were arrests of Mexicans.

misdemeanors, a record which is distinctly favorable to them. Also it is of interest that the percentage of Mexican arrests (1.4) is lower than the percentage of Mexicans under care of the United Charities, which in 1930 was 3.4.

TABLE 19—CHARGES UPON WHICH MEXICANS ARRESTED DURING THE TWO-YEAR PERIOD 1928-29 WERE CONVICTED IN THE CHICAGO MUNICIPAL COURT*

Felonies	Number	Per cent
Larceny and larceny by bail	124	87.9
Malicious mischief	6	4.3
Larceny, attempted	4	2.9
Larceny of automobile	2	1.4
Receiving stolen property	2	1.4
Larceny by pickpocket	1	.7
Larceny, accessory to	1	.7
Other felonies	1	.7
Total	141	100.0
Misdemeanors		
Disorderly conduct	1,231	67.3
Disorderly house, inmates of	201	11.0
Carrying concealed firearm	65	3.5
Assault with deadly weapon	63	3.4
Other concealed weapons	41	2.2
Gaming house, inmates of	36	2.0
House of ill fame, inmates of	34	1.9
Speed law, violation of	22	1.2
Search and seizure act	14	.8
Contributing to delinquency of child	14	.8
License renewal	10	.5
Refusal to pay taxi fare	9	.4
Stopping at boulevards	6	.3
License plate display	6	.3
Sundry licenses	6	.3
Gaming house, keepers of	6	.3
House of ill fame, keepers of	5	.3
Assault and battery	5	.3
Assault	5	.3
Abandonment of or non-support of wife or children	5	.3
Rules of road	4	.2
Auto operator intoxicated	4	.2
Lights on vehicles	3	.1
Vagrancy	3	.1
Obtaining money or goods by false pretense	2	.1
Loitering	2	.1
Adultery and fornication	1	.1
Bastardy	1	.1
Disposing of mortgaged property	1	.1
Soliciting for prostitution	1	.1
Licensed chauffeur and operators	1	.1
Register number not shown	1	.1
Vehicles not to pass cars	1	.1
Compulsory education	1	.1
Parking ordinance	1	.1
Other misdemeanors	16	.9
Total	1,826	100.0

* Data from annual reports of the Police Department of Chicago. The same individual may have been convicted upon more than one charge and therefore counted more than once.

In table 19 are shown in detail the charges upon which Mexicans who were arrested during the two years 1928-29, were convicted in the municipal court of Chicago. Among felonies, the heavy preponderance of larceny in one form or another will be observed at once. The range of "charges" would have been considerably wider, had the table not been limited to the *charges upon which convictions were obtained in the municipal court*, but convictions seemed preferable to simply *charges* as a basis for this table. Among misdemeanors, "disorderly conduct" and "inmates of disorderly house" comprise 78.3 per cent of the convictions. This proportion is much higher than the proportion of the same offenses among either American whites or all nationalities, the figures of which were 57.3 and 58.9 per cent, respectively. Assault of various kinds, and carrying weapons of various kinds comprise another 9.7 per cent of the charges on which convictions were obtained against Mexicans. This percentage also is higher than similar percentages for American whites and all nationalities, which were 3.3 and 4.7, respectively. The offenses of Mexicans are concentrated much more than average in these two groups of charges, probably mainly because of the very abnormal age and sex composition of the Mexican population in Chicago. The charge of vagrancy was very little used against Mexicans, which contrasts with the extensive use of this charge in many other localities, for example, in Stockton, California, frequented by Mexican agricultural laborers, where 32 per cent of the Mexicans arrested by the police in 1928 were charged with vagrancy, or in San Francisco where 19 per cent of the Mexicans arrested during the fiscal year 1929 faced this charge.

Table 20 permits comparison between Mexican offenders and offenders⁸⁸ of all other nationalities in respect to sex composition and marital status. The effect of the abnormal sex distribution of the Mexican population of Chicago is at once apparent. The offenders of all nationalities were 87.1 per cent males, but the percentage among Mexicans was even higher, viz., 96.3. Only 2 per cent of the Mexican offenders who were single were women, but these few constituted 39 per cent of all Mexican women offenders. The proportion of Mexican offenders who were married was only 28.7 per cent as compared with 44.2 per cent of all nationalities; but the proportion of Mexican

⁸⁸ Strictly, the number of charges upon which convictions were obtained, which may not be quite identical with the number of individual "offenders," but which is as close as the available data permit. In "Mexicans in the United States," National commission on law observance and enforcement, *Reports*, Vol. III, Report on crime and the foreign-born, pp. 220-235, the present writer has also discussed law observance and enforcement among Mexicans in the Chicago-Gary region.

TABLE 20
COMPARISON OF SEX AND MARITAL STATUS OF MEXICANS WITH PERSONS OF ALL NATIONALITIES BASED UPON CHARGES UPON WHICH
MEXICANS AND PERSONS OF ALL NATIONALITIES, ARRESTED DURING THE TWO-YEAR PERIOD 1928-1929,
WERE CONVICTED IN THE CHICAGO MUNICIPAL COURT*

	Married				Single				Totals			
	Male		Female		Male		Female		Married, both sexes		Single, both sexes	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
Felonies:												
Mexicans.....	42	72.4	16	27.6	82	98.8	1	1.2	58	41.1	83	58.9
All nationalities.....	1,650	60.4	1,083	39.6	3,647	83.1	740	16.9	2,733	38.4	4,387	61.6
Misdemeanors :												
Mexicans.....	479	94.5	28	5.5	1,292	97.9	27	2.1	507	27.8	1,319	72.2
All nationalities.....	30,513	85.3	5,244	14.7	40,105	90.6	4,144	9.4	35,767	44.7	44,249	55.3
Total:												
Mexicans.....	521	92.2	44	7.8	1,374	98.0	28	2.0	565	28.7	1,402	71.3
All nationalities.....	32,163	83.6	6,327	16.4	43,752	90.0	4,884	10.0	38,490	44.2	48,636	55.8

	Male				Female				Totals				Totals	
	Married		Single		Married		Single		Male Married and single		Female Married and single			
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
Felonies:														
Mexican.....	42	33.8	82	66.2	16	94.1	1	5.9	124	87.9	17	12.1	141	2.0
All nationalities.....	1,560	31.1	3,647	68.9	1,083	59.4	740	40.6	5,297	74.4	1,823	25.6	7,120	100.0
Misdemeanors:														
Mexican.....	479	27.0	1,292	73.0	28	50.9	29	49.1	1,771	97.0	55	3.0	1,826	2.3
All nationalities.....	30,513	43.2	40,105	56.8	5,244	55.9	4,144	44.1	70,618	88.3	9,388	11.7	80,006	100.0
Total:														
Mexican.....	521	27.5	1,374	72.5	44	61.1	28	38.9	1,895	98.3	72	3.7	1,967	2.3
All nationalities.....	32,163	42.4	43,752	57.6	6,327	56.4	4,884	43.6	75,915	87.1	11,211	12.9	87,126	100.0

* Data from annual report of the Police Department.

women who were married was 61.1 per cent, which was greater than the proportion of married women among offenders of all nationalities. Attention may be drawn also to the fact that the proportion of convictions against Mexicans (2.3 per cent) was higher than their proportion of arrests (1.4 per cent), a fact upon which further comment will be made below. The percentage of charges upon which convictions for *felonies* were obtained, which were charges against Mexicans, was 2 per cent; as in the similar comparison among arrests, this was less than the percentage of convictions for *misdemeanors* which were against Mexicans.

From such data as are available, then, the record of Mexicans as observers of the law is clearly unfavorable to them, but less unfavorable than appears from the bare figures, for reasons cited below, and less unfavorable than the opinions of their neighbors would suggest. This disfavor is probably accounted for largely by the unusually high proportion among Mexicans of such offenses as disorderly conduct, assault, etc., most of which are rather conspicuous to neighbors. The unfavorable portion of the Mexicans' record for law observance thus looms large in their eyes.

Protests by Mexicans against the administration of justice by police and courts were more specific and frequent than in other areas studied. Whether there was less even-handed justice than in some rural areas is difficult to say; probably the facts that in the Chicago-Gary region the Mexicans were a group predominantly of males, in an urban environment, far from home, and with local Mexican newspapers, which brought individual cases of abuse more generally and vividly to the attention of the colonists, made them more vocal in protest. On the other hand, there is the fact that the police in the districts inhabited by Mexicans were often first or second generation of the very nationalities which feel themselves in competition with the Mexicans and frequently have clashed with them physically; furthermore, the police were less accustomed to the presence of Mexicans in the community and were less familiar with their language and behavior than in the Southwest where they have resided longer. These facts naturally do not result in more gentle treatment of Mexicans. At the same time, the line of social and economic cleavage between Mexicans and the rest of the community, inevitably affecting adversely their standing before the law, is not so clear and sharp as in the rural Southwest.

The Mexicans in Indiana Harbor claimed that discriminatory treatment by policemen, usually Polish, was common. Four statements may be quoted as representative.

The policemen here are hard on the Mexicans. If they see a Mexican drunk they run him in, even if he has [only] a breath. If it's a *Pollito* they pat him on the back, take him by the hand, and say, "Go on home and sleep it off," even if they are acting like mad. It costs a Mexican \$18 and \$20 to drink; not a Pole.

The Mexicans take a lot of abuse here in this town. The authorities are always after us. If the Mexican drinks a glass of something and a policeman knows it, into the calaboose for him. If they commit a nuisance, the same. A Pole gets drunk and the policeman takes him home. If the other commits a crime he has a chance to get away with it; not a Mexican. The others get drunk by the families, carry on brothels, and are never disturbed. If the Mexicans have a party and somebody laughs too loud, they raid the place and call it disorderly conduct.

The police are bad to the Mexicans. They do not wait for an explanation but catch every Mexican they suspect and hit them over the head.

A policeman killed a Mexican recently. Just because a Mexican is drunk they hit him or do anything to him.

When I inquired of a Mexican in Gary why the Mexicans frequently carry guns he referred to the incident just mention by way of reply:

One reason the Mexicans carry guns is because of their relations with the police. The latter, especially in Indiana Harbor, shoot the Mexicans with small provocation. One shot a Mexican who was walking away from him, and laughed as the body was thrown into the patrol wagon. They are not so bad as that in Gary.

It should be added by way of moderation of the preceding, that a Mexican said in 1929 that, "Since last year the police treat the Mexicans better."

In South Chicago I encountered on the streets a young Mexican of almost diminutive stature, with a surgical dressing on his scalp covering a wound which he said had just been inflicted by the police. His statement, although of course *ex parte*, is nevertheless very illuminating:

My friends made me get drunk with moonshine; when I saw the police coming I threw the empty bottle on the floor. The policeman hit me on the head with his gun. I didn't say nothing to him; I didn't fight. I didn't say nothing in court. My friend asked the judge how much the fine was; he said \$14. My friend paid it and I gave him my \$65 watch until I can pay him back. In my country the police wouldn't do that. They would just take a drunk man by the arm and take him to jail, and let him out the next day. Or if he was fighting, he would have to work a week in the flower beds; nice work, not hard.

In the vicinity of the stockyards a Mexican leader explained:

The average policeman's attitude is still against the Mexicans; the police are largely Irish and Polish.

In the same area an American with reason to be well informed, included the courts with the police in his charges of maladministration of justice:

The Mexicans get little protection in the courts. The Mexicans are now learning that you must buy justice. The police searched the Mexican houses without warrants [during the Mexican-Polish troubles] and let the crowd hit their Mexican prisoners while they were in custody. The Mexican is in the same position as the Negro in the South. He is always wrong unless there is a white man to speak for him.

A Mexican living nearby, independently reported "buying justice" in a very literal sense:

Sometimes the police are all right to the Mexicans and sometimes they take money from them instead of arresting them. The police hold out their hands, spreading five fingers and say, "Sabé?" The Mexicans prefer paying \$5 to being arrested, and therefore pay.

Redfield reports the description by an American neighbor, of a police raid in Brighton Park in 1924 on a Mexican dance where a shooting occurred; the raid was conducted with such seemingly needless and indiscriminate vigor that the neighbor's "feelings were outraged by the brutality of the police."

The wholesale arrest of Mexicans caused much protest. For example, the arrest of 37 Mexicans at the Proviso railroad camp in 1926, during which, it was asserted, the police beat Mexicans, aroused much indignation and even brought newspaper censure on the consul claiming that he displayed insufficient activity in behalf of his countrymen.⁸⁷ Upon the occasion of the arrest, a few months earlier, of a number of Mexicans at the door of the dance hall at Hull House, the grievance was aired at considerable length and with thrusts at the concern of Americans over treatment of their nationals in Mexico:

North Americans in Mexico—Mexicans in the United States

In Chicago the Mexicans have been the victims more than two dozen times at the hands of the police, those abusive half-breeds who take advantage of uniforms and shining badges to perpetrate attacks on our people.

Everyone knows perfectly that the majority, 98 per cent, of the Mexicans living in this country are legitimate laborers.

Last Saturday the police, showing off great powers as detectives, caught twenty-odd Mexicans at the door of the dance-hall at Hull House, simply because it suited their fancy. There was no crime for which to prosecute; the police had not the semblance of a cause for acting as they did. They were imprisoned at the Police Station until last Monday, and beset by rascals, petty lawyers, and pettifoggers of the district who wanted to "fix up everything."

With such actions on the part of the police the hard feelings and misunderstandings between Mexicans and North Americans are only aroused more.

⁸⁷ *Mexico*, December 11, 1926; also November 27, 1926.

There are Mexicans who bring much discredit to our nationality. They live in billiard halls and centers of vice, exploiting others. But these are not the majority. These deserve to be punished, but when honorable and decent Mexicans are jailed merely at the whim of the police WE PROTEST VIOLENTLY. WE WILL NOT PERMIT SUCH ATTACKS; WE WILL CONTINUE TO PROTEST, LET IT COST US WHAT IT MAY.

The *Chicago Tribune* and other North American papers like the *Boston Transcript* should not be scandalized when an American citizen in Mexico is attacked, not by the authorities, as here, but by bandits and highwaymen.

Not three weeks ago there was a North American killed by bandits in Mexico City, and as was natural, the State Department at Washington made the investigations and claims necessary for immediate justice just as though our country were a possession of the United States.

The newspapers went on to say that the Mexican government should be more careful and give more security to North American citizens, as though it was its duty to detail a *gendarme* and five soldiers to each American to take care of him.

While the Department of State at Washington is demanding guaranties for its citizens in Mexico we are being made the victims of the police of Chicago and other cities. Only we are not going to ask for a policeman to protect us, because it is those very policemen who abuse the good nature of our patient and honorable workers.⁸⁸

The judges, too, were attacked for what was said to be unequal severity in sentencing Mexicans convicted of crime:

Partiality in judgments against Mexicans in the United States

The mutualistic societies established in Chicago have turned to the Mexican consul of the city, informing him that more than seven Mexicans are being tried for murder in the first degree in various cities including Chicago, and probably they will be given the death sentence.

The said societies brought out that in almost all the cases involving Mexicans accused of homicide, the judges give the death sentence, and it is applied with all severity, and they use great partiality against the Mexicans during all the stages of the trial. Therefore they [the clubs] ask that the Mexican government take preventive steps to avoid these procedures, which are not only unjust but set up a differential treatment to the detriment of the Mexicans, violating the treaties made between the two countries and which are in full force.⁸⁹

An incident occurred in 1931 in which the element of prejudice was very evident. Municipal Judge Thomas Green, when the consul appeared in court in the interest of some of his countrymen, declared:

The Mexican consul should do some constructive work here . . . and not allow his countrymen to become a charge upon Chicago. We are having a great deal of trouble with vagrant Mexicans, who require watching. They come here to take work away from the Americans and later become vagrants and create a problem.⁹⁰

⁸⁸ *Correo Mexicano*, September 30, 1926.

⁸⁹ *Mexico*, April 11, 1925.

⁹⁰ *La Prensa*, San Antonio, July 8, 1931.

The judge sentenced the consul to jail for contempt, but later rescinded the sentence when he learned of his diplomatic immunity, and had the case stricken from the record "in order to remove any possible belief that my act was an indication of any feeling toward Mexico or the Mexican people . . ."⁹¹

Another complaint was made by one Mexican leader of high ethical standards of a situation from which a lawyer and the police of a city appeared to profit and the Mexicans to benefit or not to benefit irrespective of their guilt.

Attorney X takes the Mexicans out of jail. He says, "How much have you?" Then the Mexicans pay \$5, \$40, or \$100 and get out of jail right away [not on bail, but entirely free]. That is not right.

One instance of abuse of position by a court interpreter was reported to Redfield in 1925:

When an old viaduct over the railway was being torn down recently, the people of the neighborhood began taking away the old lumber for firewood. A railroad detective arrested two Mexicans for larceny. They spoke no English. An Italian runner for an Irish lawyer, speaking Spanish, went to the Mexicans, and persuaded them to take the lawyer; he would get them off for \$50. [The two missionaries, one of whom recited the case] investigated, attended the trial, proved that the runner—who was acting as court interpreter—was mis-translating, and that the Mexicans had not wanted this lawyer, and secured their discharge.

The statements presented constitute a serious charge of unequal and unjust treatment by the officials charged with administration of justice. Protests were widespread in origin, some coming from almost every important Mexican colony in the region, and were on record from the time Mexican newspapers appeared to print them. Officially, the police naturally denied any discriminatory treatment of Mexicans.⁹² It is of course extremely difficult to adduce legally acceptable proof of the charges. Furthermore, it is not easy to show that treatment which is unjust is also discriminatory against Mexicans. For example, it is characteristic of Mexicans, and probably with a large element of truth, that a Mexican could "defend" the American officials in one of the very acts which raised a storm of protest from other Mexicans.

He said there had been criticism of the consul for allowing the police to lock up fifty Mexicans after the Halstead Street shooting last November [1924] but that the police always did that, Mexicans or not, and he could see nothing to criticize.⁹³

⁹¹ Berkeley, California, *Daily Gazette*, July 10, 1931, p. 3.

⁹² Statement of Chief of Police reported in *Correo Mexicano*, Dec. 22, 1926.

⁹³ Redfield notes.

However, some additional evidence does lend support to the charge that Mexicans have been dealt with more severely than is customary with most accused persons.

In table 18 it appears that the percentage of charges of misdemeanors by Mexicans upon which convictions were obtained in the Chicago municipal court during 1928 and 1929 was very much above average. For the two-year period, the proportion of convictions was only 23.6 per cent of the charges brought against American whites and against all nationalities, as compared with 38.7 per cent of the charges brought against Mexicans. This represents a probability of conviction of practically 65 per cent greater than average. That the charges against Mexicans were so much better founded in fact than those against others seems highly improbable. If the police sifted out guiltless Mexicans more thoroughly than the guiltless of all nationalities, *before placing charges* against them, which might be offered as an alternative explanation, they did it *before making arrests*, for the proportion of Mexican arrests to all arrests was identical with the proportion of misdemeanor charges against Mexicans to all misdemeanor charges, namely, 1.4 per cent. But that the guilty and guiltless Mexicans were distinguished with any greater discrimination than average *when making arrests* seems very unlikely. More probable is the explanation that conviction of Mexicans charged with misdemeanors was obtained more readily than average.

The belief of Mexicans and others that police were prejudiced against them found some unintended support in the statements of policemen. A desk sergeant of police told Redfield in 1925 that he "hated 'em." An officer near the stockyards voiced to us the current antipathy to the Mexicans as competitors with European immigrants:

They are taking the places of these respectable, law-abiding, large-familied Lithuanians and Poles. They work for two or three dollars a day.

The point of view of officers engaged in the sometimes hazardous business of arresting Mexicans also appears:

The men downstairs [policemen] have orders to take no chances whatsoever with a Mexican. They are quick on the knife and are hot tempered, and do the damage before you know it.

The Mexicans are not any worse than the others, but they will kill quicker.

Knives are usually carried . . . and when drunk these instruments come into use. They are sly, treacherous, and wily and are not dependable. Two policemen were nearly killed dealing with some Mexicans some time ago.**

** Nelson, *op. cit.*, 13, 14.

Naturally and justifiably, the police seek to minimize danger to themselves when making arrests. That they have been unnecessarily severe and indiscriminate in doing this is of course very difficult to prove, but it seems highly probable.

INDUSTRIAL ADVANCE

The gradations of the industrial ladder are less steep than those of present day agriculture. Under the conditions which prevail in most of the agriculture in which Mexicans in the United States are engaged, it is more difficult to rise from agricultural labor to lessee or owner of farm land than from common labor to a semi-skilled occupation in industry. The wider variety of operations to be performed in industrial processes, the practices of labor management developed in adjusting to them a flow of immigrant laborers without industrial background, and the fact that neither personal capital nor business capacity are necessary, account for this difference.

The gradations of wage levels which, as already noted, grade upward from track and meat-packing, to steel employment, forms steps of industrial advance for Mexicans who are able to establish themselves on the upper levels. Within each grade of employment, regularity of work also creates differentials favoring those whose

TABLE 21
APPROXIMATE DEGREES OF SKILL OF 5,095 MEXICAN EMPLOYEES OF SEVEN LARGE INDUSTRIAL PLANTS IN BASIC INDUSTRIES OF CHICAGO AND THE CALUMET REGION, 1928*

	Number	Per cent
Skilled	76	1.5
Semi-skilled	845	16.6
Unskilled	4,174	81.9
Total	5,095	100.0

* Data obtained from Chicago plants of Armour & Company and Swift & Company; Buffington plant, Universal Atlas Cement Company; Gary Works and South Works, Illinois Steel Company; McCormick Works, and Inland Steel Company. Plant reports or inspection of individual records yielded the figures presented here. Obviously, definitions of "skilled" and "semi-skilled" are not uniform as between industries, or even plants of the same industry. For example, the report from at least one plant classifies skill entirely according to rate of pay, permitting inclusion as "semi-skilled" some whose rates of pay are sufficiently above the base because of the arduous and disagreeable nature of the job, rather than because of any "skill" necessary for its performance. Also figures of some plants include as "skilled" a few engaged in supervisory capacities, such as foremen or subforemen. Because of inadequate records, data were not secured for 255 Mexicans, or less than 5 per cent of those employed by these plants. Presumably records of skilled or semi-skilled employees are kept more completely than those of unskilled employees; it is probable, therefore, that the effect of such error as is almost inevitable is slightly to understate the number and percentage of unskilled.

employment is steady as compared with the large proportion of Mexicans whose work is irregular. In track labor particularly, the latter group is so large in the Chicago market that in addition to its lower position on the wage scale, irregular employment may be regarded as an adverse occupational characteristic. Other differentials are determined by the degree of skill attained by the laborer.

Despite the lack of previous industrial experience of the great majority of Mexicans, and the fact that the agriculture which they practiced before emigrating was generally more primitive than that of European peasants, Mexicans are appearing in the grades above common labor in industrial plants, particularly where they have been employed longest and in largest numbers.

Figures classifying according to degree of skill the Mexican employees of seven large industrial plants of Chicago and the Calumet region are presented in table 21. Roughly, one-sixth of the Mexicans were classed as semi-skilled and four-fifths as unskilled; only 1.5 per cent were skilled. Data from two steel plants which, combined, appear to be fairly representative both as to distribution of skill among Mexicans of the seven plants and as to proportion of Mexicans in industrial plants which employ them in large numbers are given in table 22. These data permit comparison of the distribution of skill among Mexicans with its distribution among all employees and among Negroes in these two plants. Less than two-fifths of all employees, but four-fifths of the Mexicans, and a practically identical proportion of Negroes, were unskilled. The Mexicans comprised approximately one-tenth of all employees, but they were one-fifth of all unskilled. Negroes comprised one-eighth of all employees, but one-fourth of all unskilled. One-fifth of the Mexicans were semi-skilled, as compared with one-fourth of all nationalities, and one-sixth of the Negroes. Less than two per cent of the Mexicans, comprising one-half per cent of all skilled persons, were skilled; 4.7 per cent of the Negroes, which represents 1.6 percent of all skilled persons, were skilled. These low percentages of Mexicans in the upper grades are accounted for, not only by the facts that Mexican immigrants have generally come without industrial skill, and have been resident in the United States too short a time to have acquired it, but also because some non-manual employees, of whom almost none are Mexican, are included among the "skilled." It is among the semi-skilled that the advance of Mexicans, based upon habituation to industrial processes is to be expected and is found. It is interesting to note that a higher proportion of Mexi-

TABLE 22
COMPARISON OF SKILLED, SEMI-SKILLED, AND UNSKILLED MEXICAN AND COLORED EMPLOYEES OF TWO LARGE STEEL
PLANTS OF THE CALUMET REGION, 1928*

	All employees		Mexican employees			Colored employees		
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent of all employees of same grade	Per cent of all Mexican employees	Number	Per cent of all employees of same grade	Per cent of all colored employees
Skilled.....	8,101	36.7	38	.5	1.8	128	1.6	4.7
Semi-skilled.....	5,704	25.9	397	7.0	19.1	438	7.7	16.2
Unskilled.....	8,256	37.4	1,646	19.9	79.1	2,150	26.0	79.2
Total.....	22,061	100.0	2,081	9.4	100.0	2,716	12.3	100.0

* Gary Works and South Works, Illinois Steel Company. Persons in supervisory capacities are classed as skilled or semi-skilled.

cans than Negroes were semi-skilled, but that the reverse was markedly true of the skilled.

At those plants where Mexican employees are advancing in numbers into the semi-skilled grades, the judgment of employers concerning their capacity for advance is naturally favorable. The following are examples:

The Mexicans are getting into better jobs all the time. They are already roll hands, and getting close to the position of roller.

The Mexicans, by accepting the hand labor, are preparing themselves for the better positions later. Mexicans are good chippers, some are railway switchmen in the plant, run scale cars, run controllers, and are heaters' helpers.

The Mexicans are getting along all right. They will move up from menial labor like the others.

Outside of the large plants included in the preceding tables there were also a few Mexican skilled workmen,—leather workers, cabinet makers, auto painters, printers, molders, an electric welder, tailors, and building craftsmen. Within the large plants, the skilled Mexicans were carpenters, machinists, auto mechanics, electricians, and painters. A very few Mexicans in supervisory capacities possibly were included among the skilled and semi-skilled. The number of skilled Mexicans of all crafts was both absolutely and relatively very small; the few comments on their abilities were favorable:

I have made three molders from Mexican laborers; I would teach any Mexican who asks. This Mexican is a good molder, one of my best.

I found one Mexican who had been a Packard mechanic in Mexico and he is an excellent auto mechanic.

Some of the skilled Mexican workmen had learned their trades in Mexico, others in southwestern or western United States, and a few in Chicago. The number of skilled Mexicans, however, is so small, that this very fact sometimes militates against those who actually do possess skill. The experience of two Mexicans illustrates this:

If you are a mechanic, they won't believe you if you say you are Mexican.

The foreman said to me, "If you have not worked as a machinist in this country, then you are not a machinist."

The second Mexican had been a machinist and locomotive engineer on the Mexican National Railways, and was working at the time of his statement as a machinist in a steel products plant in Gary. Not only was there a feeling that a Mexican probably *ipso facto* was not a

mechanic, but a further statement indicates that even the converse attitude was held:

Sometimes even now when people see that I am a machinist, they say to me, "You are not a Mexican."

In some instances there are barriers to industrial advancement upon the basis of ability. A minor employment official mentioned race as an obstacle in individual cases; so also at times is citizenship, insisted upon sometimes by management, sometimes by trade unions. There was also the entry of the college-trained man into industry, which the man who came up through the ranks felt might depress the opportunities for others, including Mexicans. Said a labor manager of a steel plant:

The Mexicans are getting into pretty good jobs in the steel industry, but I don't expect roll hands or third helpers to ever become melters and rollers. These latter jobs, which are supervising foremen's jobs, are going to college-trained men whom we have been getting in greater numbers since the war. Now we are getting applications from the finest kind of Americans.

A mill superintendent at another plant spoke not entirely sympathetically of the same trend:

I don't allow any difference in race or creed to make any difference in work or promotion. The Mexicans are in every kind of work I have. My best checkers are Mexicans and catch mistakes on the previous turn. There is no reason so far as ability is concerned why the Mexicans in time can't rise as the others have risen. Of course, as to some positions, the management is training in college men. I am not a college man, and think the men should be trained from the bottom where the college men are not willing to go. So how high they can go depends some on how far the management will let them go.

In some cases hesitancy to accept responsibility retards the rise of Mexicans. The possibility of this, as well as of discouragement by management, was suggested by a Chicago roadmaster:

We have half a dozen Mexican assistant foremen; some of them have been offered foremen's jobs but didn't take them. They didn't seem to want the responsibility, or perhaps the roadmaster intimated when offering the job that it would be best to stay where they were.

Middle class Mexicans frequently have difficulty adjusting themselves to industry in this region, as elsewhere in the United States. They not only have difficulty in rising, but are obliged to enter the ranks of common labor. Some of them manage to work their way out by becoming interpreters, etc. Some adapt their previous vocational experience to qualify as craftsmen, e.g., an engineer who became an

electrician, and a government employee who became a shipping foreman. Others are unable to make satisfactory adjustment.⁹⁵

There are also Mexicans skilled in the handicrafts of their own country, who find no market for their skill in the United States, since machinery has rendered their skill obsolete. Typical of this group was a shoemaker from Michoacán who worked in the United States as a track laborer, beet tender, and steel worker, and who, when interviewed, was unemployed. Indeed, the plight of the Mexican handicraftsman in the United States was one of the themes of a *corrido* or ballad, which appeared in *El México* of Chicago.⁹⁶

A number of Mexican young men attended schools or colleges in this area intending to become aviation or automobile mechanics, electricians, or radio experts. Some of these had come directly from Mexico for this purpose, others had come from other parts of the United States, and some were already resident in the locality before entering school. A very few Mexican young women have taken courses in business colleges to fit themselves to become stenographers and secretaries.

SAVING, SPENDING, AND OWNERSHIP OF PROPERTY

In the Chicago-Gary region one hears the comment so familiar in the agricultural Southwest, that "You can't get the Mexicans to save"; or, as a German living in the Brighton Park colony observed, "They earn a dollar and spend a dollar and a quarter." A Mexican school girl remarked, "The Mexicans say the Americans are too thrifty." But even more frequently encountered than comments of this type, is the observation that in one way or another, to varying extents, the Mexicans do save. Once, indeed, that rare comment was made that "The Mexicans are thrifty."⁹⁷ A more accurate statement was made by a social worker who remarked that "They haven't been accustomed to save in Mexico, but they save in Chicago to quite an extent."

The extent and manner in which they save vary a good deal, as is evident from the varied replies to inquiries. A clerk handling Mexican accounts of a bank near the Hull House colony said:

Those that work in the city have accounts the year round and deposit regularly. When they are out of work they make withdrawals, but not too many. Those that

⁹⁵ See Field Notes, pp. 262-270.

⁹⁶ See p. vi.

⁹⁷ See also I, 363.

work in the country come in with their pay checks two or three months old, and deposit two or three hundred dollars at once. We have depositors from Joliet, Elgin, Waukegan, and even in Indiana; they bank by mail.

A South Chicago banker noted that bank deposits by Mexicans were increasing.

At first the Mexicans used to send all their money back to Mexico. Now they have savings accounts and some of them are pretty good—a few hundred dollars. They are next to the Polish as depositors.

The most enthusiastic report was given at a bank in the vicinity of the stockyards which made special efforts to attract Mexicans' deposits:

The Mexicans, when once they open an account and start to save, save regularly and well. We have over a thousand accounts; some of them run over the \$1,000 figure.

Undoubtedly some of the accounts were established by Mexican business men of the vicinity as well as by laborers. Another bank in the same vicinity had but twenty-five or thirty Mexican accounts, and probably for that reason reported much less favorably; it emphasized not the regularity, but the irregularity of its Mexican depositors:

The trouble with their business is that they are not permanent; they come today and are gone tomorrow. We have many accounts which have been opened up and soon closed out. Only four of our Mexican accounts run beyond \$400 to \$600. They do not save money very readily; they spend most of what they earn.

The banker indicated a share of International Harvester stock which a Mexican client had just sold, and added, "I doubt if the sum will be deposited in the bank by the Mexican who owned the stock. He bought it only because he had to; he will probably spend the money now." Other bankers in other parts of the region inhabited by Mexicans also reported Mexican accounts, but in rather pessimistic terms. For example,

Their accounts are very small in number and amounts. A great number of them are closed down every winter. Throughout the year they come and go.

This bank reported 550 Mexican accounts totalling about \$42,000, or an average of less than \$80 each. A Gary banker reported that less than one per cent of his accounts were those of Mexicans, and "even these do not amount to a hill of beans. . . . They come in with their checks and go out with a few silver dollars."

Although the accounts of Mexicans generally did not appear impressive to the bankers, still in view of the background of the Mexi-

eans, they represent a significant development of thrift and providence. And there were other forms of saving which did not appear in bank deposits. There was some hoarding at home. Sometimes there was distrust of the security of banks, based upon unfortunate experiences both in Mexico and in the United States. This attitude, pointed out by a Mexican in Chicago, had also been observed in 1927, as the burden of a letter from a father in central Mexico to his son in Cheyenne, Wyoming. There was also saving in the form of life insurance purchased by more stable Mexicans, principally those with families. Some bought stock under company plans for sale of stock to employees.

The record of participation by Mexican employees in the savings plan of a large steel plant was remarkable. Only employees with 18 months' service were eligible; 56 per cent of the Mexicans on the payroll so qualified. To a percentage of wages voluntarily deposited with the company by the employee and upon which interest was paid, was added, at the end of five years, a share of the gross earnings of the company. The employee-depositor was entitled to the return of his deposits with interest at any time he might wish to withdraw. There were evidences of interest in this plan among Mexicans met casually: one laborer declared it a "good plan"; another was said just to have received \$2,000 under the plan; another had just bought a good brick house with his proceeds. And the figures furnished by the company were striking: of the 1,098 eligible Mexican employees in the summer of 1928, only 7 were not enrolled under the plan.

Another important form of saving practiced was remittance of money to Mexico.²⁸ No statistics on remittances were obtained, but the testimony of bankers located near Mexican colonies, even those who deprecated the smallness of Mexican deposits, was unanimous to the effect that their remittances were numerous and important. One post office clerk said that their money orders ranged from \$5 to \$100 in amount, and were usually about \$30 or \$35. A clerk at another office placed the estimate of amounts usually transmitted at from \$10 to \$20. Bank officials said that drafts issued ranged from about \$2.50 to several hundreds of dollars. Postal clerks observed that a large proportion of the money orders and registered letters were directed to the plateau states of central Mexico and very few to Texas.

²⁸ The most complete information available on this subject, was obtained from post office money orders by Dr. Manuel Gamio, and published in his *Mexican immigration to the United States* (Chicago, 1930, chap. 2). Remittances from the Chicago-Gary region were customarily by money order and New York draft.

The remittances went largely to relatives for their support, the purchase of land, etc. The statement of a Mexican bank clerk from a small village in Michoacán suggests the importance of these shipments even in remote agricultural districts of Mexico:

In my village about half the men have come to the United States. Mostly women remain in Mexico; they are supported largely by money sent from the United States.

The extensive remittances to Mexico from the Chicago-Gary area were due largely to the high proportion of young, single males among the Mexicans, and the fact that their wages are of industrial rather than agricultural standards. Per capita remittances are doubtless larger in amount, and are made by a higher proportion of Mexicans in the colony than in agricultural regions of Texas, Colorado, and California, where the proportion of families present is higher, and the ties with relatives in Mexico have been weakened by longer residence in the United States. Therefore, neither numbers nor amounts remitted serve as reliable measures of the Mexican population present in particular areas.

In other portions of the United States, the lack of wisdom and foresight exhibited by Mexicans when purchasing was frequently remarked. That improvidence is still characteristic of many Mexicans after they come north was noted by a Mexican social worker who said,

Many do not look ahead. If they see what they like, they buy it. They say, "Well, I am working," or "I will get a job," or "Dios me ayudará (God will aid me)." They don't care so much about old age; they say, "The children will share with me."

Two other comments, one by an American, the other by a German, were likewise reminiscent of Mexicans in other parts of the United States:

They are the prey of peddlers and salesmen.

They buy junk when it comes to buying cars. They buy cars worth \$45 and pay \$125 for them. Anybody can sell those fellows anything.

Mexicans were beginning in very small numbers to buy automobiles. The practice, however, was not general, for there was neither the necessity for them which exists in seasonal agriculture, nor the facilities for housing them without heavy garage expense.

Merchants who catered to Mexican trade and Mexicans who knew the practices of their own people agreed that Mexicans spent freely, and often bought expensive goods. Drug stores were liberally patron-

ized here as elsewhere:—perfumes, patent medicines, novelties, sodas, almost everything. The observation of a druggist was representative: "They are class A spenders." They were also subject to exploitation. It was an official of a Chamber of Commerce who said:

The merchants like the Mexicans. They spend their money. They buy tinsel and froth; it appeals to them like the gaudy beads to the Indians. They buy good clothes. The merchants can sell them the stuff, and if they will put themselves out to accommodate them, they can stick them.

Exploitation seemed particularly flagrant in Indiana, where the garnishment laws then prevailing provided fees for various officials, which totaled about \$10 for an average garnishment. These costs, paid by Mexicans, were sometimes in excess of the debt. After 1930 these fees, except the constable's fee, were abolished, but at the time of our field researches, garnishments were abundant.⁹⁹ A social worker observed,

Some dealers give credit as freely as water if the Mexicans are employed, because they know they can garnish their wages. The justices take the fees even when the men are out of work and have large families, and for that reason have been unable to pay; they do not look into the reason for non-payment.

A Mexican merchant, with sympathy for both his countrymen and his fellow merchants, gave an illuminating description of the situation:

One reason why Mexicans have trouble and have their checks garnished is that they will sometimes send the money which they are accustomed to send to their families in Mexico, even before they pay their debts here. Sometimes they tell the merchants when they are able to pay, and sometimes they do not; they are likely to have their checks garnished in both cases. Many times the merchant is justified. I have difficulty in my own business because of inability to collect what is due me, and I will probably have to garnish some checks, although I have never been willing to do it.

The Mexican buys under pressure of salesmanship more than he can possibly pay for; he is already caught. There is no written record of the transactions except those of the storekeeper, and it is easy to overcharge. There is difficulty when one Mexican stands good for another. I know of a case in which A bought on credit, after B told the storekeeper that A was "all right." The first time, A paid the bill. Later A bought again but did not pay. The merchant then garnished B's check and collected from him. Some of the Mexicans get deeply in debt with too much credit and then leave Indiana Harbor.

The comment of a Jewish clothing dealer was revealing in more than one way:

The people here like the Spanish [Mexicans] just for their money. They are better pay than the colored. When they have money they spend it. The Mexicans pay good prices. I had to force one to buy a suit today, but I think he will pay for it. The Mexicans change names and move, and for these reasons, and because of language, it is harder to trace them than the colored; but the Mexi-

⁹⁹ Ch. 61, Act of 1925.

cans are better pay. Of course they know we hold the hammer over them, because if they don't pay we just garnishee their wages. I have garnisheed hundreds of Mexicans.

Some merchants, of course, did not desire or could not obtain Mexican trade. A dry goods merchant in the same town as the clothing dealer just quoted, for example, said:

We have very few Mexican customers. They go where someone speaks Spanish; we speak no Spanish here. They come in and pay cash. We extend credit to a few people, but no Mexicans.

And a Polish grocer near the stockyards, who evidently could not secure their trade in competition with Mexican or other merchants, and was perhaps influenced also by the prevalent hostility between Mexicans and Poles said impatiently, "No, the Mexicans don't spend much money; they live on a sack of flour, and just cook a few things." There was also complaint that "They may buy a small amount from other stores but when they have good orders they buy them from their own stores." The general verdict of merchants with first-hand experience with general Mexican trade, however, was strikingly like that observed in other portions of the United States.

No general movement to purchase real property, such as was noted in the West and Southwest, existed in Chicago and the Calumet region.¹⁰⁰ So far as could be ascertained by inquiries the number of Mexicans who in 1928 had purchased, or were purchasing lots was very small. What seemed to be the most reliable of the reports available indicated about fifteen purchasers of real property in Gary, about ten to fifteen in Indiana Harbor, about five to ten in South Chicago, and four or five in the Brighton Park colony. Probably there were others, but in any case the number was extremely limited.

European immigrants to this region have commonly purchased property, lived in a portion of it, and rented out the rest. The Mexicans had done little of this, although in South Chicago it was said to be the intention of some who were purchasing property. Usually lots with houses upon them were purchased. The amounts of money involved in these transactions were reported to run from about \$3,000 to \$10,000. In Indiana Harbor a Mexican owned a hotel which doubtless was of greater value.

The reply of a Mexican to the question, "Why don't more Mexicans buy property?" was "because they are expecting to return to Mexico sooner or later; so they say, 'why buy?'" The greater feeling

¹⁰⁰ See I, 65 ff., 185 ff., 365 ff.

of impermanence, the comparative newness of the colony, the age and sex distribution of its members, and the much greater investment required for urban than for rural dwellings, all account for the smaller extent of real property ownership by Mexicans in Chicago and the Calumet region as compared with such ownership in the West and Southwest.

MEXICAN CLERKS AND BUSINESS MEN

The number of Mexican clerks in the area in 1928 was small; although no enumeration was possible, the best estimates of persons acquainted with the various colonies would indicate that there were not over 200. They were engaged by a variety of businesses: the large mail order houses and some importers and exporters used them as interpreters or in clerical or stenographic capacities in which knowledge of Spanish and English was useful: Marshall Field, and perhaps other large stores, also employed a few. Clerks of this type were largely from the middle class of Mexico, and usually were called "Spanish" by Americans. Others were engaged in smaller stores in order to draw Mexican trade: drug stores, clothing stores, 10-cent stores, groceries, and a few in banks; a few Mexicans were engaged in clerical capacities in the employment departments of a few of the large plants employing many Mexicans; some were used in the employment district of Canal and Madison streets, both as "runners" and as clerks. We met or were told of a Mexican bookkeeper, a railway express clerk, and a Spanish American who held a responsible position at an electric power station.

Most of the Mexican clerks in all of these businesses were from the middle or lower middle class in Mexico, but some were from the laboring class. Racially, they ranged from white to red, with the white more often predominant. A considerable proportion, particularly large in 10-cent stores, were girls and young women. Most of the clerks were born in Mexico and educated there, with sometimes additional education in the United States. Some were Texas-Mexicans, and at least two were Spanish Americans from New Mexico.

Nearly all the clerks were employed by Americans, for the Mexican businesses were usually too small to require the services of clerks. In this region, as in the agricultural West and Southwest, the opportunities for Mexicans to become clerks depended on the patronage of Mexicans. The most obvious difference was the fact that not only the

patronage of the local colonies, but also the import and export trade with Mexico furnished in Chicago a demand for the services of Mexican clerks. Very few were employed as clerks where nationality or language was not a factor.

With the rise of Mexican colonies, Mexican places of business soon made their appearance. They were started at least as early as 1920; they began to be an evident neighborhood element about 1923 or 1924, and continued to increase in number until about 1930. Their numbers in the summer of 1928, classified by types and location, are presented in table 23. In January 1925, Redfield reported sixteen Mexican "places of business" in South Chicago, as compared with our report of forty-eight in 1928. Robert C. Jones, observing between October 1929 and June 1930, reported 146 Mexican places of business open in Chicago at the end of the period (and six closed during the period), as compared with 113 reported by us. In arriving at these figures Jones' list was edited to make it as nearly as possible comparable to ours. Because of the difficulties of enumeration, and because our lists were not in his hands when his enumeration was made, no figures on business stability and turnover based on the two enumerations are presented here. The striking upward trend during the six-year period, which they reveal, however, is unmistakably faithful to the facts.

A variety of factors accounts for the uneven distribution of both numbers and types of businesses in the different Mexican colonies. Among these are not only numbers and concentration of Mexicans, but the proportions of *solos* and families, and the degree to which the locality is already occupied by businesses which can readily attract and hold Mexican patronage. Thus, the large number of pool halls in Indiana Harbor as compared with the vicinity of Hull House, is probably the result of the concentration of *solos* in a newer and growing community, as compared with greater dispersion, high proportion of families, and a community with more established places for recreation of this or similar type. In Gary, the previously established Spanish places of business, to which Mexicans go more readily than to businesses of, say, Poles, are a deterrent to the extensive establishment of Mexican businesses. It is also possible that the proportion of restaurants is somewhat low in Indiana Harbor because *casas de asistencias* (boarding houses), which are not included in this table, are probably present in greater proportion there than in some other localities.

TABLE 23
NUMBER AND PERCENTAGES OF BUSINESSES OPERATED BY MEXICANS IN CHICAGO AND THE CALUMET REGION IN THE
SUMMER OF 1928, BY TYPES AND BY LOCATION*

Types of business	Hull House colony and west	East of stockyards	West of stockyards	Brighton Park	South Chicago	Chicago, other	Indiana Harbor	Gary	Total	Per cent
Pool hall.....	8	3	7	2	16	....	29	11	76	33.3
Restaurant.....	9	....	6	....	11	7	10	9	52	22.8
Barber shop.....	5	....	3	1	7	....	7	4	27	11.8
Grocery.....	7	....	1	1	3	....	7	1	20	8.8
Tailor shop.....	3	....	....	....	3	....	3	2	11	4.8
Bakery.....	3	....	1	....	2	....	3	....	9	4.0
Trucking.....	3	....	....	....	2	....	2	....	7	3.1
Printing.....	4	....	....	....	....	....	1	....	5	2.2
Books and news.....	1	....	....	....	1	....	1	....	3	1.3
Hotel.....	1	....	....	....	....	....	2	....	2	.9
Jeweller.....	1	....	1	....	....	....	....	....	2	.9
Newstand (only).....	1	....	....	....	1	....	1	....	2	.9
Newspaper.....	1	....	....	....	....	....	1	....	2	.9
Photographer.....	2	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	2	.9
Signs.....	1	....	....	....	....	....	1	....	2	.9
Tortilla factory.....	1	....	....	....	....	....	1	....	2	.9
Drug store.....	....	....	....	....	1	....	....	....	1	.4
Ice cream factory.....	....	....	....	....	....	....	1	....	1	.4
Painter.....	1	....	....	....	1	....	....	....	1	.4
Typewriter, etc. repair.....	1	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	1	.4
Total.....	50	3	19	4	48	7	70	27	228	100.0
Per cent.....	21.9	1.3	8.3	1.8	21.1	3.1	30.7	11.8	100.0	
Places of business.....	45	3	15	3	40	7	67	24	204	

* The method of securing these data was by observation along streets where it was expected that Mexican places of business might be found and by inquiry. The result is inevitably an underenumeration. When two different businesses, such as barber shops and pool halls, were operated at the same location, they were counted as two units among "types of business," but as one "place of business." Exception was made in the case of books and news combined in one location and management, which was counted as one "type of business," and printing and newspaper, which, in the most important instance, it seemed proper should be counted as two. Places bearing Mexican names, or catering to Mexican trade, such as "La tienda Colorado," if not operated by Mexicans, were not included. Boarding and rooming houses were not counted.

The wide range of business activity is exhibited by the table, which shows pool halls and groceries, jewelers and photographers. Even more striking, however, is the concentration on three or four types of business. Exactly one-third of the businesses reported were pool halls. Restaurants and barber shops together comprised another third. These three types, combined with the smaller numbers of groceries, tailor shops, and bakeries, comprise over 85 per cent of the Mexican businesses.

With such variations in type of business, it is but natural that the business men themselves vary in type and background. They range from educated middle class Mexican proprietors of book stores to the less educated type of lower middle class or laboring class Mexican who has gathered enough capital and credit to open a pool hall. Most of the business men had not been laborers in Mexico, though a much higher proportion had found it necessary to engage for a time in manual labor in the United States. As a well informed Mexican said, "The Mexican business men are mostly just above the laboring class, trying to get into the middle class; some of them are in the middle class." Nearly all of the business men were Mexican-born.

The patronage of the Mexican businesses was largely Mexican. The statement of the proprietor of a grocery store near Hull House is illustrative:

Most of my customers are Mexicans. They come here because they want and like Mexican things. That is the secret of success in any place where there are a great number of Mexicans. We sell them things which are made by Mexicans in the United States and some imported from Mexico. I do not import direct because of the customs, regulations, and formalities. We have a few customers from other nationalities. They drop in once in a while and usually buy standard goods like bread, sugar, and coffee. Most of them, like the Italians and Greeks, have stores of their own [nationality] in the neighborhood; like the Mexicans, they go to a place where they can order in their own language, be understood without repetition, and then exchange a few words of gossip or news.

Similarly, a restaurant proprietor near-by said:

Most of our customers are Mexicans who come here to eat their *tostados* and other home dishes. We have a few American people who come in on Saturday evenings and Sundays. Our people are good spenders and we try hard to please them. We have many who come in regularly for all their meals. They like to eat Mexican things in the company of Mexicans.

Of other types of business, such as tailor shops, it was reported that patronage was largely Mexican, but that European immigrants of various nationalities were sometimes customers, too.

For the most part, the Mexican business establishments were small and struggling. Business mortality was high, and names were continually appearing and disappearing on the windows. As in California where Mexicans frequently bought trucks for use in agriculture, then took contracts at less than cost because they did not know their costs, so, in the printing business, there was free and ruthless competition. One of the earliest Mexican printers in Chicago, who later went out of business, described the situation:

Other Mexicans think I am making money, so others come into the printing business. Now there are six in Chicago.¹⁰¹ At the beginning they work cheaper; then they find they use their presses too hard and haven't even enough for repairs; then they try to raise prices, but the Mexicans don't want high class work.

In 1928 there were but two Mexican newspapers in the region—*Mexico* of Chicago and *Humo* of Indiana Harbor. The former had fallen into hands which were partly those of Latin-Americans other than Mexicans, and the latter was a new, small sheet. A few months later another small sheet was started in Indiana Harbor. During the years 1924–1927 attempts were made to start no less than five Mexican newspapers in Chicago. These existed from a few months to a little more than a year, before expiring.¹⁰² Other attempts at publication, in the form of bi-weekly or monthly *revistas* (reviews), usually were made by middle-class Mexicans of education who sought to establish themselves in a congenial occupation in the United States; one of these was a newspaper publisher from Aguascalientes, who became a refugee during the politically disturbed days of 1927–1928. So far as could be learned, all of these efforts were ephemeral; only a couple of small organs, one with the backing of a church and the other of a theosophical society, were yet appearing in 1930.

Shifts in place of employment of Mexicans within the area had a direct and almost immediate effect on Mexican businesses. Reference to table 3 shows, for example, the shift of employment of Mexicans in 1925 from South Works to Gary Works; an elderly couple in South Chicago described the resulting disaster for flourishing businesses in the vicinity of the former plant:

¹⁰¹ Table 23 lists only four printers in Chicago; the other two were probably men who had small presses in their homes which they operated perhaps evenings after their other work, whom we did not locate definitely.

¹⁰² These newspapers were: *El Herald de las Americas*, *El Popular*, *El Nuevo Mundo*, *Correo Mexicano*, *La Noticia Mundial*. Such files as could be secured of the last two, and of *Mexico*, are in the Bancroft Library at the University of California.

Before we left Mexico we had a little business of our own in Mexico City. Our son had already come to the United States; he ran a restaurant here in South Chicago and was doing very well. Things were not going very well then in Mexico City on account of politics. He wrote us telling us that things were good in the United States and that we had better come up. That was in 1923 when there was plenty of work in the mills; in South Chicago there were many Mexicans in 1924 [when we came]. Business was good and there were a lot of Mexican restaurants. We took over the restaurant and for a while things went well. In 1925 the Mexicans started to leave the district; not so many worked. We had to borrow to keep going; the interest and the payments were too much for us; our son was working in the steel plant all the time, but that did not help [enough]; we had to close our restaurant. We could not keep up our credits and we were not so very familiar with the business ways of the United States. We had done business in Mexico and got along fairly well, but here it was different. We were not the only ones to fail; many other Mexican places of business closed too at that time.

In addition to the hazards of competition and business fluctuation, two instances were reported to us of animosity between nationalities like that which appeared among laborers. A well informed person described the situation in the Hull House district:

In 1922 and 1923 the other nationalities used to make some trouble for Mexicans when they started in business. They called them "greasers." They would not let one Mexican put up a stand on Maxwell street, but he has been there since 1927.

The other incident was reported by Robert Jones, who noted that a pool room at 1261 Union Street which opened October 7, 1929, was closed on January 1, 1930, "owing to the opposition of neighbors to Mexican and Negro clientele."

Neither business nor clerical opportunities have as yet enabled many Mexicans of the Chicago-Gary region to ascend the socio-economic ladder. Most of the businesses are small-scale, and not likely to develop greatly even with general "good times." A good many, although not all, of those who have succeeded most, were already above the labor-class stratum in their own country. More significant would have been the advance of the Mexican children educated in the region, a phenomenon which will probably be evident some ten years hence. At present, there are very few indications of such advance—a few children yet in school whose abilities may enable them to rise, and a very few who have completed their education and entered business. Much more evident and significant was the ascent up the industrial ladder in 1928 described in an earlier section.

EDUCATION

In agricultural districts, the opportunity to use the labor of children makes attendance or non-attendance at school an issue of primary importance in the education of Mexican children. Very many of them attend irregularly, very little, or even never, and thus are but slightly exposed to the influences of the American educational system. In the urban area, which is the subject of the present study, there is, to be sure, some truancy; the statements of a social worker, a school administrator, and a teacher evidence this:

In the railroad camps the children don't go to school regularly. Truant officers say there are so many of them they can't enforce the law. The cars may move on at 10 in the morning, and the parents don't want to leave the children in school.

Truancy is a greater problem among the Mexicans [than the Italians].

It seems to be quite difficult to get the Mexicans started right in the schools, and to get them coming regularly.

But non-attendance is not the over-shadowing fact here that it generally is in agriculture.

Interruption of schooling results from seasonal migration outside the area, particularly to the sugar beet fields. A teacher in a school district to which many Mexican beet workers come for the winter, gave as her experience, "I have never had a child who had been to school during the beet season." But in the cities, attendance is a matter of compulsion, if necessary. As a leader in one of the Mexican colonies observed, "There is big trouble if the Mexicans don't send their children to school here."

Wherever Mexican laborers have colonized in the United States, their children are under pressure of one kind or another to terminate their education early. In this respect the Chicago-Gary region is not an exception, although the pressure comes somewhat later than in agricultural areas because of lack of opportunity for child labor. There is economic pressure on both boys and girls to assist in support or care of the family. For example:

I don't think I will be able to go to school long, for I will have to go out and work to help my father and mother. I would like to go on with school, but I don't know how.

I have to stay home once in a while to take care of the house. My mother wants me to stay home and help her take care of the house; she says I am too old to go to school, but I want to go.

Desire to earn money for pretty clothes and other attractive things not purchasable on the parents' income also militates against continuation in school. The statements of two girls, the first in the sixth grade, are illustrative:

I like school, but I would rather get out and work and make some money. Then I could buy some pretty clothes and have good things; I can't while I am in school.

I want to be a stenographer or clerk in a store. I want to go to work when I am sixteen; I want to have money. I don't care to go to college.

Perhaps unsatisfactory progress or maladjustment in school is also an unexpressed factor; it probably was with the girl in the fourth grade, homesick for Mexico, who said, "I want to go to school one year more and then I want to work. I want to work in a factory with my mother; she is sewing dresses." There was not only adverse pressure but apathy: witness the problem of truancy, some of the previous quotations, and the remark of a Mexican boy: "I have some Mexican neighbors who don't want to go to school."

Familiar also from observations in other areas, were the apprehension of Mexican parents, not without foundation, lest attendance at school would offer opportunities for elopement and the belief that girls need less education than boys. A Mexican social worker in Gary reported:

The Mexican parents here want to withdraw their girls from school at the age of about thirteen or fourteen for fear that the young Mexican men will steal them or elope with them when they are going to or coming from school.

Similarly, a Mexican social worker in Chicago said:

Some of the Mexican mothers say that after grammar school their girls don't need any more education because they are going to marry. The Mexican parents think the boys need more education than the girls. Also, they are afraid to have their girls leave home to go to school when they think the boys will try to make love to them; then they don't want them to go to school. They are afraid sometimes that the girls are not interested in school, but go there to see the boys.

However, there were also evidences of ambition for education on the part of both the Mexican children and their parents. A young Mexican mother regretted the early termination of her schooling by marriage:

I finished eighth grade; then I married. I could still have been in school if I hadn't been so foolish. My baby is nice and my husband is a good man but I think that I should have gone to school more.

A pathetic case was that of a beet worker who explained that his children were illiterate because where he had lived in Texas they would not take the children in school.¹⁰⁸ Though he wished to remain in Chicago to educate his children, and if possible, to secure a better job, he was returned to Texas by the Chicago charities. A Protestant missionary reported the discouragement of families which he knew because they could not give their children more education.

The Mexicans here feel that they are not getting anywhere. They feel that their wages are not enough to send their children to high school. After a while when they become helpless, they feel that they will have to take their children out of school to go to work.

A Mexican social worker urged education upon Mexican girls as a means of feminine independence, or of making a more desirable match:

I tell the Mexican girls, "If you have an education, you won't have to stand no man." Now they have no other means of support. "You can get a better man if you are educated." Or, at times I say, "Why should your only object be to get married?"

Some Mexican children, girls and boys, expressed the desire to achieve an "easier life" by education. The reason was rarely stated in the negative terms familiar in rural areas of escaping some abhorred type of manual labor. More often it was a positive desire for some attractive occupation, or for education without specifying occupation, or simply the urging of parents or friends:

I believe that the higher up you go in school, the easier life will be for you. My mother says she is working for my education.

My teachers say in "Ideals" that we won't have to work on the track. I want to go to school if my father can send me. I want to work in an office if I can get in.

I am taking a machine-shop course. I plan to finish high school, then go to work, and send my little brothers to college.

My uncle and aunt and grandfather encouraged me to go to college. My grandmother said, if I [would like to] do anything for her, to go to college. My American teachers tell me to go to college.

I like to go to school. My mother wants to put me in a trade school when she has money.

The first thing dad told us was that he wants us to get educated. He says he has no money to leave us, so he can leave us only education. My mother cannot read or write, but she understands well. I want to finish school at eighteen. My sister went to business college and now is secretary in the Spanish department of X company.

I want to teach English in Mexico, or Spanish here.

¹⁰⁸ The explanation is plausible; see, for example, I, 376.

Desire for at least the elements of an education stirred many adults, also. Naturally they were under a stimulus to learn English to aid them in their social and economic contacts. Lack of knowledge of English was a material loss recognized and experienced by many, which handicapped them in securing employment or promotion. The local Mexican language press based its exhortation to the workers to attend evening school largely on self-interest, adding a customary appeal to patriotism:

An educated worker, a conscientious worker, who has known how to cultivate his intelligence, who has gone to school, who has studied and learned many new and useful things, will be sure to rise, not only intellectually but economically. That is to say, an educated worker will be in a position to carry out better jobs, he will be able to perform tasks more scientific and complicated than the one who is illiterate, and hence will receive better pay.

It is never too late to learn something and one never knows too much to learn something more. By means of education, the Mexican worker can become great, and will be not only the pride of his hearth and home but of his beloved country, Mexico.¹⁰⁴

In order to acquire this education Mexicans enrolled in classes held by various settlements, philanthropic organizations, and private schools, and in night classes at the public schools. During the school year ending June 1927, there were 636 Mexicans enrolled in the public evening schools of Chicago, distributed geographically as follows: north side, 64; northwest side, 10; west side, 282; south side (including stockyards district), 280. At least 51 of these were enrolled in high school, commercial, or technical courses not designed especially for foreign-born. The great majority were undoubtedly studying English. Some Mexicans, of course, looked down on their fellows who sought to learn English. As a Mexican business man observed:

They despise and make fun of a Mexican of their class who learns English. If heard speaking it on the streets they mock and make fun of him. They laugh at his efforts and errors.

Yet even these may secretly have wished they too could speak English for its economic advantages. Others were prevented by night work from attending school, or deterred, as some Mexicans said, "because they have not good enough clothes to come to class," because "they are afraid to make mistakes in mixed classes," or "because the Slovaks and others regard the Mexicans as colored men." For the most part, Mexicans were eager to learn, and often they seized the advantages offered. As an example of enthusiasm, during a period of unemploy-

¹⁰⁴ *Mexico*, June 5, 1926.

ment in the summer of 1928, a group of Mexican men asked for and were given *nightly* instead of *weekly* English classes at Hull House.

The desire to learn, however, was not only for instruction in English but also for education in Spanish. For example, Redfield reported in 1924 in the Brighton Park colony one of those small private schools encountered also in places in the Southwest:

Martinez keeps a school in the vacant store downstairs [below his boarding house]. Every evening . . . about six adults and eight children come. They are all taught in one class at the same time. [A neighbor says,] "the old people are taught English and the children are taught Mexican. In the daytime [the children] go to the public school and learn English and at night they come here and learn Mexican."

In 1929 the Benito Juárez society of Indiana Harbor initiated a school for children and adults under a Mexican teacher.¹⁰⁵ Schools of similar type were started in Mexican colonies in many parts of the country especially from 1927 to 1929.¹⁰⁶ The purposes were partly educational, but the emotional impulse behind them was largely patriotic. An editorial in *Mexico* is illustrative:

For some time the papers of our country have been greatly concerned with what is called the de-Mexicanization of the Mexicans. One of the principal theories advanced to combat it was the founding of schools for the little Mexicans who are obliged to receive their education in the schools of the United States.

These schools would be altogether Mexican, and in them, besides all the other obligations and rights which our children have as guests of this country, they would have inculcated in them love of the country of their fathers; they would be taught to love it, if it was intended to make them all good citizens.

De-Mexicanization, that great problem which affects our country because of the great exodus of its sons, will be a bitter reality if steps are not taken promptly. Without doubt a great percentage of those children who lack cultivation of their patriotic feelings will become in the future men who detest the country of their elders.

So let us form committees; all unite to work for the good of our children; all do our best to raise a glorious monument to our country in the innocent and blessed hearts of our little Mexicans. Let us learn what we do not know, so that when we have to pay tribute to the mother country, we can leave to our children as a great heritage a pure love of country, a boundless love for it, so that they will always be ready to die rather than see it reviled or insulted.¹⁰⁷

Education often began at the very beginning. A Mexican proprietor of a book store reported:

¹⁰⁵ *Mexico*, May 2, 1929.

¹⁰⁶ But the idea is very old. For example, the *Colegio Altamirano* in Hebronville, Texas, "was organized in 1897 for the purpose of maintaining a Mexican spirit in the Texas-Mexican youth." Jovita Gonzales, "America invades the border towns," in *Southwest Review*, summer, 1930, p. 474.

¹⁰⁷ March 7, 1928.

Many of the Mexicans are illiterate. They come in to buy not only English lesson books, but also grammars in Spanish. Most of them try to learn and get ahead.

At a steel mill, a Mexican stated that two Mexicans in his department who had known only Indian dialects, had learned Spanish as well as English in Indiana Harbor. Another Mexican estimated that as many as three or four hundred in Indiana Harbor spoke Indian dialects, and possessed only a very limited knowledge of Spanish. Not only is there illiteracy even in Spanish, but there is often superstition as well. An American attorney who has many Mexican clients observed:

The Mexicans believe in witch doctors who cast them under a spell. A man who had assaulted or attempted assault on a Mexican woman before her marriage is now alleged to have cast a spell over her, and through mysterious powers, and not in the ordinary physical sense, to have entered the house and written on the wall. He is feared, and I am asked to bring an action compelling him by law to release her from the spell.¹⁰⁸

The urge to literacy inspired by the United States immigration laws had continued in at least one family:

My husband already knew how to read before we thought of coming to the United States, but he studied two years so that he could learn to read well enough to pass the examination at the border. I knew that women accompanied by their husbands did not have to pass the literacy test, but I studied so that I would avoid any difficulties at the border. I am still studying, and my husband teaches me nearly every night.

These illustrations reveal the low level at which education is begun and carried on, but they also show a genuine desire for more than past opportunities have afforded.

The distribution by grades of the 1,242 Mexican children of 29 elementary schools in Chicago during the spring semester of 1928 is shown in table 24. Thirty-eight per cent were enrolled in the kindergarten and first grade, and 80 per cent were enrolled in the fourth grade or lower. A very few Mexicans had reached high school in the Chicago-Gary region, and still fewer had entered junior college.

Estimates by teachers of the capacity for education of their Mexican children were varied. A junior high school principal observed that his Mexican pupils participated effectively in school activities, such as Glee Club, athletics, and leader in the Girl Reserves; however, he regarded Mexicans as "a little backward academically." A grammar school teacher in the Hull House colony said: "If we can get them past the start, they do well." A social worker who knew

¹⁰⁸ See also Gamio, *op. cit.*, chap. 6.

Mexicans of all ages in their homes, stressed the great variations in ability among Mexicans which had frequently been noted by teachers, employers, and others in the West and Southwest: "A few of the Mexicans are bright. The rest of them are quite willing to be led even if they are dumb." Nelson reported the following comments of teachers in South Chicago:

They are especially good in art work.

They are fair students.

In my manual training class the Mexican boys are a little careless about their work.

They are regarded on an equal with our white pupils in this school and above the Negro.¹⁰⁹

TABLE 24

DISTRIBUTION BY GRADES OF 1,242 MEXICAN CHILDREN ENROLLED IN TWENTY-NINE ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS OF CHICAGO IN THE SPRING SEMESTER, 1928*

Grade	Number	Per cent	Cumulative per cent
Kindergarten	102	8.2	8.2
First	372	30.0	38.2
Second	227	18.3	56.5
Third	163	13.1	69.6
Fourth	129	10.4	80.0
Fifth	86	6.9	86.9
Sixth	64	5.2	92.1
Seventh	50	4.0	96.1
Eighth	19	1.5	97.6
Not specified	30	2.4	100.0
Total	1,242	100.0	.....

* Numerical data from Anita Jones, *op. cit.*, 593, obtained originally through the cooperation of the Immigrants' Protective League.

One school reported 23 Mexicans in seventh and eighth grades combined; they have been included with the seventh grade in this table.

Includes 9 specials, 18 open-window class, and 3 adolescent girl pupils.

At a Catholic parochial school it was reported that the Mexican children were "well-behaved and intelligent." It is interesting that the most favorable comments on Mexican children were made by a principal of a school near Hull House whose enrollment was almost entirely Italian, but included over sixty Mexicans. His observations, based on examinations of nationality group records, were that:

Some of the Mexican children are among the brightest we have. The average intelligence and school progress among the Mexicans is higher than among the Italians.

¹⁰⁹ *Op. cit.*, 17.

So far as we had opportunity to observe, the relations between teachers and Mexican children were cordial. Only two complaints against teachers were made to us: one, that a teacher who seated the Mexicans on one side of the room was "mean" to them; and the other, that another teacher had failed a friend of the complainant and set back the latter a half-grade "just because I did not get one problem right." On the contrary, there was the obvious cordiality of relations which we witnessed, and such statements as those of a leading Mexican that "The Mexicans get as good treatment as anyone else at the schools here," and of a Mexican mother that when her child moved, he "cried because he had to leave the school; the teachers were so nice to him, and he liked them so well." The teachers with whom we talked frequently were very fond of their Mexican children, and liked to teach them. Similarly, it was said at a religious "settlement" house that "Some of our teachers came prejudiced against the Mexicans, but now they like them."

There was some problem of uncleanness among Mexican children, but it was not emphasized as it frequently was in the West and Southwest. Even in the West, it was noted in 1927 in the lower San Joaquin Valley of California where numbers of migratory "poor whites," mainly from Oklahoma and Texas, were performing seasonal work beside the Mexicans, that personal uncleanness was a frequent occurrence among both groups; and that there and elsewhere the problem among Mexicans was frequently regarded by teachers as entirely solvable. So in the Chicago-Gary area the reports were not pessimistic. A Chicago principal said, "Some Mexicans are dirty, but not more than the Italians." A teacher of Mexicans in Indiana Harbor, many of whom came to her classes fresh from the middle western beet fields, stated: "At first, the children come to school lousy. After a few months they are ashamed to be found with lice in their heads." And Nelson quotes a South Chicago teacher who said, "In my room the Mexican children strike me as clean and courteous."

So far as was ascertained, segregation of black and white children was practiced in only one portion of the region studied. Mexicans were not segregated, and a principal reported that this seemed to make the position of the colored more distasteful:

The Negroes resent segregation, and when the Mexicans came they asked us if the Mexicans were white. We told them that they were.

According to a Mexican, a defeated candidate for mayor of one of the cities in the region had proposed in a campaign speech that "they make special places for the Negroes and Mexicans because they feel good living together," and that "it will do them good to put them separate in the schools." But the proposal was not carried out. The nearest approach to racial separation of Mexicans was reported by a Mexican who mentioned an individual teacher who seated Mexicans on one side of the room, and the others, Poles, Czechs, and two "Americans," on the other side. This slight separation serves but to reinforce the generalization that segregation is not practiced.

Friction at school between Mexican children and children of other nationalities was much less severe than frequently was reported in places in the West and Southwest where segregation was not practiced. Where segregation was the rule, for example in Dimmit County, Texas, the teasing of Mexican children was conspicuous by its absence; but this was more in the nature of an enforced truce, for in the same county where separation was not practiced, hazing was rife. In the Chicago-Gary region, the hazing was not so much that of a native race with the upper social and economic position taking advantage of an immigrant laboring class group, as it was the bickering between children of different immigrant groups, all of whom, despite some difference in race and the priority of arrival in the United States of the Europeans, were largely members of the same social and economic group. The use by children of the stigmatizing terms "greaser" or *pelado* was not reported; the common epithet seemed to be "dirty Mexicans," the adjective apparently being a term of opprobrium common in the region and applied more or less irrespective of physical cleanliness to despised persons or nationalities. Occasional subjection of other nationalities than Mexicans to hazing of this type was also reported. As a Mexican boy in junior high school said:

There is discrimination against the Polish, Jewish, and Mexican people. They are all called "dirty." The students do it too, sometimes, when playing or angry.

Once in a while the little fellows razz the Mexicans and call them "dirty Mexicans"; an Italian fellow once after school called me a "dirty Mexican" and I hit him.

[At a religious settlement:] There is some prejudice against them. One little Italian boy said the other day, "I don't want to sit next to that dirty little Mexican." But he himself was dirtier than the Mexican, and later he sat next to him readily enough.

Instances were cited in which Polish children cursed Mexicans in standard American fashion. But stigma can be conveyed by the tone as well as the words, as has been observed occasionally in the Southwest; a sensitive Mexican boy sensed a stigma even in the use of the rightful adjective of his nationality: "Some people call me Mexican. I don't see why they mention my nationality." Some Mexicans, on the other hand, firmly and apparently with reason, insisted that within their experience there was no teasing of children of their nationality because they were Mexicans. And a principal of a school with children of immigrants of many European nationalities enrolled, made the very interesting observation that:

The Mexicans assimilate a little easier, and the youngsters take them in a little more readily than some other nationalities.

The educational status of Mexican children in this northern urban-industrial region is strikingly different from that which prevails in most rural areas where Mexicans are to be found. Segregation is not practiced, social ostracism by other children is not pronounced, the economic position of Mexican families is often better, and if necessary pressure is brought to compel attendance at school. The result is more effective education and assimilation of Mexican children.

STANDARD OF LIVING

In 1928, Mexican laborers were housed in shelters provided by railroads, in company bunkhouses provided by two or three industrial plants, in private or cooperative boarding houses, or in the houses of private families.

There were at least seven railroad labor camps within the city limits of Chicago, fifteen more in the immediate western environs,¹¹⁰ and a few more eastward toward Gary. The reasons for maintaining these camps were partly the shortage of housing facilities when Mexicans were first brought north in numbers, and partly in order to have a minimum supply of labor at hand, readily available to respond to emergency calls. Partly because as the Mexicans became accustomed to the new environment many established themselves in private houses, and partly because the Chicago Department of Health subsequently forbade the establishment of new permanent camps, the Mexican labor population so housed was declining. In the winter of 1927-28, Anita

¹¹⁰ See Anita E. Jones, *op. cit.*, 77 ff., for a more detailed description with photographs of some of these camps.

Jones enumerated a total of 996 Mexicans in twenty-two camps, including 469 men, 155 women, and 372 children.

The type of housing provided ranged from box cars, usually dismounted if the camp was not temporary, to lumber houses constructed for the purpose. There was one very modern, brick bunkhouse provided by a local railroad, in which some single Mexicans, together with a number of men of other nationalities, were lodged.¹¹¹ In some camps, houses and sanitary facilities were good, in others they were deficient. In some, soil and space permitted small gardens and the keeping of chickens, and even pigs.¹¹² The box cars or other houses were often supplemented by additions of various types, constructed of used lumber. Where conditions were favorable trees and vines planted by the Mexicans afforded shade and an aesthetic touch.

The economy of company housing appealed to many of the Mexicans. Some railroads provided it without charge; others made a small deduction for rent and fuel. Coal was provided the year round, and sometimes ice in summer. When work slackened, families were usually permitted to continue to occupy their houses; in accordance with the customary practice of extending aid to relatives and *paisanos*, these, too, frequently came to inhabit the camps. In some of the camps we found a very few laborers of other nationalities, mostly single Italians in box-car bunkhouses.

At least three or four steel plants housed some of the early groups of Mexicans which they brought from the Southwest in company bunkhouses within the plant which had been used in the strike of 1919. Indeed, some Mexicans had been so housed during the strike.

After the strike, when the Mexicans were newly arriving in the area in car- and even train-loads, company housing was a distinct convenience to them. Indeed, at an industrial plant near two steel plants, which imported large numbers of Mexicans, the first Mexican applicants for employment, who probably had come from one of the steel plants, asked for quarters, saying that they had no place to live. The company had no quarters at the time, but, desiring to introduce employees of another nationality, they fixed up some buildings which had been used during plant construction. As many as sixty Mexicans occupied these houses at one time, although the number of Mexicans on the pay roll was never much higher than that number.

¹¹¹ See Nicol, R. W., "How one road cares for its men," *Railway Engineering and Maintenance*, XXIV, 109.

¹¹² See also Field Notes, p. 260 ff.

As the Mexicans became accustomed to the community, however, they often preferred to live closer to friends and amusements outside the plant, and the companies were generally willing to abandon the arrangement. A Mexican who had come early to the region, and had lived at one of the mills, described the changing situation from the point of view of his people:

The first large gang of Mexicans that lived inside the mill yards in the company houses and ate in the cafeteria liked it as long as it was new to them. The rooms were very nice and the food that we ate was good. But some men made a practice of staying out for supper and going to the families of some of the men in the neighborhood to eat. Others would eat out now and then for lunch. It was just the case that many of them liked the Mexican food and dishes so well that they grew tired of the regular American food even if it was good. There was a variety and we never had too much of one thing, but we never had *tortillas*, or *menudo*, or *tostadas*, and the other things we liked. Some of the others who wanted more [of these foods] did not like to live in the yards. After the day's work was done they wanted to get away from their work and forget about it and enjoy their leisure time. I remember one said to me once, "This is too much like a prison. We work all day, then we eat in a big place, all together, and sleep together. We never leave these walls of the factory." I guess also, we seldom had music or our [Mexican] theater plays like the other Mexicans in Chicago did.

Aside from questions of amusement and companionship, which affected the decision whether to live within the plant or outside, there was the issue of the economy of company board vs. boarding one's self. As stated by a company official:

The cost of boarding in company bunkhouses is \$1.50 per day. Some Mexicans prefer to batch it, which they can do for about 90 cents; this is important when work is slack as it is now [August, 1928].

In 1928 only one steel plant was still operating bunkhouses in which Mexicans were living.

The overwhelming majority of Mexicans live in houses which they find for themselves. Many of them live in boarding houses operated usually, although by no means always, by a family of their own nationality.

Solas sometimes live in a cooperative boarding house, where expenses and attendant labor of board and room are shared, or where each individual of the group boards himself. Hughes noted in 1925 that "Non-family cooperative groups of men were most often found among the Mexicans." A Mexican in Gary described the arrangement of his group:

I did not know how to cook when I came here, but I have learned so that now I can cook better than a woman. We six men all buy our groceries and keep them each in a separate box. We all use the same kitchen and the same bedrooms. Some

of us work on each of the three shifts so that we are never in each other's way. It makes it much cheaper to live that way. On payday our six boxes of food make this kitchen look like a store. I would like to buy food wholesale, but the other men will not agree. They are too irregular in buying and do not want a large supply because they want to be free to leave at a moment's notice.

To a shoemaker from Michoacán this practice of doing one's own work was something of a shock, a mental as well as material descent of his standard of living:

In Mexico we couldn't cook and do our own laundry for shame, but here everybody does them.

Similarly, a Mexican social worker said,

House work in Mexico is degrading. At first it hurt the Mexicans' pride to do it here when they were not used to doing it in Mexico.

Under stress, they sleep almost anywhere, as do the hoboes, but not with them. In the summer, of course, sleeping in the park is often more comfortable than in hot tenements, and is at times indulged in by thousands of many nationalities. Said an unemployed Mexican track laborer:

I sleep in bed when with my friends and when not, I sleep anywhere—under the bridge, or anywhere. When you get in town at 11 o'clock at night, you can't go to a door and ask to let you in.

Sometimes the single Mexicans live with a family of Mexican or European nationality. Indeed, the importance of the family boarding house as an institution, a center for recreation and social life, was so thoroughly recognized that the labor executives of at least two large plants each aided in establishing one in the area as a measure necessary for the stabilization of the new labor force of young Mexican *solos* in a strange city.

Mexicans with families live in the houses which they find available, either by themselves, or with another family, or with boarders. Of the one-family Mexican households studied by Hughes in 1925, 43 per cent contained lodgers. This was a higher proportion than among any other nationality group. The family itself often includes several adult relatives besides the husband and wife. Hughes stated that "The household of median size among native whites numbered four; among Negroes and foreign-born exclusive of Mexicans, five; among Mexicans, six."¹¹³

In general, the Mexicans live in poor quarters. "They [Mexicans and Negroes] are the latest heirs to the city's worst housing."¹¹⁴ They

¹¹³ *Op. cit.*, 13.

¹¹⁴ Hughes, *op. cit.*, 61.

are the latest immigrant arrivals, and like their European and Negro predecessors, they start at the bottom. They enter districts being abandoned by others, or, at times against resistance, push into vacancies in poorer districts yet occupied largely by other nationalities which resent their intrusion. Their poverty, not choice, is the chief determining factor. A Mexican housewife who lived close to the packing houses explained, for example:

This smell and stench here are bad. I know it makes me sick and makes me vomit at times. I lose my appetite and I do not eat as I should. Some of the other Mexican women I know around here feel the same way. It is very bad, but what can we do? Our husbands work near here, the rent is cheaper, and we have to live.

The standard of housing was generally low. We made no statistical study, but a few illustrations and comments of observers will serve to indicate its character. According to two Chicago observers who wrote in 1925:

The Mexicans were living in the most undesirable houses or parts of houses in the neighborhood. Many were living in basements and the great majority in back parts or in rear houses. The plumbing was usually much below the minimum for hygiene, but on the whole, in spite of the unfavorable environment and the bare furnishings of the rooms, they were quite above the average for cleanliness.¹¹⁶

The last statement was contradicted by others, for instance, a charity executive who said, "The Mexicans are wretched housekeepers." Plenty of evidence could be found to support both observations.

The housing of Mexicans in Indiana Harbor was generally agreed to be the poorest in the region. A steel company executive was the first person in the area to advise us of this, and the labor manager of a beet sugar company prophesied that when we saw conditions there, however unsatisfactory might be the houses on the sugar beet farms, we would agree that the Mexicans had been done a service by being taken away. The letter of a social worker in the vicinity described conditions in October, 1926:

The conditions under which they live are very poor, many of them living in dark basements and many in little shacks in back of larger homes which in many cities would be condemned and torn down. The rent which they are charged is

¹¹⁶ Britton and Constable, *op. cit.*, 4. Hughes in 1925 reported housing of Mexicans in Chicago to be generally poorer than that of the other groups of small-wage earners studied. In the matter of over-crowding for example, "In 72 per cent of the native white, 66 per cent of the Negro, 50 per cent of the other foreign-born and 27 per cent of the Mexican families, the number of rooms in the house either equalled or exceeded the number of persons." "The most extreme instances of over-crowding were found in the Mexican households."—Pages 21, 22.

outrageous. For two rooms they pay \$18 to \$20, and for three rooms, \$30. As the rent is so high, most every family has boarders, and in some cases in our census it was found that 75 men were living in one dark room in the basement, and the ceiling was so low that one could not stand up straight.

A Mexican who knew the colony well said in 1928:

Most of the Mexicans live in back rooms, upstairs, and in basements. They are usually crowded; some live four per room 12 feet by 12 feet.

In another locality I was told of a Mexican family found by social workers to be living in an attic which had no entrance except a man-hole. A social worker told of an instance in Chicago of sixteen relatives living in three very small rooms, and a Mexican woman said that when they had first come to the city from the beet fields they had been charged \$25 a month for one room in which eleven people had to live.

No systematic study of rentals was undertaken, but illustrations may be cited which will suggest the levels. Britton and Constable reported for 1924 an average monthly rental paid by Mexican dispensary patients of \$17, with a range from \$8 to \$32.¹¹⁶ A social worker in the Hull House colony reported in 1928 rentals which were somewhat lower: about \$8 to \$10 on the average, as low as \$6, and some few as high as \$16. A group of single Mexican laborers agreed that costs of room and board were about \$32 per month; rooms, which might be occupied by more than one person, could be had for from \$3.50 to \$5 per week. A Mexican who rented a flat of three rooms and bath on Ashland Avenue near the stockyards and took roomers, said, "You can rent three rooms and a bath for about \$17 a month. You can rent a room for about \$2.50 a week. A man can live on \$8 to \$10 a week, although not very well."

These descriptions of housing and rentals for the most part represent conditions at their lowest level; but many Mexican laborers were living close to this level. Observers who had been in close touch with the Mexican colonies for years said in 1928 that conditions were improving, and that extreme crowding was not so prevalent as it had been, although manifestly it still existed. Some Mexican laborers, however, were found living in quarters which were fully comparable to the quarters of American laborers. The best housing was that of the steadier laborers and skilled workmen, or clerks; this too was

¹¹⁶ *Op. cit.*, 3. Hughes reported that 84 per cent of the Mexicans studied paid less than \$30 a month rent for "cold water" flats, that 75 per cent of them spent less than 20 per cent of their monthly earnings for rent, and that 65 per cent of them paid less than \$5 per month per room.—Pages 33-37.

frequently fully up to the standard of Americans of similar economic and social position.

Unsatisfactory housing, diet, and a climate of unaccustomed rigor combined to make health conditions unfavorable. Britton and Constable stated:

We found that the Mexicans seem to be particularly susceptible to the harsh climate of Chicago, in the number of respiratory infections which they presented, though the incidence of tuberculosis as a factor in these respiratory disorders was not as frequent as one would have expected and as it has been found to be among the Negroes who have come to the north from the milder southern climate. . . .¹¹⁷

It is undoubtedly true that the Mexicans found difficulty in protecting themselves adequately from the climate of Chicago, especially at first. A very high tuberculosis rate is reported among Mexicans in California where the climate is not an adverse factor.¹¹⁸ It is also very doubtful whether predisposition to tuberculosis is racial; as the chief surgeon of a large industrial corporation with many Mexican employees pointed out, it appears to have adequate explanation so far as the Mexicans in Chicago (and California) are concerned, in their low standard of living.¹¹⁹

Inadequate nutrition was definitely noted by persons concerned with the health of Mexicans, and sometimes by employers as well, who saw a definite relation between food and working capacity. Thus, the labor supervisor of a local railroad wrote in 1928:

The management of the Elgin, Joliet & Eastern is now seriously considering the employment of a matron to teach the Mexican men and women how to use and prepare food which is more nourishing and suitable in the North than the inadequate diet on which they now try to live. I recently watched one of our Mexicans eating a lunch which had been prepared at home. It consisted of four tortillas, a sort of pancake made of flour, salt and water. Surely such food has insufficient nourishment for a man engaged in track work.¹²⁰

Britton and Constable reported that "There is also a high incidence of metabolic and nutritional diseases among the Mexican children,

¹¹⁷ *Op. cit.*, 6.

¹¹⁸ Mexicans in California: report of Governor C. C. Young's Mexican fact-finding committee (San Francisco, 1930), 186 ff., and reports there cited.

¹¹⁹ Compare: "The belief has been commonly held among white people that Negroes as a group cannot survive in a northern climate. . . . Evidence from studies of the Negro's health status points to the conclusion that his high death rate is not entirely a racial trait or merely the effect of climatic change, but to a great extent is due to poor housing, poverty, and ignorance."—Louise Venable Kennedy, *The Negro Peasant Turns Cityward* (Columbia University Press, 1930), 170, 178. Compare similar belief with respect to Filipinos, Bruno Lasker, *Filipino Immigration* (University of Chicago Press, 1931), 112.

¹²⁰ Nicol, R. W., "How one road cares for its men," *Railway Engineering and Maintenance*, 24 (1928):109, 111.

most probably because of the inferior conditions of living which exist among the Mexican families." A nurse of the Infant Welfare Society stated in 1928:

We prescribe diet for their children, but they cannot always afford to buy fresh vegetables. The Mexican children have rickets badly, are skinny and undernourished. They don't get enough sunshine. They live in little dark rooms and the children are not allowed on the streets; so they are inside all the time and get little sunshine. The Mexicans are poorer than the other nationalities here. Most anything is good enough for Mexicans to live in; they live in shacks about ready to come down, where the Italians won't live.

A Gary social worker familiar with conditions among Mexicans in both the North and the Southwest made a comparison of health and diet conditions which is interesting, but has the value of an impression only on a matter not easy to measure:

The health of the Mexicans seems to be worse up here. They have more money but less air and fresh vegetables, and they are more crowded.

The uncleanness of many Mexicans of the labor class is frequently remarked by residents of the Southwest, and often given as a reason for isolating them. One observes cases of uncleanness in the Chicago-Gary region, but the protest of other nationalities against Mexicans on this ground is not so strong. The conditions among Mexican school children already have been discussed. Landlords sometimes complain that their Mexican tenants are bad housekeepers; but many of them, of course, keep their houses very clean. Employers, unlike most of the farmers who use Mexican labor, frequently comment favorably upon their cleanliness; their replies are perhaps tempered somewhat by their comparative experience with European immigrants, but they are striking. A labor manager said,

The Mexicans are not inferior in cleanliness. The company used to have to whitewash around the Poles' houses because of uncleanness.

A mill superintendent observed that "The Mexicans are clean and well dressed." At a steel plant, the manager of the bunkhouses stated:

The Mexicans take daily baths. There are no vermin in the Mexican bunkhouse, though sometimes we find them in the whites' house; the whites we get are the worst. The Mexicans want clean sheets twice a week, and they are the first to squawk if the laundry is late. It is the same way if there is no hot water, whereas others will let it go and come into the dining room dirty.

At the municipal baths at a park near the stockyards, an official reported that about 800 baths were customarily taken on Saturdays, 600 of them by Mexicans. The Mexicans doubtless took baths at the

park in larger proportion than other nationalities partly because of less adequate facilities at home; however, they were a minority in the neighborhood, and the fact is significant. The official observed further that "The Mexicans will walk farther than the others to take baths. On Sunday about 100 Mexicans come to bathe. Not so many come on other days, but some come every day." An amusing situation was reported to us by an official at another municipal park. When he spoke of the friction at that park between Mexicans and Europeans, we inquired the cause. His reply was to the effect that "They object because the Mexicans monopolize the baths." In the light of this evidence, personal uncleanness seems much less a permanent and ineradicable characteristic of Mexicans than is often assumed by Americans resident in other parts of the United States.

The only data on venereal disease among Mexicans in Chicago which came to our attention are those of Britton and Constable. They reported that:

The proportion of venereal disease . . . was found to be greater than that found or reported among the clinic population as a whole. Seven per cent of the Mexicans had reported syphilis, while only 0.5% of the clinic as a whole was reported to the Health Department. The prevalence of gonorrhoea was 2.7% among the Mexicans as against 0.03% among the whole dispensary, and chaneroid 1.3% among the Mexicans and only 0.03% among the rest of the clinic.

At the employment department of a large packing plant, it was stated that rejections of Mexican applicants for employment on account of venereal diseases were greater proportionately than of applicants of other nationalities, except Negroes. The latter, it was said, had the highest proportion of rejections.

Low as was their living standard, the Mexicans were obviously impressed with the elements of the higher standard of living which they encountered in the region. The reactions of three Mexican women to the changes in housekeeping were interesting; the first two were much impressed with the ease of housework with material aids:

I find housekeeping here much easier than in Mexico. This is the first time I have used flour to make *tortillas*; I like it. It is very much easier than grinding corn on a *metate*. The gas is very much quicker than the charcoal. I haven't burned any *frijoles* (beans) yet, but I have to watch them much more carefully here than I would in Mexico. It is much nicer here with water in the house and the toilet in the house. I like the American cooking utensils much better than the Mexican *cazuelas* (pots). The kitchen floor looks so pretty when I clean it. It shows the effects of cleaning much more than the dirt or brick floors. Brick floors become stained and it is impossible to remove the stains. The wood floors get dirty much quicker, but they are easier to clean. Women's work is much easier here than in Mexico.

I could never do all the work in Mexico that I do here. I like to cook on gas as it is so quick. I like the electric motor on my sewing machine. I tried an electric washing machine, but I do not like them as well as sending the clothes to the laundry. You have to fool around with the rinsing and wringing, and with hanging the clothes to dry. The laundry is more satisfactory; the clothes come home damp, and it takes me, but a little while to iron them and put them away.

The third emphasized the endlessness of women's work under any conditions, although she conceded convenience and a saving in effort:

Women's work is just the same all over the world. They work all the time and are never done. Yes, I work all the time—from morning until night. There are many conveniences here which I did not have in Mexico. There I always cooked on a furnace that burned charcoal. It was very inconvenient, for the furnace had to be put outside into the open air until the coals glowed, then it had to be brought back into the kitchen and had to be watched or fanned most of the time while food was cooking. It took *frijoles* a long time to cook on this charcoal fire. Here the *frijoles* cook very quickly on the gas plate.

An official of one of the chambers of commerce in the area thought that the standard of living of the Mexicans was hopelessly low, that the Mexicans were content that it should remain low, and that there was not much reason for trying to raise it. He said:

If they [the Mexicans] don't want toilets, they can put the legally required number in the basement. I think somebody could build flats for them and cater to them and make money. I think we should take care of them and keep them clean, but beyond that I don't care.

On the contrary, the labor supervisor of a local railroad believed that the standard of living could and should be raised, if necessary by company inspection of company housing, and by instruction. As to the attitude of the Mexicans: "At first the Mexicans didn't like inspections and thought it was interfering, but we take the position that if the company spends money on good housing, given free, it is entitled to see that it is kept in good condition." The objection apparently subsided: The experiment merits recitation in detail.

The living habits of Mexican laborers and their families when they come to this country, are such as to manifest a total disregard for cleanliness and sanitation. . . . We tried several schemes in an effort at improvement, but to no avail. Finally a plan was put into effect under which the section foreman is required to go into each house under his jurisdiction on Wednesday and Saturday of each week for the purpose of teaching these people how to scrub the floors and to keep their quarters in a clean and tidy condition. Failure on their part to carry out these instructions results in their dismissal. The foremen are also required to make reports of the conditions they find to the chief engineer. The roadmasters are required also to inspect all such houses on their districts once each month and make similar reports to the chief engineer. I accompany the roadmasters on all

such inspection trips and report my findings directly to our vice-president. The first few inspection trips were anything but encouraging, but we could detect some signs of improvement here and there. Later on, however, every house of this nature on our railway, with the exception of one, was found to be remarkably clean, which convinced us that Mexicans can be taught our standards of living. These improved living conditions were obtained as a result of education over a period of 10 months.

The Mexicans are willing and will learn very readily. They are not solely to blame for their lack of knowledge of proper living habits . . . why not start now and teach them the American standard of living, so they will make more desirable citizens?¹²¹

The superintendent of a large industrial plant expressed similar views based upon his experience:

The Mexicans have changed greatly as to living habits in five years. They began by living in some old shacks we had used during construction. Observing them cooking over their open fires out of doors, I turned over to them a good cafeteria and kitchen which we no longer needed, on the condition that if I ever found it dirty it would be taken away from them. They kept the building in good shape and I have never had occasion to take it from them. Many have been induced to move into better houses in town, and some of them still live in bunkhouses on the plant grounds. Now the Mexicans bathe regularly and dress well. They learn readily if someone will teach them. The reason they live as they do is because nobody teaches them better.

A settlement worker also observed the change in standards of dress which had taken place:

At first the Mexicans came in overalls. Now they have suits. Now they dress their women well, in furs, etc. Some don't take the English class here because they have not good enough clothes to come to class.

One does not see crowds of Mexicans on the streets in overalls, as one does in the Southwest. In the Chicago-Gary region, as in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, and elsewhere in the North, the Mexicans on the streets are generally dressed in ready-made or tailor-made suits. They change from working clothes at the plant, or upon reaching their rooms at the close of the day.

A nurse agreed with the employers quoted above as to the teachability of the Mexicans, although she did not generally rate their intelligence highly:

The Mexicans follow instructions as far as they are financially able.

And Britton and Constable, writing of dispensary experience, ascribed to the Mexicans qualities not only of teachability, but of alertness:

¹²¹ Nicol, *loc. cit.*

The better cooperation which the Mexicans seem to have showed was probably the result not only of the efforts of social service organizations and clinic workers, but was also a part of the alertness which is a characteristic of the mental equipment of the Mexican.

The readiness of the Mexicans to advance their standard of living under favorable opportunities was thus more generally conceded, or even emphasized, than in the agricultural Southwest. Two further illustrations may be given to indicate the humbler levels from which the advance begins. A well informed Mexican, referring to his compatriots in one of the denser colonies, stated:

Very few sleep on the floor here. Beds cost only \$3; they are so cheap that all can have them.

And a Mexican woman living in one of the railroad camps, offering us some iced tea, said:

Do you like tea? We do. We have very little tea in Mexico, mostly coffee and chocolate. We often heard about it there, but only the rich people drank it. It was not until we came to this country that we started using it.

SOME CULTURAL ADJUSTMENTS

The immigrant's own reactions to his experiences in the United States are often best revealed in the *corridos* which he composes. The sense of shock upon contact with American customs in the industrial area of Chicago and the Calumet region is the theme of one such corrido, *El enganchado*, which appears at the beginning of this study.¹²²

FAMILY

The family is an important institution among laboring class Mexicans in the United States, a center about which they cluster. This is true in rural areas where they are stabilized in domicile and the sons and their wives build houses clustering about the house of the parents, often on the same lot. It is also true when they follow a course of seasonal migration during which many members, including women and children, usually work in the fields, for example, in the cotton, sugar beet, and grape harvests. It is likewise true when they shift from one part of the country to another upon the advice of a member who has journeyed in advance to search out the possibilities of a new environment. It was a Mexican clerk in a drug store of Indiana Harbor who said:

¹²² See p. vi; also *Mexico*, August 8, 1928.

We came from Colorado here because my uncle lived and worked here. Where he goes the whole family follows, just like in lots of other Mexican families. We have our uncles and aunts, and cousins, and the whole family up here. It's lots of fun when we are all together; there are over twenty-five of us.

The proportion of families, however, is much smaller in the Chicago-Gary region, and the family unit is subject to more disintegrating influences; its dominance is therefore less striking in this urban industrial center than in rural areas.

Data on the size of family were meager. Britton and Constable, reporting on a small group in 1924, said:

About 20% of those who were married had no children; of those who had children [about 130] there was an average of [2.7] children per family. While we found a number of families in which there were five, six, seven, and eight, and two families in which there were eleven children, the great majority of the families had only one or two children.

Records of seventy families reported by a birth control clinic during 1927-29 showed 3.8 to be the average number of children, but obviously this was not a representative sample. Between 1924 and 1928 the proportion and size of families doubtless increased with the advancing age group and the coming to the area of a large number of wives and families.

Most of the Mexicans come to the Chicago-Gary region with a conception of family relations which is distinctly patriarchal, and buttressed in part by religious sanctions. The relationships cast in this mold are subjected to stresses in the new environment. Not only is there a release from the controls of the accustomed environment which comes from the mere fact of migration, but there are disturbances arising from the new environment. The unbalanced sex ratio, the laws and customs of the United States, the entrance of Mexican women into industry, the education of Mexican children in American schools, and an American environment, are all sources of strain on inherited attitudes and relationships among Mexican immigrants.

The high proportion of young single men puts a premium upon the fewer Mexican women in the region. This results not infrequently in a reversal of the usual age differential between husbands and wives; as a Mexican observed:

A number are married to women much older than they. Martinez, for example, is aged twenty-two, and his wife is about fifty. It is just the other way in Mexico; the old men are married to the young women.

It is also a factor leading even to fights over women. Quoting further the preceding speaker:

Mexican women were very scarce. There were many fights for the ones that were here. Women never stayed single very long except by choice. There was one woman for whose hand three men were killed by rivals. She was married three times without being divorced once; the lovers dispatched all the husbands, thus eliminating the necessity of a divorce. Many more Mexicans were stabbed, and that was in the space of a year.¹²⁸

The scarcity of Mexican women also was conducive to prostitution. Just as prostitutes follow the cotton or onion harvests of south Texas, so they are found among the Mexicans of the Chicago-Gary region. There they visit railroad camps on pay day, and inhabit boarding houses or other convenient places. Their nationalities were reported as most frequently Negro and Mexican; there were some Europeans, of whom a few Rumanians and Germans were mentioned specifically. The situations existing at specific locations were described by a Mexican who knew the colony well:

In three boarding houses the husbands of the Mexican women live there and know that their wives accommodate the boarders. [In some instances the "husbands" were believed to be such only in order to furnish appearances which would diminish the likelihood of disturbance of the "business," but of a few others, it was said,] it is quite general for Mexicans of certain types to exploit their wives; [sometimes the same was said of several other nationalities]. At a boarding house in the Madison Street employment district two married women run a restaurant. They have a room for the children, one of whom is twelve years old, but he knows what is going on. The mother collects the revenues; the girls get one-half for themselves. At another boarding house the wife and daughter make money while the husband and son invite male friends to come to the wife and daughter. The wife and daughter go to dance halls and invite men to visit them, or else the husband and son will even take the women to some other place if the men are unwilling to come to the boarding house. At the house the price is two to three dollars. To go away, the price is raised to about ten dollars. Some men want them to come away because they believe it is safer. They believe there is less likelihood of robbery and other crimes and less likelihood of being caught. The girl engaged in this occupation from age thirteen. She says she likes it because she makes money. Probably these women are diseased. At any rate the husband came to me and asked for a doctor for genital-urinary diseases.

Other rooming houses were reported which were of an opposite type.

A Mexican social worker reported instances of Mexican prostitutes who encouraged other Mexican women to adopt the same occupation; interestingly, the liberty of women in the United States was invoked to strengthen the appeal:

¹²⁸ The women over whom the killings took place were not always Mexicans. For example, a Mexican killed another Mexican because it was claimed that the Negro wife of the first "gave liberties" to the second.—*Mexico*, February 26, 1927. Also a Pole killed a Mexican who, it was claimed, had given attentions to the wife which the husband resented.—*La Noticia Mundial*, November 20, 1927.

Some few Mexican prostitutes took other women in and encouraged them also to become prostitutes. They would say, "You do not need to work or suffer if your husband drinks. You are in the United States and do not have to do it."

The very existence of boarding houses operated by widows or by men and their wives for numbers of single men opened the way for looser sex relations, quite apart from commercial prostitution. Said a social worker:

The conditions in Mexican boarding houses are not so good. The Mexican women don't like the crowding; also it leads to loose morals. The women become common property. I know one case of a boarder who forced a woman to yield to him on the threat of killing her husband. When the other boarders found out that she had yielded they also forced her. When the husband found out what had happened, he shot one of the boarders and took his wife back to Mexico with him.

In another instance the husband dramatically killed the wife and boarder with a single bullet, the details of the tragedy furnishing front-page copy for the Spanish language newspaper.¹²⁴ Another case reported was a woman, deserted by her husband, who was unwilling to return to her boarding house, saying, "The men make too many advances to women here because there are so few women."

The idea of "freedom of women" had entered the minds of the Mexicans and was applied by them to their specific problems. The meaning to them of the phrase *la libertad de las mujeres* therefore might vary with the particular situation which each had in mind. These connotations usually appear from the quotations themselves. While the general trend was unmistakably toward acceptance of greater freedom, the amount of freedom thought desirable by individuals was subject to a good deal of variation. Thus, a Mexican woman revealed adherence partly to the old and partly to the new viewpoints:

This is too cold here; but we have to like it if our husbands like it here. The women here have more freedom than in Mexico. Here if you are injured you can go to the jail [court] and tell them, or if your husband wants to desert you or beat you. In Mexico if your husband deserts or beats you—well, it's your husband.

These two factors—the unbalanced sex ratio and the greater liberty accorded women in the United States by law and custom, together contributed to the instability of families. Although both factors were not always demonstrably operative in all cases, the latter made unsatisfactory domestic relations psychologically less bearable by Mexican women, and the former afforded them ready prospects of other, and more alluring liaisons. This is clear from the statement of

¹²⁴ Mexico, May 30, 1929.

typical domestic difficulties by a Mexican social worker with wide experience among her people:

The first type of complaint is that of the wife who claims her "rights" from her husband. The husband spends the money on wine, or gambles, and does not take his wife and children out to theatres, etc. Some husbands do beat them with their hands or fists to try to shut them up. They say, "If you don't like to have me control you, you can go to the street." In Mexico under such circumstances the wives would say they made a mistake, and would carry their cross; here they want their rights. The Mexican women see the better treatment of the United States women, so they react against the treatment by their Mexican husbands.

A second type of difficulty arises from wives who neglect their duties at home and who may want to leave with another man. They may want to go out more than they need to and to neglect their children. This usually takes place among common law marriages, and especially at boarding houses, and when the husband is the type described above; the wife then wants to leave with one of the boarders, and to get rid of her husband she complains to us. My clue that the woman was seeking to desert was the aspect of the woman herself. When she came with face rouged, short skirts, etc., I knew that she probably was from a boarding house and wished to leave her husband.

My informant estimated that in the second type of situation, about one-fourth of the deserting wives leave the children with the husband, and observed that "Often the men wanted the children more than the women." Families were sometimes reunited, sometimes not. "I could convince the men [of the advantages of reunion or of avoiding separation] more easily than the women."

Thus, desertion by the wife, said to be extremely rare in Mexico, appeared as an important type of marital difficulty in the Chicago-Gary region. Said a Mexican social worker, referring to the laboring class Mexicans, "In Mexico they have only common law marriages, but they stay together better than here." And another Mexican social worker in another part of the area said, "Many women desert their husbands. The wives go off with the boarders oftener than the husbands desert their wives."

The variation in reaction to the new conditions, and perhaps difference in class or religious background is so great among the Mexicans that generalizations which will cover even the majority are difficult. Thus, an American social worker commenting on the number of marital relationships without sanction of law, while conceding that the parents did assume responsibility for children, could state, "When the Mexicans are tired of each other they just separate and change partners. But they are beginning to get ideas of respectability [from insistence on legal marriage to secure charitable aid under certain Illinois statutes, from the activities of religious social workers, etc.]."

At the same time a Protestant Mexican social worker, impatient with her countrywomen for what some of them would endure, could also say with truth, "There is no use talking divorce to a Mexican woman, because they don't believe in it."¹²⁸

The idea of the freedom of women had its impact not only on the traditional conceptions of marital relations, but also on the relations of parents and children, and interacted with the entrance of Mexican women into business and industry. In a variety of forms these elements appear in the conflicts between the traditional and the newer attitudes. "When the [women] cross the border they change some of their ideas." Both men and women were divided in their allegiance to old and new. In general women and children more often favored relaxation of the traditional attitudes. Mexican men to a considerable extent resisted the change; frequently Mexican women too shared the men's views in whole or in part.

The resistance of the men focused variously upon codes controlling the relations of husbands and wives, men and women, parents and children, and canons of proper conduct, occupation, and apparel of women. While eligible Mexican women in the region were at a premium, in the ideals of most of the Mexican men, girls fresh from Mexico were much preferred; indeed, many did go back to Mexico for a bride. The statement of a young Indian-type track laborer was characteristic:

The Mexican girls in the United States are like the American girls or worse. It is best to get a girl from Old Mexico when one wishes to marry.

The observations of a Mexican high school boy were not only corroborative, but pointed out the converse of this, that Mexican girls here preferred Mexican men who had been in the United States, undoubtedly largely because they both would have been subjected to its liberalizing influences:

The Mexican men here say that the Mexican girls of the United States have too much liberty. They want to marry the girls newly from Mexico. Mexican girls here want Mexicans who have been in the United States.

The comments of two Mexican men, when, at the picnic of a Hull House English class, the subject of the freedom of women came up, were illuminating:

¹²⁸ Indicative of the character of the attack on divorce was the following editorial in *Mexico*, May 9, 1928, written by a Mexican, probably of the Catholic faith, "Let us avail ourselves of divorce, and see that it is nothing but the first step that a woman takes toward her own perdition; for with the same ease that today she changes husbands, she can do it tomorrow and the next day, until her life is a succession of 'husbands' only comparable to the lives of those unfortunate ones who are called prostitutes." Even Dolores del Río, a favorite movie heroine of the Mexicans, was bitterly attacked in *Mexico* for seeking a divorce.

Martínez, the better educated of the two, white in color, works in a rubber factory. He said American customs are better; it is better that men and women should be equal. A dark-faced Indian working on a New York Central section said no, European laws are better than those of the United States, which give too much freedom. He protested against the judgment in a divorce case of an unfaithful wife; the man got the divorce but was obliged to pay \$10 a week to support the children. He says that here in America the woman is over the man. The man is head of the house. There must be a head; every society has a head. The place of the woman after marriage is in the home taking care of the children. It is all right for her to work, but only before marriage.

On the latter point, an elderly Mexican woman was in complete agreement with the preceding male speaker:

A woman has enough to do in the house. If she is going to keep a happy home and a happy husband she has enough to do to stay home and take care of cleaning the house, cooking, and looking after his needs. How would you like your wife to work? You can't serve two masters, and one of them has to be your husband.

Nevertheless, Mexican women were entering business and industry in numbers, probably three hundred or more in the region. The factors which induced them to enter industry were partly a desire for independence, but more often they were economic, either pressure or desire for more things. Said an Italian social worker:

The women are loath to go to work in industry, but need forces them. When they must go, another Mexican girl already in industry usually takes them to work. If single, the Mexican women like to remain at work; they learn English and like the independence. If they marry, they stop work. Mrs. Garza's daughters were kept very strictly at home. But when the son married and the mother was not well, then the need of additional earnings sent the sisters to work.

A clear case of economic pressure was that of a Mexican who at the time we met him was going through a long, discouraging experience of inability to secure work; finally, in desperation, and to the great shame and chagrin of the husband, the wife sought and secured a job.¹²⁶

Working meant a recognized breach in the traditional relationship of wives and husbands. An American social worker observed:

Widows who work have some freedom; wives whose husbands are alive do not change.

One viewpoint, expressed by a Mexican woman, was to welcome outside employment as temporary freedom.

Women like to work here. At home the man is boss, but not while you are at work.

¹²⁶ See Field Notes, p. 267.

Mexican men were generally less ready to welcome the change, giving a variety of reasons, some of which have been cited already. Two interviews were particularly illuminating on the attitude of Mexican men toward not only the entrance of women into industry, but other aspects of the divergence between American and Mexican attitudes and customs as well. The first interview was with a Mexican printer and his wife; the husband's sisters had reluctantly gone to work, but had grown to like it, and he had come to approve their activity.

Mexican husbands don't want their . . . wives to go to work. . . . Now the Mexicans borrow money rather than let their women work, but I think the American customs are better. The Mexican immigrants don't like the freedom of women, but it is all right for those Mexicans born here. The women find out that freedom of the United States is pretty good for them. I want my children to grow up with American customs, but I don't send my boy [age 7] to school because I want him to know Spanish.

[At this point, the wife interjected:] I want to go to work, but my husband doesn't want me to. [The husband explained in reply:] It is all right for the Americans to let their women work, and it is all right for my sisters to work; they are brought up here. And it will be all right for the children who are brought up here and are used to American customs. But you are not like the Latin people; our blood is different. We eat pepper and hot food, but you do not like it. If our wives went to work, they would meet some other men and would go away with them; I would not blame my wife, I would blame myself, because I have control of her. She would meet a man and go with him. Others are used to it, but not the Latin girls. My wife feels it is jealousy, but it is not that. Besides, I have to pay a man \$25 to \$35 a week to run a linotype; but the most my wife could earn in a factory would be \$15-16 a week. If she runs the linotype she makes more here. [To this the wife replied:] I like to run the linotype, but there is not work all the time. [On another occasion:] He says that the children need me; I think that I could get some good woman to stay with the children for about \$5 a week and I could make \$20-25.

The preceding quotation shows a curious mingling of acceptance and of reluctance to accept new customs. The next quotation shows a similar mingling; it shows also chronological stages and uneven degrees of acceptance of the new. The first statement is from the daughter, who works as a stenographer; the second is that of the father, probably a *criollo* (a person of European ancestry born in Mexico), who worked previously as a mechanic in Texas, and in 1928 was buying a modern brick house in the Calumet region:

Down in Texas father didn't let me work. He said he could work and provide us with enough. Here I got a vacation job when the other girls at schools worked and father let me do it. Now both I and my sister work.

Mexican men don't like freedom of women. It is all right for the Americans but not for the Mexicans. They don't want their wives to work. My daughter works as a stenographer, but it is different in this country. In this country every-

thing costs so much that the women have to work. Not the wives who have babies to attend to, however [obviously this shifts the argument from cost to what he regards as undesirable]. My daughter wanted me to buy her a bathing suit. I said no, you can bathe here at home. I will educate you, give you music lessons, and so forth, but not buy a bathing suit. You can wait till I am dead and buy it then.

Similarly revealing of steps in accommodation of attitude was a conversation with two young Mexicans in a pool hall. The first, although born in Kansas, was yet sufficiently "Mexican" to regard himself as such and to give the characteristic reply to the question of return to Mexico that he "would go to Mexico if Mexico settled down"; but he stated that freedom of women was "all right." The young native of Mexico who heard this explained: "That is because he was born in this country." A jibe at what was regarded as the ascendancy of American women over men appeared in *Mexico* over the title, "Flapperization of the world":

I have an American friend who in his own house can't even open his mouth to order a couple of fried eggs (because he is already finding out things about his wife [*sic*]). She shoves him out to a restaurant, because according to her, she did not get married to be a cook for any Tom, Dick, or Harry, including her husband, my friend.¹²⁷

The patriarchal form of family organization extends to the relations of Mexican fathers with their children. Next to the father, stands the authority of the mother. While primary authority resides in the father until the son or daughter marries, the authority is usually exercised with flexibility and tolerance; Mexican parents in the United States are frequently regarded as lenient and even indulgent by Americans, except in respect to the strictness of their supervision of their daughters.

Evidences of strong parental authority were frequent and varied; attitudes of children ranged from loyal acceptance of allegiance to rebellion, usually combining elements of both. The following are illustrations: I was told by a young *solo* on his day off from the steel mills, that among the advantages of coming to the United States, was the fact that

In Mexico *mi padre* is boss; here I am boss. If I go back to Mexico, then *mi padre* will be boss again until I get married. There I worked on my father's *rancho* and my father got all the money.

¹²⁷ October 9, 1927.

A Mexican high school boy of 15 years, whose father had refused to sign a permit for his enlistment in the National Guard, said:

I do not know why my father wouldn't sign, for when he says "No," that is the end of it; we do not think of asking for a reason.

A Mexican girl of 16 years commented on the case of a friend whose father refused to grant her permission to marry:

Her father did not let her marry the man because the man could not get the money for the trousseau. He did get her a pair of shoes and she is wearing them now. She is more than 18 and if she were an American girl she would go ahead and marry anyway if she wanted to. The American girls have their rights and can do things like that, and the parents cannot do anything, but when it is a Mexican girl, the parents can give them *unos buenos palos* (some good cudgels).

A Mexican mother said proudly of her grown daughter:

I have the best daughter that ever a mother had. She will not do a thing without first consulting me. Sometimes she comes home from work on Saturday with her pay in her pocket-book and tells me that she saw something down town that she would like to have bought. I asked her why she didn't. She never thinks of buying anything of importance without first consulting me. I go with her when she is going to get a dress or hat or any large article of clothing. There are not many daughters like mine. Here the girls think that their mothers do not know anything. The girls at the factory where my daughter works tell her that she is silly for giving me all her pay check; that they go out on Saturday afternoon and have a good time on the money that they earn. But my daughter never does; in fact I think that my daughter does not get enough recreation. I bought that phonograph for her; now she enjoys music in the evening; you have no idea how that music in the evening helps her. She is not so *triste* (sad) as she used to be. I have been very *triste* since my other daughter was burned to death over two years ago. It seems that I cannot get over it, but my daughter should not feel so sadly; she is young and should be light-hearted.

An adult son expressed his loyalty to the tradition that the mother is above the daughter-in-law:

I don't care if the girl I marry bobs her hair and wears a bathing suit, but she can't do it until after my mother's death because she wouldn't like it.

The most extreme instance of parental domination which came directly to our attention was that of a Mexican girl in a grammar school. The girl, like most of the Mexican children, was agreeable to relaxation of the restrictions of Mexican customs in favor of American customs and the more liberal tendencies appearing in parts of Mexico:

My father has been here 16 years. He says the American girls go out alone, talk back to their parents, and don't help their mothers. He has seen how American girls treat their mothers.

My father wants to raise the boys in Mexico. He wants them to grow up with Mexicana. But now things are changing in Mexico. Four years ago there were

no women lawyers; now we have the first one. Women are trying to get the vote there. The Mexican women are forming societies; I have a cousin who teaches school in Mexico and sends me the Mexican papers. Now girls can take part in athletics.

My father says gymnasium is immoral and has me excused from it; I think it is better for you and develops mind and body. I don't go to social affairs or to the movie except two or three times a year when my father takes me. American customs help you [i.e., educate and give freedom] to do what you can do well. But the Mexican customs do not; if the parent says "No," there is no use to learn what you can do well, because you will not have a chance to use it.

My father has not many friends except old Mexicans who think as he does. He doesn't let me bring any girls home or talk with others of my own age; there is only one, a Mexican girl of 13 years. She is in the same condition as me; that is the reason he lets her come. Her parents take her to the show oftener. She is quite bold, and says that when she is 18, she will break away. Even American teachers tell me I shouldn't stay with my father, but I don't think it is good to break away from your family.

A social worker added the information that this girl "is so restricted by her father that she lowers the hem of her dress at home and raises it when she goes to school, in order not to be too far out of style at school and yet satisfy the demands of her father at home."

At another school, two Texas-Mexican girls were obviously very tense over the attitude of their parents. The teacher stated that "they feel the repression very keenly." They could not remain even a few minutes after class with a group of Mexican pupils and the teacher to talk to us; they said they were not allowed on the streets, and broke away from the group very quickly lest their parents think they had loitered on the way home. A mother was unwilling to let her daughter go unchaperoned with boys, "because of what the Mexican neighbors would say"; and a young male friend added: "and because of what the jilted young Mexican men might say; they aren't used to going with girls alone." Of a young Mexican woman it was reported, "Some of the Mexicans say [in criticism] that 'Srta. A. is living by herself'; she lives at the settlement house. The Europeans, too, thought it was not good form. Srta. A. says that she is on her guard against criticism." A Mexican social worker reported another illustration of conflict in custom:

A Mexican girl returning to Mexico wanted to buy herself a sleeveless dress but I heard her mother say, "Oh, no; girls of your class in Mexico don't wear such dresses."

A Mexican boy in high school at Indiana Harbor expressed a view as nearly typical of Mexican youths as could be expected in a situation with such variety:

The Mexicans don't like co-education. In Mexico the girls cannot go with the men. The man goes to the balcony and talks with the girl or goes inside the house with a chaperon. My parents say that Mexican customs are better, but I like American customs better.

The generalization of a well informed Mexican social worker was in accord with the view just cited. She said: "Children want more freedom like the Americans. They want the money they earn, to dress better, and to go out without chaperons. The parents see that it is the custom here."

Despite the extreme conflict between parents and children over the adoption of American customs which was evident in some cases, Mexican parents generally seemed to retain control over their children, at the same time yielding somewhat to the changed environment. Under such circumstances, the rebellion of the children was not very violent, causing breaches; but in the cases of extreme insistence upon avoidance of American customs by the father, there was clear evidence of tense relations and severe repressions, with unfortunate reactions on the children. The following quotations from three American social workers taken together, and including contradiction warranted by varying facts, appeared to describe the situation with accuracy:

The children are obedient at school and in their homes; they do what they are told. The parents have good control of their children; the parents are gentle with their children.

The children take the reins in their own hands; they rebel. The parents are lenient and give in.

There is not the friction and rebellion between Mexican parents and children that is found in some other nationalities which come here. The Mexican parents are quick to adjust themselves to their children.

The preceding analysis reveals some of the points of issue in the adjustment of Mexicans to the customs of the American urban industrial environment to which they have come in very uneven sex ratio. On such points as those indicated there are conflict and accommodation in varying degrees, with the trend clearly showing relaxation of the authority of the Mexican customs.¹²⁸

¹²⁸ A good initial case study was made by Ruth S. Cambion ("Mexican parents: a study of their adaptation to American standards and culture in relation to child training" [1927; unpublished manuscript]). Also, Robert C. Jones is assembling further data, to some of which I have had access, on this subject in which variety is about as striking as uniformity.

Mexican families residing in the Chicago-Gary region come into contact, many of them for the first time, with people who have knowledge of and practice birth control by means of contraceptives. Indeed, there is at least one birth control clinic in the area readily accessible to Mexicans. Their attitudes toward birth control are not uniform. The true situation appears from contradictory statements, each of which is true of portions of the Mexican population. A social worker, for example, said:

I sometimes say to the poor Mexican mothers, "Don't have another baby." They reply, "God sends them to us." They are not ready for birth control now; they don't think enough of it.

And a Mexican mechanic stated:

The Mexicans get wise; they see that the Americans have smaller families and want to know how they do it.

These statements, combined, give the truth of the situation; but the first is more characteristic of the attitude of a great majority of the laboring class.

A social worker with much experience on this subject described the range of her observations:

One Mexican woman whom I questioned about birth control replied, "Well, I got only five children." Some Mexicans decline to receive information, saying they are Catholic. Others who I ask if they wish to have more family reply, "No, no!" Only an occasional Mexican is unwilling to receive information.

Another social worker emphasized the objections by the husband which are sometimes encountered:

The Mexican man does not like the idea of preventing conception. He feels that if his wife is not bearing children she will have relations with other men. Also he may think it immoral. The Mexican women would like to know but they are afraid of their husbands.¹²⁹

The statement, like those preceding, is to be taken not as a universal description, but as a generalization of limited observations. An instance of a husband who welcomed birth control information was given in the statement of his wife; they had four children:

I am using the treatment that they gave me at the birth control clinic. My husband is very glad that I went to the clinic and that the treatment is simple. He says he is getting very weary and worn out with such hard work as is necessary to keep food for so many mouths. He is a good man and works regularly whenever there is work to do. Last winter he was very fortunate in not being laid off.

¹²⁹ Cambion reports of a Mexican husband: "He was opposed at first to the use of contraceptives; although he said that he would like to limit the number of children, he was afraid it would lessen his strength."

Another Mexican husband inquired:

I'm twenty-five years old, with three children, and may have more. What to do?

A Mexican woman was deterred from seeking contraceptive information by the rumor that the clinic charged for its services, and partly by apprehension of detriment to health:

Yes, I knew that there were birth control clinics, but X told me that they charged three dollars. My husband and I do not want any more children but I heard that they gave the women medicine to take, and I was afraid that the medicine would make me sick. I would rather have my health and have more babies, although I think that we have as many now as we can take care of and educate. I am sure that my husband would be willing for me to go to the clinic if by so doing I shall not be in any danger of losing my health.

Another Mexican woman was afraid of unreliable doctors, of damage to health, and of a method which might not be effective for the purpose intended:

No, I did not go to the birth control clinic. The fact is I am afraid to use any kind of medicine; it might not work. I do not want any more babies now; five babies keep me busy all the time. . . . One of my friends went to a doctor and told him that she did not want any more babies. He said that he would make her an operation for forty dollars. She paid him the forty dollars and he made her the operation, but now she has a baby girl. I am afraid of doctors and medicine, for I want to be safe.

This woman, like many other Mexicans, had borne babies in Chicago with only her husband to attend the birth; she sometimes had sought the services of a midwife, or a student-doctor from a lying-in dispensary.

The statistical records of Mexican clients of a birth control clinic, which were made available for this study, are presented in two tables. During the two and one-half years ending June 30, 1929, the total number of patients was 271, of whom 75, or 27.7 per cent were Mexicans. The group was not a representative cross-section of the Mexican colony in many respects; obviously the selective factors were largely the size of family and poverty. The number of children per family was 3.8 as compared with 2.3 among Mexican patients at the free dispensary reported four years earlier by Britton and Constable. Forty-four reported weekly earnings ranging from \$12 to \$30 per week, and averaging \$19.06; but these figures omit the unemployed among the seventy-five. Furthermore, they cannot be multiplied by 52 to estimate annual earnings because of the very irregular employment common among Mexicans.

Table 25 shows that more than two-thirds of the women were under 30 years of age when enrolled at the clinic. One-fifth were referred to the clinic wholly or partly for reasons of health and nine-tenths wholly or partly for economic reasons. The contacts between patients and clinic were established almost entirely through persons or agencies engaged in social work, and, except in a case or two, not by the initiative of the Mexican women.

Table 26 shows the number of pregnancies, and of children born per year of married life of seventy of the Mexican patients. The number of pregnancies which did not result in births seems very small; it may be owing to incorrect reporting, or if correct, it shows that abortion, either spontaneous or induced, was a relatively unimportant factor in birth limitation among these Mexican women. The rate of both pregnancies and births was a little more than one every two years on the average. Both rates fell markedly, however, as the length of married life advanced; indeed, they were halved—but the group upon which the last statement rests consisted of only two individuals. It is important to keep in mind in this, as well as in other connections, that the group of Mexican women dealt with here was a young group, the oldest of whom was but 40, and two-thirds of whom were under 30 years of age, none of whom had been married longer than 24 years, 64 per cent of whom had been married 10 years or less, and 87 per cent of whom had been married 15 years or less.

The high mortality among the children will be noted, and especially the advancing rates of mortality as the number of years the mother has been married increases. While the ages of the dead children are not known, nor the dates of migration to the United States and to the Chicago-Gary region of these particular individuals, it is probable that the higher rates result from the fact that they include more years of residence in Mexico under conditions favoring high infant and child mortality, while those married fewer years have been exposed to conditions in the United States, which reduced mortality.¹⁸⁰

It is impossible to measure from the figures available the effectiveness of the work of the birth control clinic, largely because the great majority of Mexican women change residence, and for that or other reasons fail to report to the clinic. In addition, there may be

¹⁸⁰ Compare *Mexicans in California: Report of Governor O. C. Young's Mexican fact-finding committee*, San Francisco, 1930, pp. 183-4, which, if reporting of vital statistics was reliable, shows a drop in the Mexican infant mortality rate in the unincorporated area of Los Angeles County from more than one-quarter in 1916 to slightly above one-tenth in 1929. The latter rate was still more than two and one-half times the rate among the "white" population.

TABLE 25
DATA ON 75 MEXICAN MARRIED WOMEN PATIENTS OF A BIRTH CONTROL CLINIC IN THE CHICAGO-GARY REGION DURING THE TWO AND ONE-HALF YEARS ENDING JUNE 30, 1929*

Age		Age at marriage		Religion		Referred to clinic by		Reason for reference to clinic	
Years	Number	Years	Number						
16-19	2	13-17	32	Catholic	59	Charities	18	Economic	59
20-24	21	18-22	35	Protestant	16	Infant welfare	40	Health	7
25-29	30	23-27	5			Other social agencies	3	Both	9
30-34	12					Individuals	14†		
35-39	9								
40	1								

* The oldest woman in the group was 40; none had been married longer than 24 years.
† Mostly persons engaged in some form of social work among Mexicans.

TABLE 26
NUMBER OF PREGNANCIES, AND OF CHILDREN BORN PER YEAR OF MARRIED LIFE, OF 70 MEXICAN WOMEN PATIENTS OF A BIRTH CONTROL CLINIC IN THE CHICAGO-GARY REGION DURING THE TWO AND ONE-HALF YEARS ENDING JUNE 30, 1929*

Mothers		Pregnancies			Children				
Years married	Number	Total	No. per woman per year†	Total	No. per woman per year†	Living		Dead	
						No.	Per cent	No.	Per cent
1-5	19	49	.8	49	.8	48	98.0	1	2.0
6-10	26	121	.6	116	.6	99	85.3	17	14.7
11-15	16	116	.6	107	.5	77	72.0	30	28.0
16-20	7	65	.5	64	.5	40	62.5	24	37.5
21-24	2	19	.4	19	.4	11	57.9	8	42.1
Totals and averages	70	370	.59	355	.56	275	77.5	80	22.5

* Data on 3 cases included in the preceding table were partially defective; these, and two cases married less than one year reporting neither children nor pregnancies were not included in this table.

† Calculated from number of years each individual mother was married.

effective exchange of ideas and information between clients and others who do not become patients, which of course does not appear in the records.

In some cases, it is clear that results are obtained. For example, on one case the notation, covering a 15-month period, reads, "Began as a charity case. Now pays for supplies [from own income]." Another woman reported to the clinic three times during a 14-month period, and upon departure for Colorado "she wanted to know where she could get supplies there; said she was satisfied with the method." In the majority of cases, results are not definitely known. In some cases it is known that the giving of information has not been effective. Of the latter type was probably the woman who "came once, but said it was too much bother." The record of another Mexican case, a recipient of charity, is also illuminating:

Said she didn't want any more children, because didn't have enough money to support children, and her husband was sick in hospital. . . . Came four times for supplies in one year, but 13 months after enrolling at clinic became pregnant. Reported having intercourse without using method. Said with a smile that she had gone a year with the method, as though that were a pretty good record.

Occurrences of this sort were sufficiently frequent to discourage a social worker whose agency frequently referred Mexican women to the clinic:

Two Mexican families given birth control information three years ago now have babies. The women admit that it is due to their own carelessness. We have eight Mexican families who did not use the information given.

Formerly the case worker used to decide when information should be given. If she thought the family was unduly large and the charity burden would be increased she arranged to have the information given to the mother. We found, however, that the idea of birth control didn't percolate. We . . . did not have much result. Now the Mexicans themselves must ask for it.

One Mexican woman refused birth control information on religious grounds. Some say it is "too much bother."

The following case illustrates one way in which the religious objection was abandoned. After declining on religious grounds to receive information, a Mexican woman became pregnant. Thereupon, she requested the clinic to perform an abortion, which of course it declined to do. Shortly thereafter, no longer pregnant for reasons unexplained, she returned to the clinic to obtain contraceptive information. More convincing evidence of the weakness in practice of the religious objection, is the fact, shown in table 25, that practically four-fifths of the Mexican women enrolled at the clinic said they were Catholic, and all the rest reported themselves as Protestants.

As noted before, conclusive evidence of consistent use over a long period, of the information obtained has been secured in but few cases. There is no doubt that Mexican women avail themselves of information provided by the clinic. But it would be a mistake to suppose that a birth control clinic is the only way in which the information spreads; the acquisition through quite different channels of knowledge of some mechanical means of avoiding conception was occasionally noted among Mexican laborers in localities as widely separated as south Texas, southern California, and Detroit.

RELIGION

In matters of religion, the Mexicans brought with them from Mexico the conflict between Protestant and Catholic. Imbedded in the memory of a Mexican girl then in junior high school, for example, was the intolerance she had witnessed:

Now there is less religious intolerance in Mexico. I am a Catholic, but I think that [tolerance] is better. I remember girls who were not Catholics who cried because of their treatment.

They also brought with them the politico-religious conflict between Church and State, which follows in part, but only in part, the same cleavage of Protestant from Catholic. A large majority of the immigrants come from the central plateau states northwest of Mexico City where Catholicism is strongest. Furthermore, the controversy was bitter in Mexico during the period of our field work in the region and its echoes were sharp. For instance, a Mexican Presbyterian who was taking citizenship papers was eager to be able to vote in the Presidential election of 1928. "I want to vote for Hoover," he said. "I do not like Al Smith because he is a Catholic." Another Mexican who no longer regarded himself as a Catholic, voiced a view frequently heard among Mexicans in various parts of the United States, even from some who yet considered themselves members of the Catholic Church; if able to vote, he would vote for Hoover, he said, because Smith was a Catholic, and if elected, would favor the Catholic faction in Mexico, and revolution would continue; the Catholics could do nothing in Mexico as long as the United States would not sell them arms and as long as they were keeping such a close watch that contraband ammunition could not cross the border. Of opposite opinion, but revealing the same intense feeling, was the Catholic priest who greeted our report of Obregón's assassination the day before with the statement, "That's good news!"

The cleavage between Protestant and Catholic extends through the fields of doctrine, competition in charity or other non-religious activities, and of course ultimately, competition for adherents among the immigrants. Most of the immigrants are Catholics, some of them only nominally so. A few were converted, or their parents were converted, to Protestantism in their own country. A larger number, yet a small minority of the total, have embraced Protestantism in the United States with varying degrees of enthusiasm.

By Catholics, there is complaint that migration has weakened the bonds of religion and respect for the clergy. A priest who had come from Mexico noted a change for which he could not account:

I do not know what to think. I am dumbfounded at the change that takes place in the Mexicans when they come here. . . . Down there they were at least civil and polite; they took their hats off when they passed and said goodbye; they were pleasant and merry. And here I come to this country hoping that with the higher civilization my Indians of Mexico would be much better off than down there, and it is worse. When I first came here ten months ago I would say hello to the Mexicans as I passed up the street. Some ignored me, a few grunted recognition, and few indeed were there that stopped to say hello kindly. They are not as respectful or courteous here as over there; not to me, or to the women; and even amongst themselves they are very rough and uncouth. I am very discouraged, and when I go down the street I no longer have that friendly feeling, and the desire to greet them cordially as when I first came. My ardor has been cooled.

The Poles are very nice to me here. When I go up the street they always say good morning and take off their hats; they are very respectful.

It is very hard to get the people to come to church. All the Mexicans here are Catholic in name and by baptism; but there are not many practical Catholics. I go around to visit, and invite them to come; they say yes, or at times say nothing. Even when I go around to their houses I notice the difference in hospitality and the home courtesy from Mexico; they are cool and cautious as if you were trying to get something from them. Why is that? I can't understand the change from Mexico.

Another priest pointed to similar weakening of the bonds of religious ceremonials:

They are not as good Catholics here as in Mexico. Because of differences in ceremonial, flowers, decorations, and other externals, they think that Catholicism here is not the same as Catholicism in Mexico.

There was complaint of the priests, recorded in some detail by Nelson, that the immigrants were "superstitious," and attached too much significance to extra performance of little ceremonial acts of devotion.¹²¹

A number of Protestant denominations make efforts with workers who are often sincere and devoted, to secure adherents among the

¹²¹ *Op. cit.*, 18 ff.

Mexican immigrants.¹³² In most cases separate mission churches were used for work among the Mexicans. The gulfs of customs and color as well as language separate the congregations of the same denomination. The following interview with an American Protestant pastor was reported by Robert Jones:

Some Mexicans came in to the American services before they had a church of their own. That wasn't at all satisfactory, however, because I could see that the Americans didn't like it. The Mexicans were strange people, they were dark, and they seemed to be sneaking and furtive. I suppose that was because they were new and unaccustomed to our way. For instance sometimes they would knock at the door before coming in. I have always insisted that they go to the Spanish services although there are a few who are as white as the ordinary American whom it is rather hard to know what to do with. Some of them were born in this country and speak English quite well and don't like to be known as Mexicans. They come in to the [American] services once in a while.¹³³

Some Protestant missions use charitable or protective activities, such as help in obtaining employment, as means of gaining members. These gave rise to the statement of a Mexican woman, similar to those heard elsewhere, that

Here the people do not live up to their religion. They change their religion for convenience. If they think that they can get more help or more jobs by being Baptist or Methodist, they say they are Baptists and Methodists, although all their children and grandchildren are baptized Catholics.

It is true that the conversions frequently do not survive stress or special occasions. Said a Protestant religious worker:

The children feel themselves to be Protestants. But one of our most faithful members goes to the Catholic church on Easter.

A charity official reported similarly:

Quite a few of the Mexicans who at first say they are Protestant, become Catholic in emergencies. For example, when they cannot verify their marriage and we must prove it to secure aid under certain Illinois statutes, we suggest that they be legally married here. In such cases they sometimes object to being married by a Protestant minister nearby.

¹³² Robert C. Jones, "The religious life of the Mexican in Chicago" (mimeographed outline and summary, 1929), listed the following organized Mexican religious groups in Chicago: Presbyterian, Congregational, joint Presbyterian-Congregational, Pentacostal, Theosophist, Lutheran, one center of religious activity each; Methodist and Catholic, two each; Baptist and Spiritualist, four each. See also Robert C. Jones and Louis R. Wilson, *The Mexicans in Chicago*, published for the Comity Commission of the Chicago Church Federation, 1931.

¹³³ Similarly, at Dilley, Texas, in the Winter Garden District, a visiting pastor "was told kindly by an American, 'It's not a good idea to use this church for the Mexicans,—although I have no objections.'"

Social and recreational as well as charitable activities may be used as opportunities for recruiting. Thus, at a religious "settlement"¹²⁴ it was stated:

The settlement house acts as a feeder for our church. We don't discuss Catholicism vs. Protestantism in the house.

Religious discussion was confined to the adjoining church. But often the union of Protestant religious appeal with social work is not very well received:

Miss X tried to mix social work with religion. They did not like it. They are Roman Catholics by name only; but the priests teach them that the Protestants are heretics. Some of the Mexicans say, "They are not trying to teach me English, but to make me a Protestant."¹²⁵

Sometimes street meetings, conducted usually by a Mexican preacher, were held as a means of propagating Protestantism.

The types of Protestantism seeking adherents ranged from fairly moderate "modernism" to strictly orthodox fundamentalism; the latter probably predominated and was particularly evident among the Mexican religious workers, who were concerned principally with doctrine, e.g., of the proper form of baptism. Under these conditions, feeling was not always entirely amicable. For instance, at a railroad camp, Protestants and Catholics were granted the privilege of using, successively, the same car for a church. The Protestant worker related his experiences:

We had permission from the railroad to hold meetings from three o'clock to four in a box car, and the priest had the place at four. Promptly at four he would pound on the door and demand the car, and as the children came out he would say, "You know better than to come here; don't you know you are going to hell!"

What, on the other hand, the attitude of Protestants might be upon occasion was revealed by a Mexican mission worker who, beginning with a gesture of broad interdenominational tolerance, abruptly shifted his attitude when the Catholics were mentioned:

We recognize as brothers in spirit all Christians—any who have a Father in Christ, whether Methodist, Baptist, or Congregational. Catholics? No!

With stress placed upon theological doctrine, including the differences between Catholicism and Protestantism as well as among the various

¹²⁴ The religious "settlements" are not to be confused with the non-religious settlements, such as Hull House and University of Chicago Settlement.

¹²⁵ Similarly, in 1930 it was reliably reported of a social worker in the South Platte Valley, Colorado, that the Spanish Americans "distrust this woman because she is Protestant."

Protestant sects, and with the Mexican Protestant religious workers displaying the zeal of converts and often the intolerance of the narrowly orthodox, it is small wonder that a priest made the characteristic Catholic criticism of Protestant missionary activity among immigrant Mexicans:

The Protestants succeed only in making anti-Catholics of the Mexicans, not good Protestants.¹⁸⁶

The centers of Protestant activity among Mexicans are far more numerous than those of Catholic activity, for the Mexicans do not generally go readily to the numerous Catholic churches in their neighborhoods which are attended predominantly by particular European nationalities. The Catholic churches attended by Mexicans in Chicago are principally St. Francis on Roosevelt Road, and the costly new church of Our Lady of Guadalupe erected in South Chicago in 1928. The Protestant churches ranged from houses provided for the full-time Mexican pastor in which a room was set aside for meetings, with recruitment by street-speaking, to church buildings with recruitment through a "settlement" house in connection.

The Protestant Mexican groups particularly were subject to many of the same factors making for instability which affected the non-religious societies. Mobility of the Mexican population in the area is the underlying unsettling factor, but there were also other elements of disturbance; particularly within the groups under Mexican leadership there was frequently dissension and sometimes schism. Clashing personalities of the pastor or members, dissatisfaction with the handling of finances, educational gulfs, and disagreement over refinements of doctrine, were all sources of strife.¹⁸⁷ A further factor, doubtless, was the difficulty of holding adherents when the services were less ritualistic and the structures less ornate and colorful.

¹⁸⁶ See also I, 226.

¹⁸⁷ For details, see papers of R. O. Jones, *op. cit.* For example, he cites a Mexican who offered in partial explanation of what became an open schism, that "There was almost a division . . . because Rev. S. sought out those who were more educated and disdained those who were just beginning to spell out the words *Santa Biblia*." Illustrating the religious outlook of a Mexican volunteer evangelist he quotes also portions of a letter received in acknowledgment of an effort to secure employment:

"Very esteemed Brother in the Faith of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. That the blessing of our heavenly father be with you is my greatest wish and prayer. Beloved one in Christ this is to give answer your courtesy which you saw well to direct to me dated the 16 of the present and having become cognizant of its contents tell you that I am very grateful to you for the interest which you have shown in me. . . . Brother a thousand thanks for this good favor which you have done me. May the Lord bless our goals and now I send you our most grateful remembrances and wishes that the Lord may heap upon you his richest blessings."

Despite the religious indifference complained of by the Catholic priests, and the numerous Protestant groups active among the Mexican colonists, the number of active Roman Catholic communicants very greatly exceeded the number of active Protestants.

PATRIOTISM

As noted earlier, in respect to learning the English language, the Mexican immigrants are generally eager to "Americanize." The obstacle of not knowing the language was repeatedly emphasized to us by Mexicans who could speak English and by those who could not, by Mexican business men, and by laborers who at the time we met them were in despair because knowledge of English was barring them from the employment of which they were in dire need. In the necessity for knowing English the difference between South Texas and Chicago was striking and recognized by the Mexicans; in the former area the number and proportion of Mexicans in the total population are much greater, and such a large proportion of Americans know Spanish that there is no great incentive to learn English. It was a Mexican grocer in the Hull House colony who correctly observed:

My father was very wise in telling me the experience of other Mexicans who had come to the United States. He impressed upon me the fact that the language was the greatest and first barrier to a livelihood. I learned that from my own experience as soon as I left Houston and those other Texas places where a knowledge of Spanish would get one by. Since then I have seen other Mexicans of good education and training doing work of laborers.

Both men and women stressed the need for knowledge of English as a means of securing work or retaining steady employment. Naturally, with their fewer opportunities for outside contacts, the women generally learned English less rapidly than the men.

In respect to naturalization, however, there is not merely apathy, but usually a strong emotional resistance. This is characteristic of Mexicans in all parts of the United States; they naturalize less than any other foreign people who come to this country. Personal observation and not entirely comparable statistics covering 1800 Mexicans employed in three industrial plants indicate not over two per cent of the Mexicans in this area were naturalized.

We encountered only four instances of military service in the armed forces of the United States: two Mexicans and a Spanish American had served in the Army during the war, and one Mexican was in

the National Guard in 1928. All had entered the service in the North except the Spanish American from New Mexico. The latter reported the characteristic reaction of Old Mexicans: "Mexicans who saw me in uniform thought I was almost a traitor, and asked me why I was in this uniform. I told them this was my country." That the number of Mexicans in the Chicago-Gary region who had been in the military service of the United States was small is not particularly surprising, however, since the immigrants there were very largely recent arrivals not only in the United States but also in the North, and because the war-time immigration of Mexicans was primarily a labor migration to fill the places of others who left for war service.

A very small number of Mexicans whom we met were becoming citizens, or expressed a willingness to do so should they decide against returning to Mexico. A foreman who had left Mexico eight years earlier, said for example, "I have not yet lost faith in my country, but when I decide to remain in the United States I will take out papers." A Mexican machinist, together with his wife and sister-in-law, all of fairly light complexion, had already taken papers; he said:

We [took out papers] voluntarily, as we decided we would stay in this country. We have had no discrimination. The lower class Mexicans would say we are denying our nationality.

Another Mexican, of middle class and with some education, said, "If the American people allow me to live here and give opportunities to my children, I want to appreciate and be thankful. If I were a true Mexican, I would not be here. I get my second papers the end of this month." It will be noted that none of these three who were naturalizing were common laborers.

There are several factors in the general hostility of Mexicans to naturalization. First, there is a strong emotional attachment to Mexico, a patriotism heightened, as the Mexicans themselves sometimes note, by their expatriation,¹⁸⁸ and by the attitude of superiority to which they frequently feel themselves subjected. This sentiment appears partly in expressions of fervid patriotism carried in the newspapers, particularly in poems of eulogy to the nation's heroes, and in orations on the Fifth of May and the Sixteenth of September, reminiscent of the traditional bombastic American Fourth of July orations.

¹⁸⁸ For example, "They [the Mexicans] know that here patriotism augments and increases." *La Prensa*, San Antonio, quoted in *Mexico*, October 2, 1926. We were told by one of the Mexicans seeking American citizenship that "The Mexicans become patriotic here, and they want to celebrate, but they don't even know the Mexican national hymn."

An appreciable number of Mexicans sent their wives to Mexico for the birth of their children, giving as the reason that the babies might be Mexican-born. While doubtless other factors entered, the patriotic element was important.¹³⁹ Reinforcing this patriotism were the recollections of past territorial expansion of the United States at the expense of Mexico, "stolen from Mexico," we were told. This attitude was kept alive in many ways, including articles in the Mexican press of Chicago against contemporary events alleged to constitute "imperialism," such as maintenance of marines in Nicaragua. The roots of suspicion seem to go back even to the earliest contacts of white and Indian. We were told of the belief which many brought with them from Mexico that "the people from England poisoned the water and did other things to get rid of the Indians," and were questioned as to the facts. Patriotism flares up also in resistance to forms of "Americanization" which might weaken attachment to Mexico. An editorial in *Mexico*¹⁴⁰ shows this apprehension:

There is no danger of the desertion of those who come with the ripeness of years. But those who come here as children or are born here are influenced by education, habits, simultaneous acquisition of Spanish and English, often preferably English, combined with a systematic official and private campaign of Americanization. This naturally tends to make them far away in spirit as they are in body from the land of their origin. At the end of two generations, when the parents who still carried the dust of their native land have died, when there are no causes for remembrance and no pretexts for love, the idea of Mexico will be so flimsy and distorted that all those children who should be ours will belong to a country which offers them nominal rights of equality, but always with the reservations of a putative father, and, no one can deny it, with a very profound and sincere conviction of absolute superiority, so that those who seek its support are always regarded with disfavor and some scorn.

¹³⁹ The International Institute in San Antonio reports that pregnant women en route to Mexico have said that having previously born soldiers for the United States, they were now going home to bear the next baby as a soldier for Mexico. The association between patriotism and military service seems to be close. A Mexican applying for citizenship in Gary said, "If treated right the Mexicans will fight for the United States."

¹⁴⁰ December 8, 1926. See also *La Noticia Mundial*, September 4, 1927. Compare the following address reported in *La Prensa*, San Antonio, November 21, 1930: "The secret of combating this slow invasion and conquest, which is carried on by Anglo-Saxon nations in our America, and which is not brought about with machine guns and cannon . . . lies within our own selves. The secret is simply to conserve our essential characteristics, constantly speak our own language, preserve our religion, and above all, make our children always bear in mind that they are to continue the traditions which are their legacy from their fathers. Here resides the soul of the race. And this is what is to preserve our independence and make of our peoples, nations with a spirit of their own." The spirit of awakening nationalism appears both at home and abroad. From the next quotation in the text above, however, it is evident that patriotic sentiments may be quite undiminished by the change of religion decried by the speaker quoted in this footnote.

Hence the necessity for feeding steadily the fire of love for Mexico. It is not enough for those of us who live here to go on calling ourselves Mexicans, and while taking part in this harmonious union of North American work, where discipline and respect prevail, have in our minds return [to Mexico] sooner or later; we must further positive doctrinary work and not give up sentiments to natural inertia, because inertia always ends in stability.

Let us make of the Mexican emigrants useful men of the United States (they almost always are) and let them constitute a vigorous reserve for our country, and return to it without having lost any of the virtues which they brought and taking with them a goodly share of the practical virtues that can be learned in this country.

In an interview with a Mexican husband and wife, Protestant mission workers, an inquiry concerning the relation of social agencies to immigrants unexpectedly brought a vehement outburst of patriotism and resistance to subtle "Americanization," coupled with the feeling of being looked down upon.

"The press says not to give charity to the Mexicans; they don't like us. . . . The Mexicans don't like the Visiting Nurse Association, Infant Welfare, etc." But the wife volunteered, on the contrary, that Mexican women do like these agencies. I cited a Mexican woman in Chicago who had said that because of the work of such agencies as these, she no longer wanted to return to Mexico. The pastor then became vehement: "She is a traitor to her country! She denies her mother because they get more wages and more aid here! She tramples on her flag!"

Illustrative of the natural reaction to criticism of Mexico and Mexicans, and of the American assumption of superiority over them, were the remarks of two Mexicans:

The more wrong they say about Mexico the more I love it, and the less I want to take my United States papers.

We are scorned here; make the Mexicans feel like they are at home and they will become American citizens.

A second reason for decrying naturalization is the belief, to a large extent well founded, that mere citizenship would not particularly improve the treatment of "Mexicans" in the United States. This was pointed out in an article in *Mexico* entitled "Prejudice against Mexicans and those who are not Mexicans." The occasion was the denial to "Mexicans" in Dallas, Texas, of permission to use one of the main parks of that city:

But there is one other fact which must be brought out: the drastic order not only concerns our nationals but also those American citizens who are descended from Mexico. Hence it is that the protest raised by our consul contained the signatures of many Mexican-Americans, who were also affected by the unjust measure.

This attitude suggests many reflections, but the most interesting of them is surely that which concerns the futility of our citizens taking out American citizenship papers, or if they were born here, of being entitled to this citizenship.¹⁴¹

Even material inducements did not often suffice to procure naturalization. Redfield reports a woman, for example, who "almost penniless, with three small children, when told she would have to take out first papers in order to secure a mother's pension, said she was unwilling to do this, and apparently preferred to relinquish the pension." The instance is significant, although probably a striking exception when the inducement was so direct. We also met, for example, a woman who said she was attending citizenship classes regularly in order to qualify for continuance of her pension, but her brother, when questioned, gave the characteristic reply, "I cannot forget my *patria*." Although some employers at times gave preference to those with citizenship or first papers, only a very few Mexicans took them out for the purpose of obtaining this preference. Mexicans who intermarried with Americans or Europeans, however, were frequently reported to have become citizens.

The extreme mobility of the Mexicans of course militated against conforming to the legal procedure of naturalization, even had they desired to do so.

Perhaps even more fundamental than the reasons already cited for failure to naturalize was the fact that most of the Mexicans *believed* that they were merely sojourning in the Chicago-Gary region, and that sooner or later they would return to Mexico to live. The remarks of José Vasconcelos, later candidate for President of Mexico, before a social meeting of the Sociedad Zaragoza in June, 1928, struck a responsive chord:

Mexicans, let us never forget or cease to show interest in our country and in the land in which we first saw the light of day. For if we are here working hard and suffering, it will not always be so. We are but the children of Israel who are passing through our Egypt here in the United States doing the onerous labors, swallowing our pride, bracing up under the indignities heaped upon us here. If we expect to return and to escape all this, as all good Mexicans ought to, then we should show interest in the affairs of our country from this Egypt of ours.

Speaking in Chicago, President-elect Ortiz Rubio drew enthusiastic applause at a meeting of the Mexican colony at the Hotel Blackstone

¹⁴¹ *Mexico*, June 16, 1928; reprinted from *El Heraldó de México*, Los Angeles. An officer attached to a Mexican consulate in Texas relates the pathetic incident, when visiting some of his nationals in jail, of some Texas-Mexicans who, disappointed that he could not assist them because they were not Mexican citizens, asked, "Why doesn't our consul come to see us?"

in 1929, when he said that one of the objects of his administration would be to help establish such conditions in Mexico that the emigrants might return to their own country without economic sacrifice.

The factors influencing Mexicans to remain in the United States or to return to Mexico have been discussed earlier; here it is sufficient to point out that most of them in this region hold to the *idea*, however vague may be the date of departure, that sometime they are going to return to Mexico.¹⁴² In their newspapers they follow closely the news from Mexico; indeed, they even participated in the presidential campaign of Mexico, forming in Chicago a *Club Pro-Vasconcelos*.¹⁴³ Since their thoughts are so largely of their own country and of return, it is not to be expected that the idea of naturalization would take root as it has among European immigrants. A Mexican in Indiana Harbor summed up the point by saying:

They don't want to be citizens. The countries are close; it is only two or three days to Mexico, and if they went back they would be strangers in their own country.

¹⁴² See also II, pp. 22, 265, 272, 275, 276.

¹⁴³ See also p. 133.

IV

DOMICILE

The sharp delineation of solid areas of Mexican population so evident in the towns of the agricultural regions inhabited by Americans and by Mexican laborers is not observed in Chicago and the Calumet region. As noted earlier, and as shown on the maps accompanying this study, the Mexicans, while clustering in fairly localized groups, are also considerably dispersed, and even where grouped, they are mingled with large proportions of other nationalities. Nevertheless, in practically every major colony of Mexicans in the region, there were or had been efforts to drive out the Mexicans or to isolate them by restricting the boundaries of their residence. These efforts had partial success.

The opposition came variously from landlords, particularly those *resident* in the locality being freshly entered by Mexicans, from real estate men, moved largely by neighborhood hostilities to Mexicans, or from other nationalities already predominant in the area. The reasons given for opposition were diverse, and included charges that the Mexicans were given to fighting and annoying their neighbors, were dirty and bad housekeepers, were racially undesirable, depreciated property values, or simply that intrusion of another nationality was unwanted. The presence of a new nationality in the community as a competitor for jobs, together with friction over women, also were undoubtedly factors in some instances. The methods of making the hostility effective included physical assaults, and even killings, smashing of windows or similar attacks upon property, simple refusal to rent or sell to Mexicans either by individual landlords or by neighborhoods with an understanding that this was to be the common practice, or the charging of exceptionally high rents to prospective Mexican tenants. A real estate agent was reported to be under instructions that he could sell to any Spanish-speaking people except Mexicans. Attempts were made to impose legal restrictions on residence of Mexicans, but no successful efforts of this type came to our attention.

On the other hand, vacant houses, especially when owned by absentee landlords, offered particularly favorable opportunities for the entry of Mexicans into a neighborhood. And the device of charg-

ing higher rentals to Mexicans operated both ways, for while it sometimes kept the particular tenants out, the fact that Mexicans would often pay higher rentals than could otherwise be obtained, made them for that very reason more attractive tenants.

The Hull House colony of Mexicans experienced perhaps less difficulty than was encountered by Mexicans moving into other neighborhoods. It is in an area which is rapidly being depopulated, and tenants are therefore in greater demand. Furthermore, the largest single nationality group among its inhabitants when the Mexicans entered the area was the Italian. This is significant, for the backgrounds of culture and language of Italians and Mexicans are very much closer than those of Poles and Mexicans, between whom most of the friction in the Chicago-Gary region arises. Also, the economic differential between the Italians of this neighborhood and the Mexicans was in general less than that between the Mexicans and their Polish neighbors elsewhere. Nevertheless, there was opposition even in the Hull house neighborhood. For example, an Italian woman on De Koven Street near Halstead said:

We don't like to have the Mexicans moving in. Some people are afraid of them. It is better for each nationality to live by itself.

Probably referring to this locality was the statement of a Mexican woman at the Proviso colony of railroad laborers:

We came to this camp from town on account of the Italians. They were very bad to us and some of the other Mexican families had trouble with them. They were always trying to do something to us. They called us dogs and threw things when we were not looking. They would crowd us off the sidewalks and make insulting remarks about us when we went by.

But the resistance of the Italians of this neighborhood to the Mexicans was less vigorous than to the Negroes, who remained south of Roosevelt Road.

Even more vigorous opposition was encountered from the Poles. In reporting the assault and murder of a Mexican against whom there seemed to be no personal grievance, *Mexico* pointed out the fact that no robbery was committed, and stated:

Mexican assassinated—surprised by some Poles, without means of defense, at the corner of 14th Place and South Halstead. . . .

"It was the Poles, Mr. Reporter, it was they, that's all!" So said one of our informants, a Mexican woman. . . . And this she told us with signs of fear, because it appears that the quarrelsome Poles have the district terrorized, hoping (perhaps) to eliminate the [Mexican] workers in the neighborhood.¹⁴⁴

¹⁴⁴ *Mexico*, January 8, 1927.

The Mexicans continued to enter the Hull House area, and to move westward; however, few moved south of 12th Street. Whether they were prevented by the incident cited is doubtful, for frequent assaults upon Mexicans on Taylor Street between Halstead and Canal were not effective in that respect.¹⁴⁵

The principal colony of Mexicans near the stockyards is located on the west side. The fact that its development was checked on the east side, where the Mexicans appeared first, and subsequently stimulated on the west side was attributed by local residents chiefly to the resistance of the Irish (including the second generation) living on the east side. Thus, a Mexican who had come to Chicago in 1920, reported this to be the case, and indicated that some of the Irish policemen seemed to side against the Mexicans:

I used to live on Emerald Avenue east of the yards, but I moved to the west side on account of troubles with the Irish. The young Irish used to smash the pool hall windows at Forty-third and Emerald Avenue, and used to waylay Mexicans and beat them up. Some of the Irish policemen said to the Mexicans, "You ———— Mexicans, why don't you go back to your own country!" The trouble with the Irish lasted sporadically three or four years. The Mexicans moved to the west of the yards because of this trouble.

An Irish policeman told us in 1928:

The Mexicans depreciate property values and take the jobs of the others. When the Mexicans come in, the others say they want to sail out.

But a small colony of Mexicans survived. A well informed person explained:

The real estate men who handle property for absentee owners let the Mexicans in. Mexicans will pay \$30 rent for property for which the Irish will pay only \$20. The Mexicans can't get in many places, so they pay more in order to get in; they can afford to because they take in boarders.¹⁴⁶

Resistance to expansion of the Mexican colony east of the yards was continuing in 1929 according to a social worker who said:

The Irish won't rent houses to the Mexicans outside of the area indicated on your map. The Irish are against all nationalities coming in, especially the Negroes.

The movement of Mexicans west of the yards was also opposed. There they encountered violent attacks of the Poles to be described

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, April 30, 1927.

¹⁴⁶ And the rents charged also probably influence them to take in lodgers. The Negroes in northern cities also are frequently charged higher rents than others and take in lodgers extensively.—Kennedy, *op. cit.*, 161 ff. Redfield recorded in 1924 a characteristic and illuminating statement by a real estate man near the Brighton Park colony: "Since the Mexicans have come in the real estate values have declined to almost nothing. But the rental value of the buildings goes up \$10 to \$15 per flat; the Mexicans can only get in a very few places, and they have to pay what is asked. They live so thick, though, it's cheap for them at that."

later, and a strong resistance to their penetration westward beyond Ashland Avenue, particularly along and near Forty-sixth Street. The Poles and Lithuanians, both with churches on Forty-sixth Street, and large schools, decline to rent to Mexicans in their well established neighborhood. This stability, as compared with the emigration in progress from the vicinity of Hull House, accounts in considerable measure for the more stubborn and effective resistance in the former area. Probably the most important factor in the establishment of the Mexicans in the corner of the yards and along Ashland Avenue (see map 2) is the generally poorer housing available in those areas. The first Mexicans to move into Gross Street had their windows smashed by Poles. A Mexican who had resided earlier at 45th and Ashland was driven out by even more violent tactics and threats.

We used to live on 45th and Ashland, but the Poles are terrible to fight the Mexicans. There is a fight nearly every night. They threw stones with notes tied to them through our window telling us to move out of that neighborhood. Finally they threw rags saturated with oil and lighted, into our basement. They also threw another stone which nearly hit my father. They said they were setting the house on fire, and that if we did not move they would bomb the house. The fire in the basement did not do much damage as the wood in the basement was too damp to catch, but my father thought it was best for us to move, so we moved over to the Hull House neighborhood.

Resistance was as violent here as anywhere in the entire region, but it was ineffective as compared with the better districts both east and west of the yards; in these there were probably larger proportions of resident home-owners, and from the poorer districts there was practically no alternative for escape by the poor people even under persecution. The hostility lingered even in 1929. Not far from the University of Chicago Settlement, I asked a young man, evidently a second-generation European, when the Mexicans came into the stock-yards. I received no answer, for some children who heard the question interrupted him with the taunt, "Yes, he let the Mexicans in his houses." The jibe of the children naturally required a reply, which he gave: "Well, they are better tenants than a lot of Poles."

In the Brighton Park area there was some antipathy to the entrance of Mexicans. This was expressed by a man who complained:

The Mexicans depreciate property. If they come in, others don't want to live there. They spoil a neighborhood.

But to the landlords, they had an economic value, even though they were looked down upon. As one of them said:

We rent our poorest houses that the others don't want, to the Mexicans. They pay good rent. We don't rent them our best houses because they keep the houses so dirty.

In South Chicago a good deal of hostility was manifested toward Mexican neighbors, especially when they sought to move out from the more restricted and poorer locality which they occupied, largely among Negroes. An old resident, a German, who found the Mexicans satisfactory neighbors, described their admission to the neighborhood:

The Mexicans came in flocks five years ago. The landlords were getting tired of the dirty, troublesome Negroes. When the Negroes moved out, they rented the places to the Mexicans. They don't bother the other people in the neighborhood. They are nice neighbors; they keep to themselves and keep their fights and shootings to themselves.

But others, particularly young Poles, probably American-born, expressed vigorous complaints:

People here cuss 'em out. We don't want them living around here. They fight.

The Mexicans are very dirty. They spoil the new houses they occupy. You see that house across the way? Well, it was a pretty good house till the Mexicans moved in. Now nobody will live in it. First one family moved in, and then last winter about ten more came to live there. They lived like rats all cooped up. You could smell the place when you passed in front of it on a dark night.

The Mexicans are very noisy. They are always disorderly. Some Mexicans moved in next to us about three months ago. When we passed in the passage between the two houses they threw bricks and bottles at us. We told the landlord and he kicked them out. I wish they would move out of here or live altogether in one place instead of spreading around. People around here do not like them to live in this neighborhood.

The incident may have been reported correctly, or not. At any rate, another side of conflict over domicile was told by a Mexican, who lived only four blocks away from where the Mexicans had been accused of throwing missiles, and who had moved out the next day after he moved his family in, because of threats of the neighbors. And but two blocks away, in 1926, Poles had broken the windows of a Mexican business establishment. The Mexican account reveals the characteristic feeling that the police were prejudiced against them:

When the police were called to take note of the happening, their notorious partiality was evident, because the group of Poles who broke the glass was still there, in spite of which the police asked us if anyone had seen who did it. We couldn't do that because the clerk as well as my family and I were asleep when the thing was done, at about 2 in the morning. . . .¹⁴⁷

¹⁴⁷ *Mexico*, October 16, 1926.

An American in Iroindale reported:

The latest nationality always gets the hazing, so the Mexicans get it from the young Irish toughs who tried [in gangs] to drive them out. But the Mexicans held their own pretty well, and after using the knife a few times they were let alone.

In order to find more desirable and healthful quarters than those east of Commercial Street, some Mexicans sought homes outside the original location of the colony. Such desire was natural, and it was encouraged by at least one social worker

who visited the Mexican families here and talked to them about moving out. She spoke Spanish and was a very nice lady. She told my friends that for the sake of their children's health, and for their own they ought to move away from the steel mills and their smoke, iron dust, and coal soot. The neighborhood got pretty rough then with some bad men from Mexico, and their troubles with some Poles and Italians made it worse. So my friends moved north of Madison. Many went there and to other places. It was too far from work for me so I stuck to South Chicago.

The attempt to move west of Commercial Street encountered resistance which was partly physical; at least two Mexican families which attempted it had their windows broken. Another Mexican with sandy hair and the appearance of an Irishman had no difficulty negotiating in English a rental at \$25 a month until his son said approvingly, "Qué bueno!" This remark, he says, resulted in the question, "Are you Mexicans?" and the announcement that the rent was \$35. The terms were not accepted.

A move for formal segregation of Mexicans was made in 1929 by persons within the Chamber of Commerce, and initial steps looking in that direction were taken. An informed person described the situation:

The objections to Mexicans are because of race, economic competition, and lower standards of living. People would like to segregate the Mexicans as well as the Negroes, but we probably will not go ahead with the segregation for two reasons: First, the legal case for such separation is not so clear as for separation of the Negroes. We understand that the Mexicans are legally classed as white. Second, the Mexicans do not present a general problem throughout the entire Chicago community as do the Negroes.

Persons connected with the steel mills opposed legal segregation, and the support of the merchants for the move was weakened because, as the man just quoted added, "The merchants like the Mexicans; they spend their money."

Efforts to retard the scattering of Mexicans into some portions of the city were also made in Indiana Harbor. Physical conflicts were

reported, but since it was not clear that they were concerned with where the Mexicans sought to live, these will be discussed in another connection. It was again the Poles who were the cause of the friction:

They [the Poles] own a lot of real estate in this town and when it comes to renting we are at their mercy. They charge us more rent than other people; we have to live somewhere and we pay.

They rent only the poorest houses to the Mexicans. If they want to rent in a better part of town the landlords will not rent to them.

But the Mexicans were spreading into better districts, nevertheless, until in 1929 a Mexican was able to say:

There are only two streets in town that don't want, i. e., refuse Mexicans, and even on these there are a very few.

In harmony with the information given by the Mexicans was the statement of a banker, who explained the conditions which favored the expansion of Mexicans into districts where before they had been refused:

We have been trying to make restrictions here to separate the Mexicans by themselves, but have not got very far with it yet. Mexicans used to live on Second Street, Block, and Pennsylvania; now they are scattered out. The reasons for this are that there are too many houses for rent now, and the Mexicans and the colored pay better rents than the others. The owners feel that they will gain by the higher rent, but when they come to sell, they find their property has been depreciated. Generally the Mexicans are harder on property, but not always; I have seven Mexican tenants, and all but one or two are clean housekeepers.

A real estate man added the opinion that the Mexicans would pay even higher rents than the Negroes, and were "better pay."

Of course, upon many of the Mexicans the fact of efforts to isolate them did not press hard. Even though they knew of these efforts, most of the Mexicans were not seeking to move elsewhere; poverty and gregariousness made grouping by nationality more or less inevitable and even preferable. This attitude appears, for example, from the statement of a Mexican whom we met in a Gary pool room:

There is no trouble with the *gueros* (blonds). They are easy to get along with. Here on the south side we get along together. In some buildings you have *gueros* and Mexicans living together; there is no trouble; the Negroes live next door, and so it goes. On the north side they will not rent to Mexicans. We don't care about it; we could not pay the rent they charge down there anyway, and are just as happy up here. They rent to the *blancos* (whites) and those who work pretty steady; we don't work as steady as that.

With other Mexicans who sought residence in better localities, however, the fact of discrimination did rankle. A Mexican mechanic

of Gary characteristically sought to maintain the reasonability of recognizing, in matters of social distinction, the difference between the lowest classes of Mexicans and others and also characteristically stressed color as an object to which prejudice readily attached itself:

We don't blame the American people, because of the kind of people some of the Mexicans are; they are a low kind of people. The color is the main thing; they don't want to rent to dark Mexicans.

And he added plaintively, "I am North American, too."¹⁴⁸ The claim that they too, are "Americans" is often made by all Latin-American peoples, who resent somewhat the monopolization of the designation by inhabitants of the United States of America. Another Mexican, of some education and light in color, tried to rent a house in north Gary. First he said he was Mexican and was refused. At the next house where he inquired he claimed to be Central American, and was accepted in the same neighborhood where he had been refused.¹⁴⁹ A real estate company was seeking to develop a *Colonia Iturbide* where Gary Mexicans were invited to purchase and build homes, the only instance of this kind of enterprise, so common in the Southwest, which we observed in the Chicago-Gary region. In the municipal cemetery a section was set aside for Mexicans, but it might be overstressing the point to assert that this was evidence of desire to continue segregation of domicile in the hereafter.

There were other occasional evidences of unwillingness to have Mexican neighbors which came to our attention. A Mexican married to an American woman told us that at 61st and Cottage Grove the landlord of an apartment had refused them admittance, saying, "My rule is not to mix people with the Mexicans." But an educated Mexican woman, obviously of part Indian ancestry, reported that initial objections of neighbors were overruled when the landlord discovered that his prospective tenants were people of culture:

When we came [to move in] the landlord told us that he felt bad, but the neighbors in the flat said that if it was rented to Mexicans they would leave. But when he saw my books, piano, pictures of my parents, etc., he said we should come anyhow. He said, "You are good people." Now there are several Mexicans in the neighborhood [Jackson Blvd.]. We have trouble when seeking better places because people mistrust Mexicans from the reputation of Mexicans in the papers,

¹⁴⁸ See I, 242, fn. 4; also II, 240.

¹⁴⁹ My informant stated that in Los Angeles a friend "with educated daughters who held positions" was visited by neighbors and warned by them to leave or "they would make it hot for them. They said the presence of Mexicans would depreciate their property." Race restrictions intended to debar Mexicans are of course a device frequently employed in southern California and elsewhere. They are not universally enforced, however, particularly against Mexicans of the upper classes.

movies, etc.—and there are some bad Mexicans. But if they rent to the Mexicans in the alleys it is all right.

We received an unverified report from responsible Mexicans that Mexicans and Negroes were not wanted in the town of Whiting, and that in 1924 there had been a sign to the effect: "No Mexicans or Negroes allowed." A workman at a factory on West Harrison Street didn't like neighbors of dark color, suggesting Negroes:

Some of them are dark, just like the niggers; I wouldn't like to live among them. I want to live among white people.

An official of a Chamber of Commerce, who was particularly vehement in his objections to Mexicans, said:

Mexicans should have a recognized part in the community and then we should cater to them. If they don't want toilets, they can put the legally required number in the basement. Somebody could build flats for them and cater to them and make money. I think we should take care of them and keep them clean, but beyond that I don't care. They are the scum of the earth. Many people prefer Negro laborers and neighbors. You can talk to them and they have learned some of the white man's ways of living. The Mexicans are lower than the European peasants. They are not white and not Negro; they're Mexican.

Even in an institution of a partly religious character, the objection to Mexican roomers by other nationalities was permitted to become effective. The situation is reported in detail by Nelson:

When the Y.M.C.A. [in one of the industrial sections] first opened up there were six Mexican young men rooming in the building. The opposition to them of the other members became so great that there was nothing else for the authorities to do but to get them out of the building as tactfully as they could. . . . Since that time, few come to the institution. S., in charge of the bowling alleys, said that they never encourage them to come around, that in fact they do not want them there.¹⁵⁰

The evidence which has been presented here in detail shows a frequent desire to isolate Mexicans similar to that observed in agricultural regions. That this social pressure, although often more violent, is not so consistently exerted nor so effective in maintaining the clear-cut domiciliary isolation seen in the latter areas, is due mainly to the facts that in the Chicago-Gary region the Mexicans are numerically less conspicuous, they are more nearly on an equality, socially and economically, with other nationalities also in the process of establishing themselves in the new environment, and they are entering an area where housing is already available, interspersed among people of other nationalities.

¹⁵⁰ *Op. cit.*, 32.

The Mexicans are not unique in experiencing resistance in this area. The successive entries of various European nationalities which preceded the Mexicans were also occasions for friction, and each of these nationalities has shown a tendency to live more or less by itself, just as have the Mexicans. That the gulf is greater in the case of the Mexicans than of the European immigrants, appears clearly from the instances of readiness to associate Mexicans with Negroes in proposals for segregation.

PHYSICAL CONFLICT

The record of physical clashes between Mexicans and other nationalities is fairly extended. It is worth while to set down some of the evidence of this friction, in addition to the instances cited previously. It was reported by an American west of the stockyards that:

Each group has snubbed the newest comer. The Poles here said, "The Mexicans are getting our jobs in the yards." The Poles had been knocking down isolated Mexicans and leaving them unconscious on the street. One night a wild shot from a Mexican killed a Pole. This angered the Poles and they decided to clean the neighborhood of Mexicans. They called in the "42's," a gang from 12th and Ashland. Police prevented a riot.

In the same neighborhood a Mexican woman complained that "she had a great deal of trouble with the Polish boys picking on her little boy." Other persons gave similar testimony. Two further accounts of difficulties in the same area, by a second generation American and by an American social worker, were as follows:

In 1922 there were small riots. The Mexicans used to stop Polish girls. They marry white girls and that causes a terrible lot of hatred. People feel they are a different race. The whites leave the Mexicans alone when they get tequila. The Negroes are afraid of the Mexicans. I heard one Negro say, "I wouldn't monkey with that boy. He is too treacherous; he will stick a knife in me." In the plant there are a few fights between Mexicans and colored workers, but none between Polish and Mexicans.

In one of the parks the caretaker told me regretfully that he had to keep the Mexicans out to avoid friction with the Lithuanians and Poles. Of course they don't do it just that way, but they let them know it is better for them to go to the other park.

The Lithuanians and Poles thought the Mexicans came in to lower wages. A couple of years ago they used to beat up Mexicans coming home at night. They claimed the Mexicans molested their women, but it was only a cloak. A month ago there was a fight when a Polish prostitute who had had relations with a Mexican accused him in the presence of a Pole. A year or two ago the Mexicans got rocked at Davis Square by a gang of Lithuanians. The Mexicans are more

individual and don't gang up. A Pole who is beaten gets a gang and beats up on a Mexican. Now the feeling against the Mexicans has died down; they don't like them but they accept them.

Further incidents illuminating various aspects of the friction in different parts of the region may be given:¹⁵¹

A Negro in Indiana Harbor: There is good and bad in all races, but some of the Mexicans are dangerous. You can't understand them very well, and if you get into an argument with them you don't know what minute you will have them after you with knives.

A Mexican clergyman in South Chicago (Redfield notes): There has been, so far as he knows, very little trouble between Mexicans and Negroes. "Of course, a few Mexicans have been shot, and a few Negroes cut up, but that can be ascribed to moonshine."

Another clergyman in South Chicago: There is friction with the Poles. The Poles say the Mexicans are taking their work. The Mexicans have lower standards of living.

A Mexican on DeKoven Street, near Hull House: The Polish and Mexican children fight; the Poles are worse than the Italians.

A Mexican in Indiana Harbor: The Poles here are very bad with the Mexicans. Four or five of them will jump a Mexican and cut him all up. They will leave him to die in an alley. They do not give up their hatred for us. They do not give us a chance to make a good fight.

The Mexican account of recent conflicts in South Chicago reveals clearly the ill-feeling of long standing between Mexicans and Poles, and Mexicans and police, a number of whom are Polish:

Mexican cowardly beaten by Polacks

24 [Mexican] compatriots arrested

The Mexican colony of South Chicago is justly alarmed lately by the action of a group of Poles who resort to treachery to injure our fellow-countrymen. The victims of this group of Poles are numerous, and the authorities must act on the matter to prevent recurrence of incidents such as that of Apolonio Castellano, who was assaulted twice in the same day. Mr. Castellano is a peaceable citizen and dislikes quarrels. The Poles declared that it was Castellano and other Mexicans who provoked the altercation, but we have it on good authority that it was quite the opposite and that Castellano was going along alone when they attacked him.

¹⁵¹ See also, for example, the following incidents reported by the Mexican press: *Mexico*, October 16, 1926, Mexicans robbed and beaten by Poles; November 27, 1926, a Mexican attacked at Jefferson Street and Roosevelt Road by Poles and Italians; April 30, 1927, assaults on Mexicans frequent on Taylor Street, between Halstead and Canal; July 20, 1927, Italians attack and shoot Mexicans at Taylor and Halstead; *La Noticia Mundial*, August 21, 1927, three Mexicans charged with "homicide to a person of Polish origin, who in company with a number of fellows of the same nationality attacked without provocation four of our company who were going peaceably past the spot." August 28, 1927, a Pole shot by a Mexican woman "in legitimate defense of her outraged honor." November 20, 1927, Pole killed a Mexican; "It is believed that the motive of the assassination was the relations of Garcia and the wife of the assassin;" *Correo Mexicano*, January 3, 1927, ten Italians at Halstead and Taylor beat a Mexican but were unsuccessful in robbing him.

Castellano was brutally struck on the corner of 83d and Buffalo streets at about 9:30 p.m. on the 23d. An hour later as he was returning from the police station where he had gone to complain, the same group surprised him by treachery for the second time, giving him a severe beating.

Various of the Poles who were arrested stated that they were the victims and that they acted in self-defense.

Monday night no less than 24 Mexicans were arrested at the Police Station of South Chicago. These arrests had the same motives as the cowardly attack of which Castellano was the victim.

The events of the night of January 17 when a Polish policeman was killed by three Mexicans whom he tried to detain without cause, are provoking a very delicate situation. The Poles of South Chicago, according to what we are told, are collecting funds, not to save a countryman of theirs, but to see that the three Mexicans go to the chair.

The Mexican colony protests violently against these unjustified attacks which make victims of honored and industrious workers.¹⁵²

The physical encounters involve violence by both sides. They include assaults on Mexicans, and less often, shootings or knifings by Mexicans. Robbery is occasionally the motive, but usually not. Domicile, economic competition, and the relations of the sexes among persons of diverse nationality appear to give rise to most of the friction, with the latter two factors probably underlying the resistance to establishment of domicile by the invading nationalities. Individual hostility readily becomes generalized into racial antipathy. Violent friction was noticeably less in Gary, probably partly because the Poles, among whom hostility to the Mexicans developed most extensively, formed a small proportion of the population; partly because the shock of the entry of the Mexicans there was cushioned by the previous presence of a colony of Spaniards, and partly because housing conditions for all nationalities were generally better and less crowded in Gary than in other portions of the regions where Mexicans colonized.

SOCIAL CONTACTS AND ISOLATION

It is apparent from material already presented that there exists in the Chicago-Gary region the same desire to isolate Mexicans that was observed in the other areas studied. The desire is less nearly unanimous, however, and though more violent, it is far less effective in maintaining the isolation which it seeks. Were it as effective as it is in the rural Southwest, there would probably be fewer instances of physical conflict.

In the summer of 1928 separate seating of Mexicans in theaters, so common in the Southwest, was known to be practiced habitually

¹⁵² *Mexico*, February 27, 1930.

only in two movies in the region, both of them located in Indiana Harbor. It is significant that the Mexican colony there constitutes the largest proportion of the total local population of any colony in the area. Earlier, separation had been practiced also by some theaters in Gary, but this seems to have been settled satisfactorily after appeal to the Mexican ambassador.¹⁶⁸ Other instances reported to us were very few, and apparently sporadic.

The explanation of separate seating given by an owner of one of the theaters which practiced it was characteristic: The Mexicans were objected to by other persons whose patronage he regarded as more important than that of the Mexicans; although objection was greater against some Mexicans than others, the line of nationality was the most convenient basis of separation; and the Mexicans might go elsewhere if they objected.

The Mexicans are not considered white. They are ushered to the first aisle with the colored. White people don't like to sit next to the colored or Mexicans. No, even though they are clean. Many of them are not clean and we can't separate on the basis of dress, so we separate them on the basis of nationality. We used to have trouble about the first four months, but not now. They go by themselves to their place. We have only about ten or twenty a night whereas we used to have one or two hundred. Their societies tell them not to go. We had the Mexican consul here [to investigate the matter]. We don't know whether we lose. It is a high class theater and the white people who come would not like to sit next to the Mexicans; in other theaters there is no separation [but there was separation in another movie in the same town].

The accounts of the Mexicans reveal their various reactions to separation; also the fact that separation was not always rigidly enforced. There was humiliation at segregation with the Negroes; there were apologies for the conduct and clothing of some of their compatriots, but similar offenders of other nationalities were pointed to, and the use of nationality as a basis for discrimination was opposed.

In the shows they make us sit with the Negroes. They are all right, but why can't we sit with the Poles; we are as good or better than they! They are savages; we have some manners, they have none.

At the theater I asked them why they separate us and they said, because we are Mexicans. I said, "But I am white in my ways." I have not been to that theater since then.

The theater is owned by Poles [another account said that Jews and Rumanians owned the two movies which discriminated]. They said the distinction was made

¹⁶⁸ *Mexico*, March 21, 1925. This news item expressed the belief that the matter had been settled in both Indiana Harbor and Gary, but separation was still a source of friction in the former town as late as 1929. One Mexican asserted in 1929 that separation was still practiced by a movie in Gary, but others doubted this.

because the Mexicans hugged the girls; the movie man also said Mexicans come in their overalls. Of course, sometimes Mexicans do these things, but why do they see it on Mexicans and not on themselves?

A Mexican boy in junior high school: I went with a Mexican girl once and they tried to separate us. But the girl said, "Come on, you have paid your money;" so I sat with her. If I had been alone, I would have asked to get my money back.

Once my father was not admitted to a theater in Chicago when he went in his working clothes. He said clothes do not make the man. I think he should have worn his good clothes.

The Mexicans are partly to blame for this discrimination. Many of them are dirty and wear old clothes to a movie.

Refusal to patronize the theaters which discriminated was practiced rather extensively. The Mexicans spoke feelingly on the subject, particularly so against their own countrymen who did not join the boycott, especially if they belonged to the privileged few who were not segregated. With characteristic readiness it was also pointed out that the sources of discrimination were not the real "Americans." The following statements by Mexicans are illustrative:

If all the Mexicans did as I and a majority of the Mexicans do, there would be certain theaters that would have no patronage at all. Of course some Mexicans have given cause for criticism by going to shows with dirty clothes and unbathed. Anyone with a clean suit of clothes would object to that.

We sit any place in a movie, but dad says we shouldn't go because they separate the other Mexicans. Jews take care of the movie; they are not Americans. I don't blame people at the show with nice clothes who don't want to sit next to dirty people with poor clothes, but they shouldn't charge all for the acts of some.

About ten Mexicans [as individuals] can sit anywhere they want, but the others can't. [As a result of protests] the members of the X society with forty members can go anywhere in the theater if they wear their society button. The Y society was given the same privilege [but refused it]. I blame the X society for taking the privilege. I asked for all well-dressed Mexicans to be admitted equally. They replied, "If they wear the Y button they can come." I told them under those circumstances I did not want to come. They [the societies] are supposed to be working *pro patria* and should not accept special privileges.

A few other instances of social discrimination were reported to us. A Mexican in Indiana Harbor stated, for example:

I heard a Polish girl say of a Mexican girl whom she thought did not understand English, "Don't wash in that bowl because that Mexican washed in it." But the Mexican girl was as clean as the Polish.

At a Protestant "settlement" house it was said, "the Italians don't want to mix with the Mexicans in the gymnasium and showers." At

one of the non-religious settlements some hostility was encountered when a dance was given:

There is not so much prejudice against the Mexicans as against the Negroes, but there is some of it. We decided to have a dance to which some young Mexicans were coming, clerks mostly, rather than laborers. Shortly before the dance a young Pole said, "No decent Polish girl would dance with a Mexican." So we got sorority girls to come from the University of Chicago and dance with them.

A Mexican and two social workers reported:

The Mexicans have their own social affairs. I know one Mexican who was put out of a dance hall apparently solely because he was a Mexican. But I go to other dances now, sometimes alone, sometimes with a friend or two and I am not molested. I think the Mexicans would get along better with the others if they spoke English.

The proprietor of a Polish dance hall would not let the Mexicans rent it; he said it was only for Poles.

At some [Gary] dances last year Mexicans were put out of the hall.

Another Mexican said:

At dances Mexicans can't associate with American boys and girls.

This statement probably did not refer to all dances, for in the same vicinity a Mexican mother said:

My boys dance with the *blancas* at all the public dances.

At many dances attended by Mexicans there were "white" girls, frequently but by no means always, of a lower type.

At a Protestant mission it was noted that when special efforts to bring in the Mexicans were made, the attendance of Italians practically ended:

The Italians don't like the Mexicans. One Italian said: "I don't want my kids to associate with the Mexicans. God made people white and black, and He meant there to be a difference." The Italians used to come in numbers of two to three hundred; now only three or four families come regularly, although we visit their homes and invite them to come. The others won't come because of the Mexicans.

A settlement resident, while citing the apparent diminution of friction in his vicinity, nevertheless added:

Another difficulty is that there is not much chance of a Mexican mingling with a crowd without recognition because of his color.

The matter of color was not infrequently mentioned by Mexicans or others, as the preceding and other occasional citations have indicated. Further instances may be given:

A social worker said: The Mexicans are mixed with Negro and Indian. When we sent a child for a summer outing to a private home, we tried to bleach the child out. The family expected a Mexican but we didn't want them to think we had sent a Negro.

Another: We send Mexicans to the white summer camp, but when we send a child for a vacation to a private family we tell them in advance that the child is Mexican. We would not bother to tell them in advance if the child was a Pole, and we would not send a Negro at all.

A Chamber of Commerce official answered my inquiries:

No, they are not regarded as colored; but they are regarded as an inferior class. Are the Mexicans regarded as white? Oh, no!

An Italian woman, who resented mildly the entry of Mexicans into her neighborhood said:

The Mexicans are of a different race; their faces are blacker.

A settlement resident with long experience among immigrants observed a growing feeling of race difference and noted a very interesting aspect of "Americanization."

There is beginning to be race feeling [against the Mexicans] in Chicago. They are beginning to say they are black. The Italians used to get on well with the Mexicans who used to be in the Latin-American Club. Now the Mexicans are drawing off to themselves as there are more of them. Recently the Italians came to us and said they would not rent our hall for weddings any more if we continued to rent it to the Mexicans. It is not swell enough for them when we do that. I said to them, "In Italy you would not be prejudiced against the Mexicans because of their color." An Italian replied seriously, "No, but we are becoming Americanized."

The color prejudice encountered here is met by Mexicans with mingled attitudes: pride of Mexican nationality or "Aztec race," resentment, injured sensibilities, and occasionally partial acceptance of the white color standards.¹⁵⁴ Illustrative of the first type of reaction was the statement of a Mexican who called attention to the very characteristic American attitude that unless a Mexican is dark, he is not a Mexican, but usually Spanish; the Mexican insistence on being "pure Mexican" is equally characteristic:

My daughter says that many people at the factory where she works will not believe that she is Mexican; they say she is too fair. She tells them that she is nothing but a pure Mexican, that every drop of her blood is Mexican.

¹⁵⁴ See also pp. vii, 237, 262. The consciousness of Indian ancestry is often evident. "We do not forget that we are descended from a progressive and cultured race, as were our ancestors, the Aztec."—*Correo Mexicano*, Chicago, September 6, 1926. The historical depredations against Indian life in what is now the United States seemed to be better remembered than those in Mexico. As one Mexican said, "The English-speaking people killed off the Indians."

The smoldering resentment which at times bursts out appears in an editorial printed in Chicago during the summer of 1928. Needless to say, this resentment has long tradition behind it, and experience in other parts of the United States where race discrimination is infinitely more evident than in the Chicago-Gary region.

Is it true and natural that the Mexicans go in a body to the festivities of the North Americans to celebrate the Fourth of July? Unfortunately no. Why? While there is not complete accord between the two peoples, a solid and sincere mutual affection; while racial prejudices exist in which we Mexicans are always unequally matched, we do not go to the celebration. . . . If we were well looked upon . . . if by one and all of the Yankee citizens we were regarded as beings equal to them; if our attendance were regarded as a desire on the part of our country to contribute to the joy and enthusiasm which reigns in their hearts, all would be different; the whole aspect would be altered, because we would be well received.

But while there is a barrier of racial hates, and while we do not know how to present ourselves and mingle with them, for our own good and for the name of our country we should stay away from their festivity. Let us have our Honorific Commissions and the clubs of each town represent us to the authorities and people of North America. Our representatives will know how to play their parts. . . . And let their representation confine itself to civic acts, official ceremonies, and end when these end. Going to dances and parks where there is only material entertainment, happiness, and enthusiasm which has nothing to do with patriotic sentiment, is also unpardonable, since it would not be unusual for a Mexican to be rudely snubbed by someone, a rebuff which might be followed by a tragedy.¹⁵⁵

A Mexican of mixed German and Mexican parentage who was one of two dark-skinned children, the other two being white, was particularly bitter and sensitive, so sensitive, indeed, that he was even enraged when, according to dominant American color standards, he should have been flattered. After relating discrimination which he had experienced in endeavoring to rent rooms, he said indignantly that in Texas he had once been ordered to move by the street car conductor after seating himself in the section for colored persons. Another Mexican asserted that there was an additional difficulty in learning English "because the Americans won't talk to dark persons." When a fair complexioned educated Mexican woman stated that she had not experienced distinction, a dark-skinned Spanish American immediately interjected characteristically, "Miss X is as light as any of you, but I am dark." A Spanish-type Mexican who had been a government employee in Mexico said: "There is no discrimination against me at the theater, but when I went once with a dark friend, they tried to send him on the Mexican side." A social worker reported:

¹⁵⁵ *Mexico*, June 30, 1928.

A Mexican at a church supper told me to tell a [somewhat unkempt] Mexican to keep out. He said, "What will the Americans think? He is so dark."

The acceptance of American color standards by a Mexican who had been twenty years in the United States was clear. Proudly he showed a photograph of himself taken with his wife and their first baby. Commenting on his wife we said appreciatively, "*Muy bonita*" [very pretty]. His reply was uttered with an air of resignation, "Yes, but she is *prieta* [blackish]; I dark too."¹⁵⁶

That the color discrimination might also be turned against others was evident from a statement given later.¹⁵⁷ But in general, the color or nationality prejudices of the Mexican laborers were very weak, and were raised either by conflict with particular groups in the region, or by absorption of the race and color scale of values prevalent in the United States. The Mexican who replied to the interrogation why they did not like certain other nationalities by saying, "Because they don't like us," correctly placed the initial demonstration of antipathy on the other nationalities.

The factors and attitudes which appear in the effort to isolate the Mexicans socially are essentially the same as those which appear in the conflicts over domicile, or the physical conflicts described earlier which arise upon various pretexts. There is at bottom, as between Mexicans and other immigrant nationalities, the fact of job competition, which may variously appear as allegations of undercutting, of lower standards of living, or actual displacement:

The Poles resented the encroachment of the Mexicans.

The Poles feel they are being supplanted.

The Poles say the Mexicans are taking their work.

¹⁵⁶ See also I, 93. Mexicans in the United States generally attribute the rise of color prejudice entirely to adoption of American values by immigrants, denying that it exists in Mexico. This point will bear further investigation, however. For example, a fair-complexioned educated Mexican woman who regards herself as "white," spoke of the matter of color both as she had observed it on the west coast of Mexico, and in a grape pickers' camp in the San Joaquin Valley of California: "My mother is dark and is sensitive about it, and is always commenting on whether a person is dark or white. The reason *mestizos* say there is no color prejudice in Mexico is because they would not be flattered by it. The *criollos* do regard themselves as socially superior. The *mestizos* are accepted only if they have money or political position. If a man rises to a position where he may aid the revolutionists and take property away from them, then they take him in socially. In camp today I told a woman how pretty her baby was. She replied, "He used to be so white, but now the sun is darkening him." Similarly, Cambien records the remark in Chicago of a Mexican wife concerning her husband: "He is a good husband; he isn't white, but he has a good heart." Also the fact that a Mexican woman referred to a Mexican man whose attentions she spurned, as "that black man."—*Op. cit.*, 29, 109.

¹⁵⁷ See also pp. vii, 235, 262.

I believe the Poles think the Mexicans are working for less, and that they are taking their jobs.

The Polacks say the Mexicans are a low class and should not be here. They hate the Mexicans and call them "greasers." They call them fools. They say they are the only ones in the United States who live on bread and water and who don't dress up and don't speak English. It is difficult for the Mexicans to reply effectively to these taunts because they don't know enough English.

The hostility of the Poles and Slavs is due to the fact that the Mexicans are in open competition with them.

The Lithuanians object that the Mexicans are employed when they are not taken on. They sometimes say, "Why you give the Mexicans jobs and you don't hire us?"

These are characteristic statements by employment executives, social workers, and Mexicans in different parts of the area.

There is also the friction over women, enhanced by the unbalanced sex ratio, which has been described earlier. Here the attitude of the Mexicans is presented as it appeared in one of their publications:

The Poles have a very evil opinion of us Mexicans—but it's different with the Polish girls.

In the packing-house district many Poles and Mexicans live; and by virtue of being employed in large numbers at the huge slaughter houses, there is continual association between them. This has fomented a certain intimacy between them; indeed, many Mexican men have already married Polish girls. The men disapprove of such a thing, but as for the women who angle for Mexicans, we do not know what they have confided to the sisters of their race (probably that we Mexicans are good catches). This has come to put the Polish gentlemen in a bad humor, and it is rumored that they are preparing a good beating up for our countrymen. This rumor has not dismayed our fellow-countrymen, and when it is mentioned they are wont to say: "Bah, that bothers us the way air does the well-deserving of the Americaa."¹⁵⁸

The attractions of Polish girls and Mexican men were evidently reciprocal. As a young Mexican admitted:

I like the Polish women very much. They are physically attractive and their golden hair rather fascinates me. They must be very affectionate wives, because they have a lot of children.

The more courteous manners of the Mexican men were among their advantages over the young men of other nationalities.

Asserted uncleanness and proneness to fight, which have been detailed earlier, should be added to the reasons given for the isolation of Mexicans. While the Mexicans sometimes assigned reasons for the hostility of others to them, they sometimes professed (probably sincerely) that they did not know the reason.

¹⁵⁸ *Festividades*, Chicago, November 1, 1925, 7.

The Italians did not like us but I don't see why. They never told us, although we asked them to several times. They just did not like us. It made us feel bad and suspicious, not of the Americans, but of the foreigners; the Americans are all right.

The tendency to exonerate the "Americans" was frequently observed. In part this was doubtless politeness of the person interviewed, but as pointed out earlier, the contacts with Americans are rarely those from which petty and irritating friction is likely to result; rather are they contacts with teachers, social workers, or higher executives, which produce less friction than the contacts with European immigrants on the same socio-economic plane, or but slightly above them. This explains the replies of two Mexicans to our inquiries concerning their relations with Americans:

I can't tell who are Americans; they are white, but I can't tell whether they are Poles or Jews or what they are.

The little Mexican children say the others hit them sometimes. These are mostly foreign children. I haven't met any real Americans.

Other statements showing the tendency to exonerate Americans may be added:

A Mexican referring to the hostility of the Poles said: They don't like us. There are few Americans here. The Americans treat us all right.

An American school teacher said: The Mexicans will try to shift the responsibility for discrimination and misdeeds away from Americans. They will say after telling an incident, "But he is not an American."

I try to get in touch with real Americans, not these Russians, Poles, Slovaks, etc.

A Mexican in high school stated: We like the school . . . but we don't like the town. Everybody here is low class people. There are hardly any Americans here.

Referring to the school attended by her children, a Mexican mother said:

There were only two Americans in the room [in addition to the Mexicans]; the rest were Polish and Czechs. [And she added:] It is not the real Americans who mistreat the Mexicans, but these Europeans who call themselves Americans.

It is very significant that the distinction between Americans and European immigrants in this locality is so often made. It would be a mistake to conclude, however, that it is always made. Furthermore, there are both the traditional antipathies toward Americans and the wounded feelings occasioned by discriminations commonly experienced at the hands of Americans in other parts of the United States,

emotions which when aroused override the distinction made locally between treatment at the hands of Americans and of others. The statement of a Mexican showed a blurring of these two attitudes:

If you get acquainted with the real American people they treat you well. Some treat me just like any other friend. The average Mexican just takes it for granted that they don't like him, and calls them "gringos." They say the American people don't like us; if we go to the show they separate us.

In the rural areas studied, the source of discrimination was invariably identified with the Americans, although individual Americans or classes of them might be excepted. A Mexican social worker said with discrimination:

When the Mexicans complain about American extortions, etc., I tell them these are not the real Americans. They don't see many real Americans. They like the Americans as individuals, though they retain some feeling against them as a group.

Contempt was frequently expressed by Mexicans for the European immigrants who assert their superiority, especially when they sought to be regarded as "Americans."

We don't have a chance to know the real American people. I see the Greeks, Italians, Poles; they are not Americans. The Poles are citizens and pretend to be the real American people. Poles are the organizers of distinction against the Mexicans. The Polish people put their women to work; the Mexicans don't want their women to work even if they are poor.

The people who make things hard for the Mexicans are the Europeans who have just come over here but claim to be Americans.

The Mexicans say the Poles are too bold; they had nothing to eat in Poland and have much here. But in Mexico no one ever starves.

As compared with these Europeans, the Mexicans felt themselves to be "Americans" by birth. A Mexican reported, for example:

Real Americans don't hate the Mexicans, but the new Americans, the Serbs and others who are naturalized citizens and can't even speak English do; they ill-treat the Mexicans. The Mexican claims to be American because he was born on this continent. They say to the naturalized citizens, "You are Americans because of business reasons."

Redfield noted the similar conversation of a Mexican:

The Poles always pretend they are Americans; they are ashamed to say that they are Poles; they say they are Germans or Americans. One night at school the teacher said that the peoples comprising the Americans were the Canadians, the people of the United States, and the Mexicans. You should have seen the Poles look around at us! What, the Mexicans Americans!

We heard once that under emotional stress, the superiority of title was claimed even as against inhabitants of the United States; this was again Indian consciousness rising to the surface:

One teacher asked my little boy why he did not go back to Mexico; that he was not an American and did not belong here. The boy replied, "I am more of an American than you are because all of my ancestors were born in North America and yours were all born in Europe."

While Mexicans defended themselves individually in the physical conflicts between themselves and other nationalities, in matters of social discrimination they displayed the characteristic sensitiveness and retirement observed in the areas previously studied. Thus, a social worker said:

The Italians and others called the Mexican boys "dirty Mexicans" at the Mexican dance recently. How did the Mexicans take it? With the gentle dignity with which they take all affronts.

Similarly, a settlement resident spoke of the unaggressive attitude of the Mexicans:

The Poles don't think the Mexicans get a square deal, but they don't think they deserve it. The Mexican could get more [social consideration] if he would, but if he feels he is not wanted he stays away and does not fight for it like the Negro. I could not run the Poles out of the settlement now if I tried, but I could easily run the Mexicans out. In planning one of the settlement picnics the Mexicans asked hesitantly, "Are white people going too?" The Polish told the Mexicans at first that the settlement was for the Poles. Each nationality resents any outside group coming in.

Another attitude occasionally encountered was that treatment depends on one's self. A Mexican boy in junior high school said:

It all depends on one's self how one is treated. I get along with all. I have Mexican, Polish, and American friends. I get along all right with the colored.

Faith in education as a preventive of racial discrimination was also expressed. A characteristic explanation of Mexicans for the discriminations to which they are subjected in rural areas is lack of education of American farmers. There the distinction was made between educated Americans and uneducated Americans: here the line between educated and uneducated seemed to coincide fairly closely with that between native Americans and immigrants:

The true American treats us ten times better than those from Europe. The Americans are educated; the foreigners are the ones who treat us roughly and are not educated. There are nice people in other nationalities; it depends on education. If people have education they won't mistreat others.

[Discrimination] is not by Americans but by other nationalities, and those of the ignorant class.

We distinguish between the real Americans and those who come from Europe.

This faith in the moderating influence of education on race prejudice was somewhat shaken by the anti-Mexican editorials appearing from time to time in Chicago newspapers, particularly the *Chicago Tribune*. A Mexican whose wife was American said:

Uneducated Americans are prejudiced against Mexicans, but educated persons don't exhibit it. But here they let it out in the press.

Another Mexican raised similar objection to the attitude of the press of Chicago:

I notice the feeling among the Mexicans after there has been something in the American papers about opposition to the foreign-born. What a Mexican does here is conspicuous in the paper, as for example, when a Mexican shoots a policeman. The Mexicans don't hear with pleasure when the papers here urge that the United States will go to Mexico and conquer it, but at other times we don't talk against the Americans.

The familiar complaint against considering all Mexicans alike, ignoring individual cultural differences between them, coupled with an understanding assent to the different treatment of those of lower culture, was made by a skilled Mexican mechanic:

I don't blame Americans for that [discrimination]. Why do they think we are all alike? Just because you are Mexican you are treated like any other Mexican.¹⁵⁹

Similar to the emphasis on individual difference, is the stress on class differences which Mexicans frequently advance as a basis for shifting the line of discrimination away from that of nationality. The individual who advances such a view is usually in education, culture, class, and sometimes race, somewhat above his fellows according to the dominant scale of values, though the difference sometimes is slight. Thus an Indian-type common laborer, well dressed, but of slight education, was sensitive about his more ignorant compatriots:

If they can't read and write they are ignorant and give us all a bad reputation.

The son of a Mexican who operated a bakery spoke similarly:

There are so many low class Mexicans here it makes it harder for other Mexicans.

It is very characteristic of Mexicans not themselves laborers that they are sensitive to the unfavorable impressions sometimes made by their compatriots; they not only apologize for them, admitting that they give excuse for discriminatory treatment, but they also seek to assure that the laborers do not represent the culture of Mexico.¹⁶⁰ A

¹⁵⁹ See also I, 82.

¹⁶⁰ See also pp. 270, 271.

Mexican grocer of intelligence and some education spoke at length of the disparity between the cultural and material status of the immigrant laborers:

The Mexicans here in Indiana Harbor are nearly all from the lower classes of Mexico. It is only that class that comes this far north to seek a livelihood. The middle and upper classes stay in San Antonio and in Los Angeles. You will find some too in New York and in San Francisco. These people are from the ranches and foothills of the sierra. They are for the greater part illiterate in their own language. Many of them in coming to the United States have to be smuggled over because they cannot pass the literacy test in Mexico. In Mexico the schools were few and far between. Many of them never saw a book or heard of one. Neither did their fathers or anyone read a paper. They know very little of good manners or customs.

When they are here the sudden wealth and the prosperity of this country is too much for them. They put on shoes for the first time and wear a good suit of clothes, when in Mexico all they possessed was a pair of breeches. And they believe themselves to be just as good because they buy shoes for \$10 and a suit for \$60. They eat something else besides raw meat and herbs and think they have everything in the world and cannot know or have more.

They advance materially but not culturally or spiritually. . . . It is plain then that you cannot judge Mexicans or Mexico by the people you see here. They are essentially from the lower ignorant class. I do not believe there are more than five educated Mexicans of some quality here. We have no upper class people here at all.

Other observations by Mexicans may be cited in evidence of the sense of class difference between themselves and those whom they regard as below them; usually they were offered by way of more or less apologetic explanation to us as Americans.

Some of the Mexicans have nothing in their heads, so they ornament themselves and think if they dress neat and smart they are all right.

The Mexicans here are a lower class. . . . In Mexico we have these Mexicans as cheap servants.

I don't have many Mexican² friends here. I want to associate only with the best people, and most of the Mexicans are of a low class.

The North American sees only the crudest Mexicans, *los rudos*, *los indios*.¹⁵¹

A Mexican bank clerk, when extension of invitations to laborers to a settlement party was under consideration, said:

Don't invite those men; they are too primitive.

A Mexican woman, wife of a small business man, said:

The people from Old Mexico here disgrace the real Mexicans. In Mexico a lot of the people that are here were either servants or mountain Indians. There

¹⁵¹ Redfield. Compare the exclamation of an educated Mexican woman when we pointed out "her countrymen" in the camps of the San Joaquin Valley, California: "Oh! those are Indians!"

are many peons from the haciendas here too. There they were uncultured and savage. Here they dress like civilized people and eat well, but do not pick up any education or manners.

The attitude of Americans in the Chicago-Gary region toward Mexicans has already been suggested at various points. Its range may be given here in a few quotations. The first is the statement of a minor executive of the malleable iron plant which had unsatisfactory experience with its Mexican laborers:

The educated, higher-type Mexicans are like us; they're brainy. They're not damned foreigners; they're wise foreigners. And they have mannerisms (*sio*) and learn two or three languages. Then they try to get diplomatic or other jobs where they can use their mannerisms and their languages. But the downtrodden peon group which we get,—they're seum; Hell, we can't do anything with them.

Very characteristic was the remark of an employment manager who obviously did not care for the typical Mexican laborers:

Of course there are exceptions; there are always exceptions. I have met Mexican people who are fine, as fine as anybody, but they are mostly of Spanish descent—people who have kept up their culture.

This selection for commendation of the "Spanish" type is generally resented by Mexicans in the United States whatever their race or class. The third statement was by a Mexican:

My wife is an American and we have a four-year-old child. A neighbor said within hearing of my wife, "Too bad she is a half-breed." Some dark Mexican friends visited us over a week-end. A neighbor said, "Did you know you had colored guests?"

A nurse of the Infant Welfare Society said:

We are used to the arrogance of the Italians, Poles, and others, so we like the ways of the Mexicans.

Britton and Constable wrote enthusiastically:

. . . . generally speaking our contact has impressed upon us the fact that the average Mexican has unusual native intelligence, a very pleasing courtesy and a marked ability to get along happily in very poor surroundings and with few or no possessions. These native instincts make them, in our opinion, a very desirable addition to our American mixture.

Doubtless, it was Americans like those quoted last, rather than the man quoted first, to whom Mexicans referred when they said, "The real Americans are good to us."

In contrast with the social isolation described, there were frequent evidences of friendly relations between not only Americans and Mexicans, but between individuals of European nationalities and

Mexicans. The friction having been presented in some detail, it is appropriate to give attention to some of the many instances of friendly contacts, the effect of which is to moderate the strained relations which so frequently prevail. As a Mexican said:

When some individual Americans are friendly to us, it makes us feel more friendly to the Americans.

Many young Mexican men board with families of European nationalities, Austrians, Croatians, and others, even Poles and Lithuanians. An Irish housekeeper in South Chicago had good words for the Mexicans; although deploring their shootings and knifings among their own people, she said:

The Mexicans are all right; fine people. If you don't bother them, they won't bother you. They are a lot better than the Negroes. Steady workers, fine fellows, and they like to work. If they get out of work, they're down there by the fence bright and early and looking for a job the next morning.

A Mexican who lived in a flat above a Polish family said:

There is a Polish family living downstairs. We got along well with them. They own the house and we are its only tenants. The lady and I are quite friendly; she does not know much English and no Spanish. I understand some Polish and with a few words we get by.

Redfield reports an Irish woman in the Brighton Park colony who said she liked the Mexicans:

They're nice people if you leave them alone.

Greeks and Mexicans had very little contact with each other, even when they lived in the same areas, as they do in the vicinity of Hull House; the Italians had more contacts with Mexicans. A Greek expressed a view which we frequently heard:

The Italians get on best with the Mexicans because they understand each other's language.

An Italian, formerly a social worker, said:

Among the neighbors of the Mexicans there is generally no race feeling. The Italians feel that the Mexican is a Latin.

Redfield, too, reported friendly feelings toward Italians on the part of Mexicans:

I like the Italians and the Americans; they are *simpático*. But the Poles [a look of disgust].

With the increase in numbers of Mexicans, some hostility from the Italians, too, had developed. Between Settlement House and similar

social workers and Mexicans, relations were most cordial. But so far as Mexicans and their European neighbors are concerned, it appears that even where friendly words are spoken, the relations are largely of the "live and let live" variety, and the isolation of the group remains despite the friendliness of individuals. The exception to this statement, if any, is the relation of Mexicans and Spaniards, and to Hispanic Americans.¹⁰²

Toward the Spaniards, who are principally in Chicago and Gary, there were much more friendly feelings than toward other European nationalities. Although common language and cultural traditions seem to explain this, it is nevertheless of particular interest in view of the characteristic antagonism toward Spaniards in Mexico. In Mexico the Spaniards are usually of the business classes and often rural salesmen or merchants, who are regarded as exploiters, but since in the United States both are in a strange land and of about the same social and economic status, the relations between them are tempered.

This friendliness appears partly in the organized activities of the colony. In Gary some Mexican girls were entered in a Spanish "popularity" contest. Some Mexicans were members of the Spanish society Ibero-Americano of Chicago and the Unión Benefica Española of Gary, and a benefit for a "temple for the Mexican colony of Chicago" was said to have aroused "great enthusiasm among the Mexican and Spanish colony."¹⁰³

The conception of Latin America, united against the common northern "enemy," was utilized as an appeal to unite the Hispanic Americans of Chicago.

In Union There is Strength.

There are in Chicago a good many societies, organizations, and clubs which have much support from the Spanish-speaking element of this city, but, though we hate to admit it, few of them tend to unify the Hispanic Americans, who, being in a foreign country, and above all in a country which is considered an enemy of ours, should not consider themselves from different nations, but from a single country—Hispanic America. . . .

We recall that Americans almost never distinguish between us, and always call us "Spanish." To them (because of their lack of knowledge of geography) it is all the same whether one is Mexican or Spanish, Chilean, Nicaraguan, Argentinian or Salvadoran. To them we are all "Spanish." Let us then redeem our race. Let us make sure that the "Spanish," (which we will translate to Hispanic American) are recognized in the group of important colonies of Chicago.

¹⁰² The term Hispanic American is used here in contradistinction to the term Spanish-American, applied to persons of Spanish or Indo-Spanish descent who inhabited the territory in southern Colorado and New Mexico which became part of the United States in 1848.

¹⁰³ *Mexico*, October 16, 1930.

Wouldn't it be better for these groups, now completely disunited, to join in forming one only, strong and powerful, which would say much for our Indo-Spanish race in this city?¹²⁶

Like the efforts to unify the Mexican societies, this suggestion was not carried out, but it indicates the feeling of solidarity. The Club Cultural Latino-Americano, although organized by Mexicans, significantly planned for the admission of other Latin Americans. Also significant is the unique instance of the successful use of a Filipino, married to a Mexican, as a worker among Mexicans at a leading settlement house.

Despite the friction between European and Mexican immigrants, indeed at times augmenting it, there was some intermarriage between Mexicans, almost always men, and Europeans of the first or second generation. Among the specific instances of intermarriage cited to us were included Poles, Italians, Germans, Jews, Negroes, and a very few Lithuanians, Irish, Greeks, and French. There were also "Americans," many of whom were doubtless second generation of European nationalities, just as many second generation Americans were doubtless included in the references to the specific European nationalities. There were also intermarriages with Cubans, Argentinians, and other South or Central Americans. The number of Mexican women who had intermarried was very small. I was told of only six instances; three had married Cubans, and one each an Italian, an Argentinian, and a Negro.

The number of marriages between Mexicans of course far exceeded the number of intermarriages with persons of other nationalities. Mexican girls were either brought to the region by their families and relatives, or Mexican men went to Mexico for a visit, and returned with a bride. The latter was a frequent, indeed, a preferred course of action. While no statistical data were available, one obtains the very clear impression that as in Bethlehem, the proportion of intermarriages far exceeds those which take place in rural areas of the Southwest. Whether they exceed the proportion which takes place in San Antonio or some of the Texas border cities is a different question, which we are not prepared to answer.

Various comments were offered by way of explanation of the intermarriages which took place. Their character was frequently affected by the point of view, but the partial truths, or the truths concerning some cases, when assembled, are illuminating. Some emphasized the low character of the women who married Mexican

¹²⁶ *La Noticia Mundial*, January 29, 1928.

men, doubtless a fact in some instances. For example, two persons, one a Settlement resident in Chicago, the other a Polish business man in Gary, concluded their remarks on the subject by adding, "But the women were of the prostitute type," and "but with low class white women who are prostitutes." The last speaker continued:

They stay with them while they provide a good living, and then, some of the Mexicans are handsome.

A second generation American near the stockyards indicated another type of American, which sometimes married Mexicans:

Sometimes girls who don't see chances to get other men, and see a Mexican whom they think has money, they will marry him.

A Mexican social worker observed correctly the range in type of persons who intermarried:

There are some marriages to girls who are all right and some to girls of loose morals. Some of the second generation European girls abuse the freedom of women which prevails here. They have dragged down some Mexican boys. The young Mexicans are handsome and the girls like them.

Some of the women who married Mexicans were obviously persons of high type; some undoubtedly were not. Also, there was a wide range of social type among even the Mexican laborers.

Corroboration of the attractiveness of Mexicans came from a Spanish American woman with opportunity to observe:

The light haired girls seem to like the Mexicans here. If the Mexicans were better educated there would be more intermarriage. The American girls like them. The Polish girls like the Mexicans at the dances. They are polite, well-mannered, and romantic.

A Mexican man agreed that the Polish girls liked the manners of the Mexicans, but felt that their dark color was a handicap in the eyes of European girls, even the Polish.

Some of the intermarriages appeared to continue satisfactorily to the parties immediately concerned, others not. Of the latter type were two instances reported to us:

One American wife became ashamed of her Mexican husband and left him and her two children. Another left after the first baby came, and took the baby. The influence of the mother-in-law was felt in the latter case.

Of two Mexican-Polish marriages reported by an intimate observer, one was then ending in divorce, the other was said to be "very happy." The Mexicans in both instances were educated laborers of the better type, probably lower middle class in Mexico. Some

Mexicans who intermarried were Catholics and some were not. Their wives were sometimes of the same religion and sometimes not. Since European girls were frequently Catholic, the religious barrier was naturally less than in some of the rural areas where the American population was generally Protestant.

By those who were not themselves participants in intermarriage, opinions were readily expressed as to its desirability. That Polish and Lithuanian men were generally hostile has already been indicated. A Lithuanian father near the stockyards disowned his daughter for intermarrying; my informant, describing the father's violent feelings, said:

I mentioned to a Lithuanian father his daughter who had married a Mexican. He replied, "Don't you talk to me [about] that ——!"

In Gary it was reported:

Recently the Polish parents opposed strenuously their daughter's marriage to a Mexican. They drove the girl out of the house and she went to the house of the [married] brother of her Mexican sweetheart. The parents finally took the girl back but did not let her see her Mexican sweetheart, so finally they met secretly and were married.

In general, but not always, the a priori attitude of Mexicans toward intermarriage was one of opposition. Illustrative of the exceptional was the belief of a Mexican laborer of white complexion who said that in respect to intermarriage "the Italians, Poles, and Mexicans and others are equal." Indeed, a Spanish American with good opportunity to observe, thought that "intermarriage kind of flatters the Mexicans, though I have not talked with them about it." The reasons for opposition included rather vague beliefs that "it is better to marry one's own nationality," and a statement suggesting a mild pride in race purity:

As for intermarriage, that is something you cannot tell. But the children would be mixed up after a few generations and would not know what they were.

With those whose customs and background were closest, such as Cubans, Central and South Americans, the thought that marriage was an intermarriage hardly arose. As a Mexican said significantly, "but we count them the same as the Mexicans." With reference to the Italians, a Mexican woman whose brother had married an Italian girl noted the similarity of customs, but interestingly ascribed their conflicts to differences in custom, and their ability to get along despite differences, to a common "racial temper."

He had married an Italian girl four years ago and now has four children. They get along well because they are of the same Latin temper although our customs and those of the Italians are slightly different.

From the point of view of the Mexicans, the principal ground for opposing intermarriage was clearly the clash of customs which it involved, rather than biological differences. Only one Mexican suggested to us the danger of national prejudices:

I think that it is better not to marry another race anyhow. It might be all right, but after the first when fusses begin to come she might throw at me that I am Mexican, or I might throw at her that she is American. I think that it might cause trouble.

On the other hand, concern was felt principally over the relations of husband and wife, and the entry of women into industry, the very conflicts described earlier which appeared with migration to this urban-industrial American environment. The following statements by Mexicans demonstrate this clearly; the first is by a Mexican married to a Mexican, who was then opposing the suggestion of his wife that she seek industrial employment.

The Mexicans are afraid that if they take Polish wives, they will go to work, will meet other men, and divorce the Mexican husband. The Mexicans believe in marrying permanently.

Mexican husbands don't want their Polish wives to go to work, and very few have gone to work. The Polish don't want Mexicans to marry their girls. The Poles say they don't want to mix white with yellow blood; but they don't know that our skin is dark but our blood is white.

A middle-aged Mexican mother expressed a similar apprehension:

There are some Mexican boys who have married Polish girls and some Americans. I suppose they are happy and get along, but I imagine it is very hard to adjust themselves to new conditions. The Mexican has his ideas and customs and the girls here have theirs. Here they can work even if they are married; in Mexico we never think of it.

A young Mexican Indian track laborer was less articulate, but he evidently had similar conflict in mind when he said characteristically, after remarking that intermarriages "don't last over a year or two,"

It is best to get a girl from Old Mexico when one wishes to marry.

A better educated Mexican expressed the same idea more fully, adding the interesting sidelight on the high cost of competition for Mexican wives in this region:

The men prefer to marry girls from Mexico. They do not like the uncertainties that go with a mixed marriage. The customs are different and the women are used to having so many liberties here that the well meaning intentions and safeguards of the husband would be misunderstood by their American wives.

It is cheaper to go to Mexico and marry than to get a wife here. The girls are so few here that you have to go some to get one. You have to bring them all sorts of presents and to cinch the thing you have to buy an automobila. Down there you have to have a strong heart and a good tongue. All you need is railroad fare both ways and you have a little vacation in the meantime.

The wife of the preceding speaker gave further details of the bases for disbelieving in intermarriage. She began by referring to a specific couple:

They get by well but I doubt if they are happy. She comes in here to buy Mexican things to eat, but I don't know whether she eats them, or he eats them alone; she must want the other foods she ate at home, I am sure. Then the Mexican customs are so very different from the American that it must be a hard time for both of them. I should imagine it would be hard to adjust themselves to a change like that. The Mexican husband is master in his house. What he says is law. He is at times hard and cruel. Among the lower classes even more so, the wife being but a servant or slave. Can you imagine an American girl being a slave to a Mexican laborer here who was a peon or sierra Indian in Mexico? I do not think such a marriage would succeed. A Mexican husband would not stand for all the liberties that an American woman takes. She could not go out alone to social functions because in Mexico her husband would have to take her.

Now there is the case of a Mexican boy who married an American girl. He was of the lower class and not educated. He could hardly sign his name and can't read Spanish. He came from a town in the sierras of Jalisco; he is almost a wild Indian. They are very hard on their wives, often beating them. Do you think she has an easy life? I do not. He had a job and his work was steady. She knew that since he was a Mexican all she had to do was to marry him and she would have a home. Then she knew also that marrying a Mexican, she would not have to work [outside the home], since Mexican married women do not work. A marriage like that will not last. She will leave him when he loses his work or the money stops coming for some reason or other. Then he might get tired of her spending, or her liberties, and leave her. She goes out alone now when he works, and comes home with others. Nobody approved of that affair or marriage. He has lost caste with the Mexicans, even though he married to gain caste, I suppose.

Americans were naturally less likely to have focused their attention upon the question of intermarriage than were the Mexicans. For them it was a more abstract, hypothetical possibility when the matter was brought to their attention. Furthermore, the answers to our queries on this point were from men, and as Americans, they were more likely to deal with the general principle of race mixture than to reflect on the possibilities of harmonious marriage. As an American business man said:

Personally, I hope they won't mix with the whites. I have a prejudice on the subject.

And another American, a plant superintendent, contented himself with the apparently sufficient reply, "I hope not." However, the feeling that Mexicans were another race to whom the customary ban

against race mixture should be applied was not nearly so general as in the rural areas studied. Thus, a steel mill superintendent distinguished sharply between Negroes and Mexicans in this respect:

I don't believe in intermarriage with the colored, but I do believe in giving them an equal chance. Intermarry with a Mexican! Why not! They are intermarrying now.

In discussion of the social contacts of Mexicans with others in Chicago and the Calumet region, the relations of Mexicans and Negroes merit some separate consideration. In several of the Mexican colonies in this area, notably in South Chicago, Indiana Harbor, and Gary, but to a lesser extent in other places, the Mexicans established their quarters in the same streets as Negroes, often in the same houses. This proximity was favored by the poverty of both peoples and the weakness of the race feelings of Mexicans against Negroes. A social worker related an experience in the vicinity of Hull House typical of many:

The Mexicans don't seem to have much prejudice against Negroes. I took one of the first Mexican families here [1917] to a Negro family to secure lodging. The Mexican family did not object at all to staying with the Negroes, but I have never seen Negroes in the intimate affairs of Mexicans, for example at the christenings as godfathers, etc.

The particular family referred to was a good type, middle class family, forced by economic breakdown and political insecurity to leave Mexico and begin work at common labor, with the women of the family operating a boarding house. Redfield, reporting what he saw in South Chicago in 1924, about a year and a half after the heavy influx of Mexicans, said:

The Negroes and the Mexicans live together—Negroes upstairs, Mexicans below, or Mexicans occupy shacks in the back yard of Negro dwellings.

The antipathy of other nationalities toward Mexicans was further conducive to establishment of relations between Negroes and Mexicans. As a Mexican who regretted any intimacies between them said:

It is true that the Mexicans feel alone in the United States, and about the only people who talk to them are the Negroes, who speak to them smilingly.

Among the results of this proximity and the high proportion of young Mexican males, were sex relations between Mexican men and Negro women ranging from prostitution to marriage, both with and without legal sanction. The instances of intermarriage were not numerous, but were so frequent that any Mexican asked about the

subject always knew that such cases existed in his colony, and often knew the participants.

The conversation of a Mexican who asked another why he had married a Negress was revealing of the circumstances under which intermarriage might take place:

He replied, "I asked a Mexican girl, and she wouldn't, and I don't know whites, so I had to marry a Negro.

Interestingly, one Mexican said that Negresses were preferred in some cases to Mexican girls who had attained "too much liberty" by residence in the United States:

Some of the Mexicans who marry colored say it is because there aren't many Mexican girls and they don't like the Mexican girls who are here. The Mexican men here say that the Mexican girls of the United States have too much liberty.

This comment is in harmony with the statement occasionally heard here and elsewhere that the Mexican girls were worse than American girls, since the latter were accustomed to liberty and knew how to use it, while the former did not know how to use newly acquired liberty with discretion. Another basis for inter-relations was indicated by a Mexican who said:

A few marry or live with Negroes. The Negresses have money and support the men.

Some intermarriages were apparently satisfactory to the participants. An American who knew the Mexicans well, said:

I have seen happy marriages of Negroes and Mexicans.

But the Mexicans suffered in the estimation of others by their relations with the Negroes. Americans sometimes advised them to move away from Negro neighborhoods, or not to associate intimately with them. At least one American had directly told a Mexican leader "to tell the Mexicans not to live with the Negresses." A drug clerk simply condemned them:

They mix up with the Negroes, and that's rotten!

In the main, the Mexicans, Texas Mexicans, and Spanish Americans were equally strongly opposed to intimate relations with the Negroes, either because they had acquired race antipathies toward them, or were sensitive to the white American stigma attaching to them because of such interrelations, or both. Illustrative of the dominant attitude, the Mexicans expressed regret in Indiana Harbor, that

they had previously located their Catholic church in the Negro neighborhood. A Mexican woman, speaking of some Mexican dances in Gary, said:

I have been there many times, but I have never seen Negroes at any of these dances. I think they understand their inferiority and stay away from the dances in Gary.

On the contrary, it was reported that a few Mexicans sometimes were in attendance at a dance hall in the black belt at 47th and Grand in Chicago.

A Spanish American of some education, sensitive to the discriminations to which he had been subjected on account, he believed, of his complexion, said:

The Mexicans don't like the Negroes because they are rough-mannered and because of their color. Also they object to the smell of the Negroes. Some Mexicans say they do not want to go certain places because there are so many *prietos* [in this case, Negroes].

A Texas-Mexican revealed both the reaction characteristic of a white southerner to the absence of "Jim Crow" cars in the North and at the same time a temperateness which did not approve of "Jim Crow" in principle:

We invite white people and everybody to our dances. No, not the Negroes; they don't live here [but they did]. Well, I am a Southerner and you know how they feel about the Negroes. The first time I came North I was surprised to see a big Negro sitting by a white lady. But you find good and bad among all people, and the Negroes should be treated just as good as any if they behave. They are human. They should not keep them away in cars, waiting rooms, etc., because they are darker.

The attack of Mexicans on intermarriage of their countrymen with Negroesses, however, was nearly always unqualified and vigorous. The following replies of Mexicans to inquiries will illustrate:

We have a hard enough time as it is with social discriminations; why have more trouble by marrying Negroes?

They don't like to see them degrade their race.

Many of the Mexicans mix with the colored women, but it lowers the prestige of the race.

The Mexicans hate to see other Mexicans marry colored people. They're human beings the same as everybody but it looks bad among the people.

The Mexicans don't want to be classed with the Negroes. The Mexicans who marry Negroes are ostracised and regarded as having degraded themselves.

The stigma among Mexicans attaching to persons of color was sufficiently weak so that intermarriages took place; nevertheless, most Mexicans were conscious that this incurred social disapproval of other nationalities which tended to extend to Mexicans generally, and they were seeking with success to build up a similar social taboo among their own people.

Despite the lack of intimacy and even friction between Mexicans and other nationalities in the Chicago-Gary area, and many evidences of the same desire to isolate Mexicans socially which was a dominant characteristic of the rural areas studied, it is clear also that the contacts between Mexicans and other nationalities are much more numerous and effective in the former region.

The Mexicans work beside other nationalities in industry. They live among other immigrants as neighbors, in the same houses, or even as boarders in their homes and boarding houses. To a limited extent they attend the amusements attended by other nationalities, and even in some instances intermarry with their women. Appreciable numbers of adults attend night classes conducted under public or private auspices, and the children attend school in high proportions and without segregation. Settlements, religious bodies under American auspices, and social agencies such as visiting nurses, infant welfare nurses, charities, all take the initiative in establishing and maintaining friendly contacts which almost invariably compel some cultural adaptations on the part of the Mexicans. These contacts are more insistent and pervasive than similar contacts in agricultural communities. Here, under urban and industrial conditions rather than in the rural areas, the Mexican immigrants are thrown into the cultural and biological "melting pot" which for decades preceding has had the European immigrants as chief ingredients. The Mexicans themselves are fully conscious of the greater cultural shock of residence in the Chicago-Gary region. One is not told in Chicago, as we were by a Mexican woman living on a farm in Imperial Valley, that life is about the same in the United States as in Mexico.

The retardation of assimilation of Mexicans comes most effectively, not from those Mexicans who exhort their countrymen to resist "de-Mexicanization"; rather, since many Americans and Europeans hold the attitude which they do, the simple fact pointed out by a Settlement resident "that there is not much chance of a Mexican mingling with a crowd without recognition because of his color" is at present a major obstacle to assimilation. But one is told frequently, both in

this region and in the Southwest, that the North is preferred to the Southwest not only because wages are better, but because there is less *distinción*. The obstacle of race is more easily surmounted here than in the agricultural regions, and it is much less important than is the obstacle of color to assimilation of Negroes in the same urban center; but it constitutes a retarding factor different from and more persistently effective than that which was presented by the migration of Europeans to this same region.

V.

FIELD NOTES

The first group of notes shows types of Mexican laborers, some of them roving *solos* without women-folk, others with their families, who recount their migrations and reveal in flashes significant aspects of their lives, their work, and characteristic, though often diverse attitudes towards them.

A Mexican in Gary:

I came to Gary on June 3, 1927, from near Zamora, Michoacán. I had to leave because the revolution was *muy fuerte*; I could not make a living for my wife and six children. We had formerly all been in the United States, and we had gone back to Mexico to stay permanently, but when I could not make a living I left my wife and children and came to the United States. Our *tierra* has more believers in the teachings of our forefathers [Catholics]; for this reason the revolution is stronger in Jalisco, Guanajuato, and Michoacán. I send \$30 every two weeks to my wife and children.

From 1916 to 1921 I worked in a roundhouse at Dodge City, Kansas. Work was plentiful at that time, and when I left there, I did not intend to ever return to the United States but was forced to do so. I want my boys to learn trades in Mexico, so that they won't have to come here. I want all my children to stay in school as long as possible. We live here like birds of the air. As long as there is work in the steel mills, we stay; when work closes down, we are away to any place we can hear of steady work. We make more money in the mills and for that reason we stay there as long as there is work. I have no other outlook than to keep on working until I die. I was a farmer in Mexico. I raised corn, wheat, and bees. If I had \$2,000 I would rent a farm here, bring my family, and live contentedly. My wife wants me to send for her. Women's work is easier here than in Mexico. My wife didn't want to send me a picture of the children for fear the picture would satisfy my homesickness and I would not want to return to Mexico.

Any place is good to live in if there is plenty of work. In Mexico I own a little place and only have to pay \$1 per year for taxes. Here, if one does not have work, one is lost. If I had the money to open a store or rent a farm, I would bring my family, but I do not want my family to have to suffer here, in case I should be laid off or lose my job.

A steel worker in South Chicago:

This man on his day off from the mills was talking Mexican politics with others in a small Mexican news shop. He condemned the *mal gobierno* of Porfirio Diaz and favored vigorous prosecution of the government campaign then in progress against the "religious rebels" of Jalisco.

I spent my youth on a *rancheria* in Jalisco near the town of La Quemada. There were plenty of cattle and sheep in that land and there still are. There is plenty of wild life and game and I hunted for weeks; there are lots of pumas and cougars in the thick forests and jungles. You could go for days at a stretch and see no one. Fruits were plentiful and wild. When I think of some of the lean days I have passed in this country and the plenty of our land in Jalisco it makes me sad at the very recollection.

I worked on this *rancheria* until 1910. Then I went to Matamoros in the state of Tamaulipas where I worked on a farm till 1915. One night I crossed the border in the dark and I was in the state of Texas. No one bothered me, there were plenty of Mexicans there, and I was only one of many.

My first job in the United States was on the track. I worked there for one day at \$1.25 a day. The work was too hard and the pay was not enough, so I left. In those days they paid twelve and a half cents an hour and you sweated for ten hours.

I then went to work in a quarry where they paid \$1.35 a day and you only worked nine hours. I was just a laborer but they paid a little more because the work was dangerous. Men would be hit by rocks falling or from dynamiting, and some were killed. The blaster's helper who was Italian got sick and my chance came. It was a very risky job because you had to light the dynamite fuses short and then run. The foreman asked all of us if someone wanted to substitute. No one answered. Then the superintendent came out and asked for a volunteer. Only silence. Finally I came out and said I would take it if they gave me the blaster's helper's pay. They did and I took the job. I was hurt by some rocks and scraps sometimes on account of short fuses they gave us but I got away with my life.

The helper came back and I went to work on the old job. I had had my chance and made good on it and I felt satisfied. In a month the blaster was again taken sick and left for the hospital with appendicitis. The Italian helper was afraid to take the job and that night he left so they would not ask him to take it the next morning. I got the job after they had offered it to two other Italians and had been refused.

The foreman and the superintendent both came out to teach me and supervise my work for a while. I did as they said for a few days and then I suggested to them a new way which we had used in Mexico in blasting out the rocks and old tree trunks. Their way was slow, cumbersome, and dangerous although they said it was economical. Because of this I pledged my first half check if my way should fail or be costlier. The superintendent took up my offer. He watched carefully, doubting all the time. But I got my check.

After being three months from Mexico I was making \$7 a day in 1915 when the others were making one. This made some of the Italians sore but they could say nothing. Five months later I went to town Saturday night. I got in with a crowd of friends from Jalisco and we celebrated our reunion. We went to some saloons and other places and I just don't know what happened but I woke up in Denver sleeping in a box car.

I liked the north country and I traveled around working on the railroads in the states of Wyoming, Colorado, Utah, and Idaho. I worked for the Union Pacific where they had Japanese and on the Chicago and Northwestern. I drifted east on this road from section to section and got into Chicago in 1922. There was some work then but in a year or so it was very good. In 1924 I went to work for the steel mills and I have been there since. I have been laid off sometimes but my English helps me. I learned that in Wyoming where I was alone and there were no other Mexicans. You work very hard at the mills but it pays well and it is regular if you do your work and have been there some time.

A Spanish American on Canal Street:

Seated on an ash can I entered in conversation with one of the boys who wore the usual denim overalls and jacket and his good suit under that. All that he owned he apparently had with him. He was going to work soon, how soon he did not know.

I was born on a farm near Albuquerque, New Mexico. I lived on that farm with my family till I was old enough to work. Everyone around us spoke and read Spanish and while the boys and girls were supposed to go to school, we did not go and no one came after us. Most of my friends never learned English and I had no occasion to use it till I came to Chicago two years ago.

When I got old enough to ride a horse I went to work. I worked on the cattle ranches in New Mexico for a long, long time. I worked for an old German who liked us very much. He had a large family and had me teach his children Spanish. He spoke Spanish himself and a little American. The children spoke little German, good Spanish, and later spoke American. That was the life and I liked it then. I expect to go back some day. Plenty of milk to drink, good things to eat, and ride the horse all day. Maybe once in a while work in his little garden with the flowers and vegetables.

I did not like the way some of our Mexican [i.e., Spanish American] people who had been born here treated those from Mexico. They talked about them, sided with the Americans against them at times, and did not help them very much. I think they should be ashamed of it. We are all of the same race and should stick together. The other people [Americans] when they see us divided do not think so much of us and do what they want with us.

I worked in Texas for a while and there the Texans were bad. I have seen many people treat Mexicans bad but they are the worst of all. Whenever I was out on the range riding bareback, they stopped me, asked me who I was, where I lived, where I worked, and if I did not answer fast enough they hit me with the whip. I did not like that and hated them for it. I had no gun or would have killed some sometimes the way they treated me and the way I felt.

I left Texas because it was a hard life there and came to Chicago. I came by working on the different railroad sections from that state here. It is very hard work and I do not like it. The beet fields are hard work, too, and I shall stay away from there. When I came to town I knew no one and slept in the park the first few nights. It was warm and I had done that before on the range and I did not mind it.

I went to work in a candy store then as a porter and dishwasher for a while. Then I met a man who worked at the Stevens Hotel and he took me there when he heard there was a job open. It was a nice place to work. We ate very well there and got seventy-five dollars a month besides. But the work was at night and it was for ten hours. That's too long and you miss all the life having to work at night. I like to have the evenings to myself and do something.

I intend to go back to the railroad and work east into Pennsylvania. I have a friend who is working for the steel mills in Johnstown. I would like to work in a candy factory like the Baby Ruth but I know little English and have little experience so I guess I have little chance. Besides I heard they are quite full now so I guess I'll go east. I left the job at the Stevens Hotel three days ago and then this afternoon they ought to have my check ready. My room mate brings me my supper every night from the Stevens Hotel so I don't have to worry about eating.

A Mexican railroad worker on Canal Street:

It is but a year ago [1927] that I came to the United States from Mexico. It was not very quiet there and I did not want to get shot down from one day to the next. I had always worked on the farms and ranches there. I like that kind of life, riding horses or working in the harvests. When I got here I knew no English and had to take the first work that I could. That was on the railroad. It was very hard work in Texas last summer and the foreman was a Bulgarian. Most of us were Mexicans and he had to treat us well. After two months I gave it up and came to Kansas City and then I worked in Lincoln, Nebraska, for a short time. I came to Chicago about nine months ago because I heard there were a lot of Mexicans here and since then I have worked on different sections around here to see the country and wherever the work was best. For that is our lot. We don't know the language and we have no ready way of learning it so we go from place to place, wherever we can get the best and get along. If things are best for me in the steel mills I go there, if they are best in the section I go there. The work, the conditions, and the wages are things we look for.

The work in the steel mills while it is very hard is very good. It is hot, it is heavy work, but if it were regular work I would prefer it there. I tried to work there when I first came to Chicago but since I had no experience they would not take me. Later I got on with the Inland Steel but that lasted only a short time. I have still the scars from the heat of the open hearth furnaces. The packing houses are good to work for but they always take the experienced men. So you see the only thing left for us is the section or the best fields. While I like the farm life I think the best fields are too hard on a man and I do not want to break my back. Then things are so unhealthy in those camps. It is always good to get out in the section near some river or creek where you can go in bathing or swimming and clean up. Well, I have to go out to-night, I don't know where, but just so I see some more of this country before I settle down to a good job some place.

The next group of interviews took place at one of the railroad labor camps of a type frequently seen in and near Chicago. The camp consists of old box-cars taken from their trucks. Additions have in some cases been built to provide extra rooms, covered porches, or open floors. There are gardens, chickens, and even pigs, with the usual cats and dogs. The first woman I spoke to lived in a box car with no additions. She had a family of four children and her husband. One of the little boys had had an eye pecked out by one of the chickens and her little baby was badly bow-legged. The house inside was rather dark and dirty.

My husband has been in this country ten years. He spent many years in Missouri working on the railroad. I knew him before he left Mexico and we always wrote to one another. Our family was not friendly with his. They would not let us go together down there. Seven years ago [1921] he came back to Mexico because things were bad here. But they were worse down there so we got married there and came up here. All our children were born here in the United States. It is four years since we have been living at this camp. Before, we lived out in Iowa. There were few people from Mexico along the tracks; they were mostly in the cities or in the *betabel* (sugar beets). I felt very lonely and

sad out there. Here there are more people from Mexico and I have someone to talk to and visit with.

It is very nice here but I miss the *vida alegre* of Mexico very much. I long to go back and enjoy the *fiestas* and *ceremonias* of our country. We seldom leave our camp here. I do not care for the movies so much. They are nice but I cannot read the titles in English. My husband knows a little but sometimes we miss the meaning of things and we are lost. We have very few people who speak English coming here. At times some of our friends from *el pueblo* come over for a nice cool Sunday to spend the day with us. But I wish I were back in Old Mexico.

The next man I spoke to had a box car with the addition of a covered porch and screen for flies. His wife was sick but the rest of the family was well. He had lately been an inmate of the *Casa de Corrección* for having carried a knife while on a spree in town.

I left Mexico in 1919 when there was good work in Texas. My first job was digging ditches and excavating work down there. The good work lasted about a year and a half. Then came *la crisis* and I was laid off. So were many, many Mexicans. Some of them had worked there a long time but they kept the Americans. It made some of us mad but what could we do? Nothing.

I went north to Detroit in hopes things would be better. Then to Pittsburgh. But they were worse. In 1923 I came to Chicago and worked for the steel mills. I like the work there. It pays well. It is very hot and heavy but I could stand that. Then I was laid off. I did not have work for three months and I was desperate. Finally I landed here. I have been here four years.

The track work does not pay so well but it is steady. Out here we get our coal and water free. That makes it very nice in the winter. I remember very often how we would suffer from lack of heat in the winter. In the summer we have ice and that is a great luxury. We have no rent bill to pay and that makes it very much better than in town. There is always plenty of fresh air and sunshine and the children like it here because they can play in the open country.

We get *La Prensa* here and when I finish reading it I pass it to someone else. Some of the others get papers from other places in Texas and there is one man that gets a paper from Los Angeles in California. That is a pretty place and I have often heard so much about it. There are many Mexicans there and we hear from them very often. Many of the people around here would like to go there. They say the people down there are so very happy and it is not cold like it is here.

The third man had quite an imposing dwelling. It had been expanded from a single box car by the addition of three rooms and a good covered porch with floor. He had about thirty chickens and over one hundred chicks with a good chicken house. He had a large garden of tomatoes, potatoes, and other vegetables and was quite proud of it. He was the oldest resident of the camp, having come there in 1920. He had a large family of his own and some relatives were with him for the time.

So you come from California. I have been there too. Have you been in Los Angeles? Isn't that a pretty town? And you know there are many, many Mexicans there. There are many *sociedades* and two Mexican churches there. I spent five years there; the work was always good. I left Los Angeles in 1918 because I heard that work was much better in the east. If I had not been here so long I certainly would like to be back there.

When I came from Mexico in 1910 I went to New Orleans. There were a lot of Negroes there and I did not like it. I have never liked them and try never to get work near the Negroes. I do not like to go into Chicago because there are so many of them there. It made me mad when I was in Texas and Oklahoma to be treated like a Negro and sometimes called one. That is another reason I like California. The people there understand the Mexicans and treat them well. They have known them for a long time and are used to them, I guess.

I know a little English, but I wish my children to know all there is to know. They are going to school now and I see that they study at night. I like to hear them go over their lessons and sometimes I try to learn something but it is very hard for an old head to learn. My wife and girls like to go to the movies and I often go with them to accompany them. But I like it here and do not care so much about them. I can't read English so I don't get any English papers. Sometimes the boys bring some home and I read the *rótulos* and look at the pictures.

The man that worked at the roundhouse had built himself a comfortable extra room and was just completing a covered porch. The box car was well kept and clean. He had been working for the company five years and in the roundhouse for three years. To celebrate his promotion from the section to the roundhouse he had taken a trip to Mexico. He went away single and came back a married man. Now he has two children. Before coming to this camp he had worked in various other parts of the country *vagando y aventurando*.

I left Mexico right after the war and went to work in the copper mines of Arizona. The work was very hard there and I left. I then went to work for the railroad at El Paso. Finally I came to Illinois working on the Santa Fe. That first winter was very hard and when I think of it now it is a *mal sueño* (nightmare). I came out here to work on the section five years ago. There were some Greeks here then as well as Mexicans. I got along all right with them but some of the others got into trouble. The Greeks always seemed to get out of it somehow and the Mexicans took the blame or punishment. I was glad to see them go anyway. Now we have very little trouble except among ourselves now and then.

Since I worked at the roundhouse the foreman wanted me to move up there. But I did not like it so much there; you can't have a garden. It is always nice to have a garden; it is beautiful, too. Then there is always smoke and soot and things are very dirty up there. It would not be good for the children and the tracks make it dangerous. So I walk over a mile to work and back but it is worth it.

Among the Mexicans in Chicago is an appreciable group of middle-class, and lower middle class persons. These frequently are working, or have worked as laborers. Usually they seek to rise above common labor, and are often successful in getting work as semi-skilled or skilled workmen or labor agents, or they manage to set up small businesses such as pool halls, restaurants, barber shops, or printing shops. Here are presented a few first-hand accounts which exhibit vividly the migrations, occupational shifts, and economic struggles through which these persons go.

The first account is a very brief note in the third person on the movements between points as remote as the *mesa central* of Mexico, Alaska, and Pennsylvania, of a Mexican who in 1928 was operating a barber shop in Indiana Harbor.

Came from Jalisco in 1913, *a la ventura*. First came to El Paso and for three months sold clothes for a Mexican tailor. Then he learned the barber trade. In 1915 he left for the American army camp in [Deming?] New Mexico where he remained five months. In 1916 he went to Pittsburg, where there were only seven to ten Mexicans who were working on the Pennsylvania Railroad. He went to Pittsburg because his brother was working in a machine shop there; for six months he also worked in the shop. In 1917 he returned to Guadalajara for six months. Then he returned to the United States via Laredo and San Antonio, remaining fifteen days in the latter place. Then he came to Chicago for a month. In 1918 he went to Omaha where he remained fifteen days. Mexicans were in the railroad camps there at that time. Then he went to Cheyenne, Wyoming. Until 1922 he was a machinist's helper, and left Cheyenne because of the shopmen's strike. Then he came to Salt Lake City and worked in a barber shop with a Japanese for nine months. He joined the Mormons in the second ward. In 1923 he went to Pocatello, Idaho, and set up his own shop to cater to Mexicans in and around Pocatello in the beet fields, sugar factories, and on the track. There he remained eight months to the end of 1923. Then he went to Portland, Oregon, from where, after a few days, he shipped to the Alaska canneries and went to New Sagak, Alaska. The workers were mainly Mexicans, Spaniards, and South Americans. This work lasted four months.

In 1924 he returned to Portland and then went to San Francisco where he worked in a pipe plant in South San Francisco for four months. In 1925 he went to Oakland where he worked with a Spaniard in a barber shop. He remained there six months, then went to Los Angeles where he worked in a barber shop for two months. Then he went back to Guadalajara for two months. In 1925 he came to Indiana Harbor; he had friends in Chicago but not in Indiana Harbor. Here he has his own barber shop.

The following interview traces the fall from wealth to poverty, escape from the revolution, and sustained efforts to rise through common and semi-skilled labor to ownership of a small printing business.

My father died when I was six years old. He left \$25,000 in cash, and a big store and farm worth another \$25,000. This was in San Andreas de la Sierra in Durango, in the gold and silver mining country. We then had bad luck. We had a large shipment of goods in our warehouse, when a flood swept away store, warehouse and everything. My mother saved only the cash. There were no banks in the region, and in those days, no bandits. We continued to live there, spending the money, for two years; then my mother took us to the city of Durango. We came there to be educated, and our mother to do something with the remaining money. She and my aunt set up a dressmaking shop. My sister and I made the cardboard boxes, and the hair for wigs, etc. My mother was making good until the first revolution came. Orozco's soldiers in 1912 took all our silk goods and hair goods and Singer sewing machines, and burned the store for which we supplied goods. So we lost more money.

Then I went to work in my uncle's print shop and learned printing. From 1910 to 1913 we had the printing business of the bullfight and theater near us. But in 1913 the revolution of Carranza and Villa against Huerta began. My uncle liked Díaz and wrote an article in favor of him; he made some politics. Once when there was a battle near us his paper came out with the news that the Federals had beaten the revolutionists; but the revolutionists came into the city. The paper came out at 3 P.M., and at 5 an officer and eight soldiers were at the shop. They remained in the shop until my uncle returned. Then they asked who was director, and how he got the information, etc. He replied, saying something about free press. The officer hit him on the head with his pistol, and told the rest of us he would shoot us all if another paper came out. Later the revolutionary government said we might publish, but under their censorship. But the theater and the bullfight were closed, so we had to close the shop.

A lieutenant colonel of the revolutionists who knew me before the revolution offered me a commission as paymaster of his troops. I was only 15 years old, but I joined the Villa-Carranza army against Huerta. When Villa and Carranza divided Mexico between them at Aguascalientes, I was with the Villa army. We were fighting later in Tamaulipas. Once we had a railroad to defend; we were waiting for ammunition from the United States. When I opened the car of ammunition I found the bullets were wooden bullets with thin metal covering. Carranza was protected by the United States and got good ammunition. Later Carranza troops used different bore rifles, so the ammunition we captured from him was no use for our rifles. This is the way Obregón defeated Villa at Celaya.

After this battle we were going over the mountains from Chihuahua. I saw that the whole army was dispersing. There were 125 men in my troop at first, but at our review in Chihuahua there were only 25. Only two days afterward they caught Villa at Agua Prieta. When I saw the army was dispersing, I deserted in the night. I told the general my horse was paralyzed and stiff, so he told me to ride with him on the train. I got into a freight car, and changed my uniform to civilian clothes which I had. Before entering Ciudad Juárez I left the train to avoid the soldiers who would watch the train, and entered the city on foot. I walked in and went across the bridge. I was then 17 years of age.

I had \$700 of Villa money, but the United States people wouldn't change it, so I walked back to Ciudad Juárez. I spent my \$700 in half a day. Meals cost me \$20 or twenty cents American. I made 40 cents from two Mexicans by paying for their meals and taking the American money from them. And when I bought things with Villa money, I asked for a 5 cent bridge ticket in change. So I came to the United States on October 4, 1915, with 40 cents.

An employment agency to which I went said I was too young, and wouldn't give me a job when I came in with my good suit. Then I got a job for a day at \$2.50 working in concrete on the U. S. Post Office building. Then when I went again to the same agency, with my clothes dusty from the cement, they didn't remember me and sent me to work on the Santa Fe at Barr, Kansas, near Topeka. I gave my age as 21 to get the job. I worked on the section. In the winter I was transferred to Melbourne, Kansas. There wasn't much work, and we were working every third day; if the weather was bad we missed that. It was too cold; we didn't have coal to heat our cars; so I had to run out, and went to Emporia. Talking with a Mexican restaurant man there, I learned there was another man from Durango in town, who I found was one of the printers from my uncle's shop. I had no work, and he supported me for a month, while I cooked his meals. Then I found work in the roundhouse unloading coal.

A man came out from Kansas City to get subscriptions for "Cosmopolita." The restaurant man told him he had two printers. Only one was needed, so when

the order for one printer came I sent my friend who was more experienced. Two days after he went, I was let off. Then I returned to Melbourne on an extra gang. A rail on our track was found to be one inch from the end of another by the roadmaster, so he fired the American foreman. The Mexicans liked the foreman and struck unless he should be returned. The roadmaster tried to get the men out of the cars, but they asked for their checks before they would get out. So he gave us our time. I got out and went to Topeka. I found they were getting men for Chicago; so I paid \$1 for a chance and came here in 1916.

We came here on November 23, 1916; 17 *solos* in box cars. But the box cars had bed bugs and were cold, so I got an apartment. In 1917 I sent money to my mother and sister for tickets to come to Chicago. I bought the furniture of a Mexican married to an American, who was getting a divorce, and we hired a cook and started a boarding house for Mexican laborers at 415 South Halstead. In 1919 our cook quit, and my mother wanted to quit running a boarding house. So we moved around the corner to 744 Tilden, where we lived one year.

I quit my work at the roundhouse, where I had worked as a laborer since 1916, and went to work as a machinist's helper at Plamondon Company. One Mexican machinist was working there and he got me the job. In July, 1920, I asked 2 months' permission to go to Durango. There I met a friend of my sister's who had been a girl friend of mine and married her. When we returned to Chicago in November 1920, the factory was closed. My mother had moved because they were tearing down the other house for a garage. We lived with her for 2 years, and one child was born there. My mother had heart trouble and was disturbed by the crying of the baby so we moved. I didn't have very much work. I had some at the Armour Elevator Co. and then went to the Globe Die Company foundry, where I worked until 1923 repairing machines. In 1924 I worked in the steel yards at 16th and Kedzie. I got jobs there for seven roomers at my mother's house.

In 1917 I bought a hand printing press, and printed cards and handbills. I printed the rules of the Benito Juárez Society when it was reorganized in 1921. I printed in the basement of my mother's house at night. In July 1924 there was no work at the Globe Die foundry. I saw an ad in the *Chicago Tribune* for drill press men. I went and got the job. We drilled Spanish combs, bracelets, etc., for stones. On piece work I made \$50 to \$75 per week. I made more than the others; I made my own drills from steel, while the others used iron which got dull quickly. I stayed there a year until the combs went out of style and there was no work. I had saved some money, so I bought another press and started in the printing business. I was paying \$65 a month rent, but there was not enough business, so on May 1, 1926, I moved here.

I started a newspaper, and had to buy \$300 of loose type, and hired men to set it by hand. In February 1926 another newspaper was started. I published only about 12 weekly issues of 12 pages. The owner went broke, and gave me the paper. I continued it about 6 more weeks and then gave it up. In September, 1926, I published another newspaper. I paid a man to write for me. I bought a linotype in July, and a new press. The newspaper started to make good, but on account of the cold winter the boys couldn't get out to sell it. I was losing money, so I gave it up. Then I went into the jobbing business again.

The other Mexican newspaper was in financial trouble, and the help was not paid, so they came over here. About 12 partners then put out a new paper. It appeared for 31 issues and then suspended for lack of funds. Now I print 4 or 5 small papers.

I like the United States but I have a feeling for going back to Mexico. Some day the United States is going to go behind like every other country. Some day

Mexico is going to develop into a modern country. I want to go back when my country develops.

In early 1930, when I met the relator of this account, his printing business had been discontinued, and he was again working for others.

The despairing struggle of the son of a school teacher successively against hard manual labor and unemployment (1928) is revealed in the next interview:

Under the régime of Díaz my father had been a school teacher in the Academia of Guadalajara. His brother, my uncle, was a leather and saddle worker by trade. My father helped in his spare time during the time my uncle was busy. The Madero revolt came and hard times fell on Guadalajara. My uncle was shot when the forces of Villa came into town. My father being a school teacher lost his position. During the war all the schools closed. My father then turned to the leather business and carried it on. I was then ready to commence school but there being no school could not attend any. So all my education was received at home from my father. He taught me after we closed the shop and in the early morning when business was light.

Things went on this way till my father died in 1923. Then my brother and I took over the business. It was good then for about two years. Then when the religious troubles came to the Mexican nation the state of Jalisco and the city of Guadalajara were the center of the maelstrom. Business was very, very bad. Many houses closed. I closed up my place of business and went to Mexico City. There I opened up another shop but things were not much better. Last January I began to think of closing up the shop in Mexico City and going back to Guadalajara to live. In February I went to the old town and things were worse than than they had ever been. There was shooting every day. I sold the shop, machinery, and stock, came back to Mexico City and with my wife and little boy came to the United States three and a half months ago.

We had news of the United States long before we came here. My decision to come was not made till three days before I was on my way. Before that I had had letters from my friends telling me about their work in the United States, the life here, and its hardships. I did not come here under false ideas or impressions that things were easy, that wages were good, or that work was easy to get. I knew beforehand that the work was not easy and that wages were not high. I knew that I could not expect to find work right away but that I would have to *navegar y aventurar*. My friends had told me this in their letters.

When I came across the border I registered myself and my wife and baby. Some Mexicans who were returning to the United States offered to carry my baby in as their own and thus save me ten dollars but I refused. I wanted everything clear so I would not have any trouble later.

We stopped in San Antonio for a week. There were a lot of Mexicans there and they were very friendly. Then we came on to Chicago. At San Antonio a Mexican who was an agent for a steel company in Michigan had offered me work. I took it though I had never worked in a steel plant in my life. I wanted to be located and at work as soon as possible.

At the steel plant in Michigan the work was very heavy; much heavier than I thought or expected it to be. I did my best to get used to the work but it was of no avail. The fumes of the steel and molten iron were too much for me. My eyes became clouded and head full. I was dizzy and went around in a daze. I just had to give up and so we came to Chicago.

When I came back here a second time it was very hard to find a job. Last week a friend of mine who knew a little English went around with me. We went to the many leather and harness shops. In one they needed a man right away. They were almost taking me in when they found out I could not speak English. They told me to come back later when I knew even a few words. I felt very bad then, almost like crying. That night I felt very disappointed and discouraged.

Seeing that I could not get a position in my own trade on account of the language I resolved to work wherever there was work to do. I went to the packing plants each morning looking for work. There they employed first the men who had worked for them before and those who had letters; then those who spoke English. I had no letter and knew no English. I sat in the same place morning after morning. Nothing came of it.

We were quite desperate as my funds were getting low. My wife resolved to go to work even though in Mexico she had never, never worked. I felt at first very much ashamed of myself because I was not able to support her. I often wonder what my father would say if he knew she was working. I never would have approved of it but what can you do? Economic circumstances in this country are different from Mexico. You have to make the best of the situation and meet the Moor in his country.

My wife went around looking for work with one of the girls from this neighborhood who knows English. She went around to different places but work was scarce. At last she got work at the packing plant of Wilson and Company. She is now working cleaning casings. Sometimes she works six hours a day, sometimes eight and sometimes ten hours. They would never have worked that long down in Mexico.

The Mexicans who have been here for some time help the others who are new. But they do not help them wholeheartedly or do everything they can for them. Sometimes they tell us where the work is but you have to coax them very hard to come with you to help you out by interpreting or to take you around to the strange places. A new person here in a big city is lost.

The next quotation is from a Mexican, who at the time of the interview was employed at fairly high wages in a foundry. With the decline of his inherited business in Mexico, he came to labor in the United States in cities, on the railroad, on farms. In the steel mills he became interpreter, then labor agent, during and after the steel strike. He was also active in later efforts to unite the Mexican societies of the region. Note the explanation offered for the aid of Mexicans in breaking the steel strike, the mingled attitude toward his countrymen who are laborers of whom as countrymen he is proud, yet of whom he cannot be one even though working with them, the intense patriotism for Mexico, yet willingness to serve the United States where loyalties do not conflict.

Our family lived in Chihuahua for many, many years. My father had a good business of his own till the time of the revolution. In those days of trouble he grew sick and passed away. I was the oldest and upon me fell the charge of keeping up the family. There were two other brothers and my baby sister. I could have well remained in Mexico and made a bare existence for all of us. But

that was not enough. We had lived well and I thought that by coming to the United States I could do better. So I left Mexico and came to California.

Los Angeles was the first place that I remained in for some time. That was in the year 1912. There were quite a few Mexicans there at that time. But since the main current of the middle class and aristocratic Mexicans had not as yet set out for that city the Mexicans there were of the poorer classes. There were many runaway peons from the time of Porfirio Díaz and many criminals. They were of the lower class, yes, but a distinct lower class—the worst of it.

I was a very young man then, full of illusions and ideals. I certainly was not happy then amongst that type of people. They were different from the class I had known in Mexico. The city held no attraction for me even though the colony was gay then as now. I left and went into the country. I went from place to place, wherever there was work. I would work on the track, then later on I would be on a farm, and that is the way it went.

In 1914 I was in San Francisco. I had worked my way north from job to job. I like California very much and some day I hope to be there again. For those early days were days of very, very hard work, of ideals and hopes being dashed to pieces, of bitter disappointments and disillusionments.

In 1916 I went to Colorado and in 1917 I was in Illinois. I had by that time served my apprenticeship with life. I grew reconciled to things and met them as they came. Certainly if I had buried my ideals and scruples by now I would be but a mere workingman. Perhaps some day I will succeed and be a little better off but never I hope at the sacrifice of ideals and principles. When I first came to California in 1912 I had an opportunity to go in business. A very wealthy American offered to start me in business. He had made his money off the Mexicans and become rich. He thought them all fools and would very often say, "The dirty, lousy Mexicans, this and that and the other." No, I was a Mexican and even though he did not refer to me it hurt me. I loved my country and respected my people, and I would not take anything from a man that said that, even though it made me rich and such sayings were not aimed at me. I know many Mexicans who feel that way and when the occasion came have acted that same way because they too love their country and are proud to be Mexicans.

You seldom see a Mexican who complains about his country. Certainly he may say that things are bad down there now but later they may be good. There are some bad Mexicans but he will not say they are all bad. He will not say that in Mexico it is all persecution, that there is no liberty, that there is no respect for law, for he knows that is not so, and feels it is not so. Frequently you hear the other foreign people say this of their country, but not a Mexican.

In 1918 I was working for the steel company, I knew English and acted as a translator for the few Mexicans that were there and for the company. The workers at the mills had been ready to go on strike but waited only for the end of the war. Soon after the armistice they struck. The Mexicans went out too. The mills were deserted. The companies sent me to get our Mexicans to work for them. I got some at Chicago, others at Omaha, Kansas City, a few at St. Louis. I even went down to El Paso and some cities in Texas. When my brother came with the family in November, 1919, they were still coming by train-loads.

When the large coal strike came a year or so later many of the big mills shut down for the lack of coal to run them. Many Mexicans were released and went back to Mexico, some went to the railroads, and some to the beet fields.

Mexicans are not as a rule strike breakers. Neither are they radicals. They are hard workers. They look for work, get it, work hard at it. They want a fair

day's work for a fair day's pay. They do not work for less. But they will not listen well to some people who tell them not to work so hard, or to loaf on the job. They are used to work and to work for what they get. They are not used to soldiering on the job. It does not go in with what they have been taught or brought up to respect. Radical ideas do not sink in easily. They may listen to them but they do not understand them thoroughly. If they do what the radicals tell them they do so without knowing that which they do. It is just a mechanical action.

I was out of Chicago when my call [for military service] came and did not receive the letter till 13 days later. I came back from Rockford and went up to the board. The man asked me, "Well, what branch of the army do you want to join?" I said, "None." He replied, "Aren't you grateful for living in this country, for your liberties, the good work?" I said, "Yes, but you have not asked me my reason. If you will provide for my family, my mother and brothers and sisters who need my help and bring them up from Mexico, then I will put on a uniform right away." He threw the paper at me and said, "You make up your mind to go into the army or to jail, I don't care which." "I don't either," I replied and started to walk away. I was called back by an older man who talked nice to me. He put me in class six and I helped him for months afterward in translation and other things. I would have been tickled to death to go to war. I wanted to go and do my part for this country. I love and respect this country and I love Mexico. I would serve in the army of the United States in case of any war again. I hope the United States and Mexico are always friends.

The plight of middle-class persons, many of whom fail to adjust and work up as well as the two young Mexicans just quoted, was the theme of an editorial in *Mexico*, March 6, 1929. The same unwillingness to return except "in triumph" is frequently observed among disillusioned Filipinos in California, particularly those who had been students in the Islands and had come to California with high hopes of success, but perhaps have been unable to rise above farm labor.

A person of the middle or upper class, when he has a remunerative position, maintains all the social obligations compatible with his earnings, and puts himself in a place too high to keep up if his good income should cease. All goes well while he remains at those heights, but there comes a day when inevitably he finds himself deprived of the income that he enjoyed, and as good positions are scarce the "world shuts him out" as the popular saying is, and he prefers to leave his country rather than become an "object of pity."

That person knows very well that he could gain a living at home if he would descend to labor or activity of a more humble sort; but he has before his eyes the phantasma of "what they will say," the insurmountable barrier of criticism, and rather than give rise to gossip he prefers to go "where he is not known," to start over in complete freedom, without the menace of the irony of malicious people or the sympathy of friends.

And that good fellow, who could make his way better there, if he were not so timid and fearful, comes here to suffer humiliation and want, and perform tasks that he never dreamed he would ever come to perform, because while the laborer can get ahead here, the middle or upper class man finds all doors closed to him, and if he doesn't want to die of inanition he must make up his mind to work at jobs which suit his present status.

And the sad part of it is that these are the slowest ones to return home, if they ever return, because they want to return in triumph, and their life here barely brings them enough for necessities. Their return is postponed year after year, and it is most likely that death will surprise them without having realized their golden dream of being once more in their own land. And all because they did not have the spirit to face any situation at home and bear criticism and malice.

The wife of a Mexican of education who was unable to rise above the wage rate of common labor:

This is no place for Mexican people of good education; here all Mexicans look and are treated alike. Now I have a good education but I am treated just the same as these poor peons who can neither read nor write. My husband also has a good education. He talks English and has been educated in Spanish. What good does it do him? He has helped the boss by acting as interpreter ever since he has been working for the Company, but still he gets only 44 cents an hour. They pay him at the rate of a laborer, but they expect to use his education to their advantage. He cannot leave the job because his wife and children would suffer. I cannot get a good job because I have no good clothes. Now if I had nice looking dresses I could go out and get a job in an office and make good money, but with this kind of clothes they think all I know how to do is work in somebody's kitchen or wash somebody's clothes.

The next group of quotations expresses the attitude of Mexicans on points which occurred to them when they were invited to compare life in the Chicago-Gary region and Mexico. The very selection of topics reveals their perspective—unemployment, foremen, wages, recreation, the clash of customs, social services, schools and opportunities of the United States, the unbalanced sex ratio, climate, social distinction, the insistence that we understand that the Mexican laborers in the area do not adequately represent Mexico.

It is not as happy and gay a life here as in Mexico. They have no *fiestas* or *serenatas* and no places for *paseos* in the evening. If you walk in the streets in the evening you suffer insults from uncouth persons. Life in Mexico is much easier and better. There you are not in constant dread of your employer or the foreman like our people are here. There you do not worry whether you will have a job or not, if you have laid off for a day or two. People work, yes, but enjoy life.

The people from old Mexico here disgrace the real Mexicans. The real Mexican is polite and courteous and tries to learn all that is good and will benefit him. In Mexico a lot of the people that are here were either servants or mountain Indians. There are many *peones* from the haciendas here too. There they were uncultured and savage. Here they dress like civilized people and eat well but do not pick up any education or manners.

It is very cold here in the winter. I seldom go out. In the summer it is too hot and I seldom go out. The life here is very cheerless in contrast to Mexico. The neighbors are other nationalities and they are hostile instead of friendly. I miss the *paseos* and *serenatas* of Mexico. I miss the *fiestas* and the good times.

It isn't *alegre* like in Mexico, because the *muchachas* are not here. A few who know English marry *polacas*, but it's better to marry one's own nationality.

The Mexicans are better off in Mexico. We suffer here too much. We don't understand the customs and don't like them. They are not suited to Latins. For example, love is easy here and is just for fun. In Mexico love is serious. Men and ladies are too familiar here. They go out together and to school together and we don't want our daughters going out with boys.

Work is hard. Life is more *triste* here. We don't know the language and can't read the titles of the movies. We like it here [in Chicago] better than in Texas. Wages are better here and there is no *distinción*. Your money is good here. There they may not admit you to restaurants or they give you food in a sack [to be eaten outside].¹⁶⁵

In Mexico I was a merchant. Here I am a hard working man. In Mexico I did not do hard work or worry about a living. My cares were very light. Here I must worry about my job, whether I will still be working next week, whether I will have money to live on if I do not have work.

I like the life here very much. The Americans are fine people. They pay good wages here and if you work you can have a good time and enjoy life and that is what I like to do. I am trying to save some little money to go to Mexico in a year or two but that is slow work. Still in the United States I have learned that habit that almost none have in Mexico. There they spend all they earn. Here I save at least one dollar a month. I want to open up business in Mexico but before I go I want to learn some good English because it is valuable down there as well as here.

I am not ashamed of being a Mexican. But I am not proud of the Mexicans in Chicago. They are mostly Indians of the lower uneducated classes of *peones*. In Mexico they lived in *chozas* and were servants. Here they live in tumbledown houses and being unused to having money, spend it. Some of them save a little, others send it to Mexico. You see they are still Indians. In Mexico they never mixed with people of learning or a little study. When they come to this country they still keep apart. For you must know that ninety-nine per cent of the Mexicans of Chicago are of the lower class. They come from some of the thickly inhabited Indian sections of Mexico where illiteracy is very high. Very few know English here well enough to ask for work. It is a fact too that the greater number of Mexicans in Chicago come from those areas in Mexico where revolt and fight has been going on the strongest. You need mention but the state of Jalisco. The respect for law and order is very light among them. They are used to fighting the civil order themselves and are constantly brawling in Mexico. When they come here the habits and customs do not change so easily. They do not cease to fight or kill when they pass the border.

Some Mexicans say this is the best country in the world with its schools and religion. They say, "If our country would only be this way." But if they receive hard treatment they don't speak well of *los gueros*.

I like the United States because it has schools for everybody. It gives opportunity in business. In Mexico one must have money.

¹⁶⁵ This preference for treatment accorded in the north was general. The comment of one Mexican that some persons who treated him particularly well socially must be Texans—he had been so well treated in El Paso—was not a typical laborer's reaction.

If the American people allow me to live here and give opportunities to my children I want to appreciate and be thankful. If I were a true Mexican I would not be here. I get my second papers the end of this month.

I would not let the Mexicans come to the United States until they knew English. The American people dislike the people who come here and send their children to the schools but stick to Mexican societies, criticize Americans, and don't know English. But there are many good people here. If treated right they will fight for the United States. They need a leader.

The Mexican women are glad to have the help of the welfare clinics.

Mexico is my country and I love it, but what is not flesh in me and belongs to intellectual affairs is at home in this country. I want to change the ideas which other people have of my people. The more wrong they say about Mexico the more I love it. On Mexican national holidays I may rub shoulders with a prostitute but on that day we forget it.

You Americans feel like conquerors when you go abroad. You have no thorn in your heart like with small nationalities. When we go abroad to France or England or the United States we have. I would feel different in Cuba or Africa. During the war you went abroad with something high in your heart, but the immigrant comes for food and better circumstances.

Something of the Mexican immigrants' own estimates of the significance of the migration as a whole, and their attitude toward its control appear from editorials in the local press and a personal statement given below. Stress is laid first on their unassimilability and the belief that they will return to Mexico. But there is fear lest their children put down too deeply their roots in the United States. The interview quoted here favors limitation of emigration by Mexico itself, a characteristic view, although not universally held by emigrants. Finally, there is a blast of outspoken protest, unchecked by apprehension of American readers, against the proposed application of a quota restriction to immigration from Mexico.

The European can leave his distant shores forever to build himself a new country in America. Between this type of emigrant and ours then there are totally different motives and quite distinct conditions in an ethnical, psychological, and geographic sense. The European comes to remedy, not a temporary but a permanent and absolute evil, caused by a mass of people who haven't enough room. They come, therefore, decided to become American citizens, to adopt the English language, to dwell with their progeny under their new roof, identified with and faithful to their new flag. The Mexican emigrant, we repeat and maintain, is not prepared to make such a transcendental change; he goes and returns easily by the rails which unite the two countries without any geographical break; and above all, for obvious reasons, he is incapable of being assimilated spiritually, mentally and physically into the American people.

In support of this thesis we can cite our blood relatives on the other [U.S.] side of the frontier. They have lived eighty years under the civil, administrative and educational laws of the United States and although in fact they are citizens of the United States, the different ideals, customs, and temperament have not been eliminated.¹⁶⁶

¹⁶⁶ *Mexico*, November 23, 1927. See also June 23, 1928.

It cannot but be a really sad and even shameful spectacle that there should be here many Mexican children who know nothing of the country of their parents.

How easily (and I applaud and approve it) they express themselves in English, and sing and converse with their little friends. They are completely Americanized. They can say "daddy" better than "papá," "block" instead of "manzana," "I don't care" for "no me importa"; they sing "Follow the Swallow" and forget the words of "Sobre las Olas." They exclaim "Oh!" and don't know what "Bravo!" means. They can give you a clear and precise geographical idea of the country which is north of the United States [Canada] but they can never say what the one is south of the Río Bravo, nor who are its inhabitants, and, if you will believe it, they don't know what language they speak.

I am not one to criticize Mexican parents, because their children speak English well and are educated in the schools of this country. No, because I myself was one of those children educated in a Boston school. But I did not lose my customs and above all my language, because my father was careful to keep me reminded of the fact that I was a Mexican, that he also was, and that Mexico was my country.

Fathers of families should be very careful in the education of their children; they should send them to American schools for instruction, but they should see that they learn to read and write in Spanish; they should teach them the history of Mexico so that they may know who were Hidalgo, Juárez, Díaz and Madero, just as in the schools here they are taught to love Washington, Grant and Lincoln.

How sorrowfully I have seen innumerable little children of Mexicans who could neither read nor write Spanish. They know that their parents are Mexicans, because they have heard it from the lips of others, but never from their own parents.

One morning I was going to our printing office, and on passing along Halstead street I met a little boy, who from his ethnic characteristics I knew to be a little Mexican. The child pleased me, I greeted him, and he replied politely; I asked him if he was Mexican and he answered no, but that his father was.

When I asked him if he knew our weekly he replied negatively, and then I gave him a copy to give to his father. He replied that his father could not read Spanish.

At the words of the child I felt I don't know exactly what: shame, sorrow, rage, pain, pity. Could it be possible that this Mexican home was not acquainted with the round O, and that they read the five different sounds which the A of George Washington's language has?

Mexican fathers: you must not neglect the education of your children; teach them what your country is, what are its beauties, its great men, its virtues, and its civilization, which goes back to the seventh century. Teach them the history of Mexico and explain to them who were Hidalgo, Juárez, and all the other patriots that we have had. Buy, if you haven't one, a Mexican flag, which has printed in the center the beautiful Mexican eagle, and teach your children to love this most beautiful flag. Make them sing the National Hymn weekly.¹⁶⁷

Ninety per cent of the Mexicans who come here are no good and they come to bother those who are here, and we don't want them to come. They give us a bad reputation and when the papers say the Mexicans are all alike that hurts, too. We want the coming of the Mexicans stopped, but we want it stopped from the other side.

At present, when a crazy life of profound materialism is lived in the United States, days spent in an indefatigable effort to conquer the dollar, it is quite

¹⁶⁷ *Mexico*, April 11, 1925. See also *La Noticia Mundial*, September 4, 1927.

ridiculous for weak nations to believe in or use romantic speeches and pathetic phrases. In these times, when economic problems are only solved "with dollars and cents picked up in some way or other," the sentimentalists that we love so much are superfluous. There are too many of those humiliating reverences that we are always so willing to make to powerful Uncle Sam.

Now more than ever we should give up that mistaken attitude of passivity; now, when to support an evil and unjust initiative [the quota bill] our defects are brought to light and we are dubbed useless, we should protest in a very conscientious and well-considered way, against the offensive which tightens the barriers against the Mexicans.

It is also necessary to remember who it is they insult and call detestable; that the Mexican nation has contributed much toward industrial development in various parts of the United States; that the Mexican nation is the one who in times of sorrow for this country has been ready to give its aid disinterestedly to wipe a tear or alleviate a sorrow.

Also, historically, do not the United States owe it to Mexico that the territories which were ours, such as California, were not for slavery?

It was N. P. Trist, an American commissioner, who proposed to Uncle Sam the annexation of the lands which are no longer ours, those lands which are very extensive, so great that someone has said on good authority that it was the most extensive transaction that has taken place since the world began. The Mexican representatives, obliged by circumstances, and more from force than voluntarily, resigned themselves to the loss of Texas, "but opposed that of New Mexico, and refused to give up California if it was not guaranteed that slavery would not be implanted in the portion which now forms the richest state of the Pacific.

The propositions of the Mexicans only called forth laughs and jests, and Trist himself said: "No American president would dare to present to the Senate a proposed arrangement containing such a clause in its context." But now we know that the idea of those Mexicans, even if it was ridiculed, was given much consideration in the development of the affairs of that epoch. . . .

Is this the undesirable race? Is this the element that serves no good purpose whatever? Is this the worker that they are trying to throw out? Are these the people who can only harm and endanger the cultured (!) inhabitants of the United States?

If we are indeed undesirable, detestable, useless, why are we accepted on special occasions, why are we well-treated only from certain points of view, why are our services accepted in such a hypocritical way?

If we are really detestable let them never accept us for anything; but we don't want them to treat us with regard and deference when our services are necessary and even indispensable because of special conditions, and then mistreat us and call us an inferior race and people of the lowest sort when our services are no longer necessary. They throw in our faces that cursed word (cursed because of the lips which pronounce it), which is deliberately intended to wound us, which gives pride and satisfaction to the stupid and rascally people who use it, who with pride and satisfaction call us "greasers."

And can people who do such things be considered really cultured? No. That culture and education of which they boast exists only in the imagination of all the other dolts who surround them and who cry loudly that this country is the one where there is perfect education, with ways tested by the strictest justice, a thing which we will only believe when it is proved to us by facts. We are tired of hollow words.¹⁶⁸

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, March 17, 1928.

In 1928-29 the majority of Mexicans expected to return permanently to Mexico some day. But many did not. The expectation of return was often vague, perhaps a previous return to Mexico had proved impermanent, the children opposed return, or for other reasons the idea was being abandoned. Some of the factors affecting Mexicans' attitudes—revolution, wages, unemployment, children and schools, sentiment—appear from the following interviews; the attitudes, of course, may or may not coincide with future action.

A seasonal track laborer: If things are good here in the United States we come here to work, if they are better in Panama, or Colombia, or Peru, tomorrow or the next day we will go down there. We are here only for a short time. When things get well in Mexico we go there not only because the work is good but also because that is our home and final resting place.

An early resident of the South Chicago colony: Some day I am going to get some money and go back to Mexico away from this dust and smoke. Life is much easier there.

An elderly couple in South Chicago: We intend to return to Mexico as soon as we can get a little money. It is very gay there. We would like to go back even if we should die here; it would make us happy to have our remains interred in our own country.

A steadily employed track laborer: Well, if things settle down in Mexico I might go back. Things are much more open there. There is not so much "don't do this or that." Life, I remember, is pleasant there even though work is hard and pay is poor.

A boarding house keeper: Some day when I get well and have a little money I will go to Mexico to forget my troubles and die.

An unemployed laborer: My main idea in the United States is not of having a good time but of making money. It is my one steady purpose. After you have amassed some good amount you can do anything. You can have a good time, go back to Mexico, have a business and be your own boss. That is what I intend to do. In a year or two I plan to return to Mexico if I have enough money. I have worked very hard here so far, but have little to show for it. It costs a great deal to live here. The United States has proved a road to Calvary for me so far and I hope it changes so that when I go back I will have something nice to say besides saying that I worked very hard here.

A restaurant keeper: Life has been very good to us in the United States. If the situation ever clears up in Mexico we would like to go back and settle down. There is opportunity there as here.

A steel worker: I had worked in Texas before, and returned to Mexico twice. I went back intending to stay both times but things were worse there each time I went down. Now I think I am here to stay. The reason so many of us like to go to Mexico is to forget our work and our troubles up here. You must think of your work and the money you earn every minute of the time up here. They will not let you forget it. Mexicans weary of their work, its hardness, and go back to Mexico to enjoy a life much more restful. In Mexico no matter how little you may work you can live. If you have no work you can still live on the little you have. Here the little you have is soon spent if you do not work every day.

At a railroad camp: I like the American people. Only a few have been bad to me, but I am old and I forgive them. Most of them have been very nice to

me. No, I think I will be here in the United States till I die. My wife and I would like to go back but my children have gone to school here and they like it, so *¡que hacer!*

Some day we would like to go to Mexico to stay there but our little girl likes it here. It is hard to decide and to think about it at times. We miss Mexico but things are so much better here. Some day later we will decide but I think we will stay here.

A candy maker: The children all go to school and like it here very much. So when I feel that I want to go to Mexico once more I think of them and say *¡Quién sabe, mas tarde!*

A school child: My mother likes Mexico and she wants to go back very much, but I would like to stay here.

A Mexican: The Mexicans would like to go back to Mexico but they earn more here. There they don't earn enough to support them and they may get killed.

A Mexican mother: I did not want to come to the United States at all. My two oldest sons came first and stayed about two years; one of my nephews also came about that same time. At the end of two years my sons came back to Mexico to bring me and the rest of the family to the United States, but I could not bear to leave my *tierra*. I had a great many misgivings but finally I agreed to come.

I still own my little home in Mexico. I do not know whether it is rented or not. I left the key with my kinsmen and they can do with it as they see best since I am not there. I do not think I shall ever go back to Mexico to live. My daughter says that she would like to go back on a visit and perhaps some day I shall do it, too, but I am very happy here. In fact, it would make me sad if I thought I had to go back there to live. Sometimes I dream that I am in Mexico and I always feel that I am sad to be there.

A laborer twenty years in the United States: Going back to Mexico? No, he die here.

A track laborer's wife: I like it very much here in the United States. I do not ever want to go back to Mexico to live. Here even the poor people can have what only the rich have in Mexico. I lived in a small town in Michoacán. We had to leave on account of poverty. My husband used to plant corn in Mexico; now he works on the track in Hammond.

A linotype compositor: I like the United States and I think there is a better chance here than in Mexico any day. It will be a long time before things are better there than here. I know a lot of people from Mexico that would like to go back but I like it here. It is just as *alegre* with the movies and dances and our parks and *playas*. There will always be people here from Mexico to make things nice and as long as the wages are better I will stay here.

An unemployed laborer: I like the United States better than Mexico if I have work, but if no work, it is better in Mexico. It is not so cold, and people help you.

In the depression years of 1921 and 1930-31 many Mexicans shared and acted upon the views of the last speaker.

SUMMARY

Mexican laborers in Chicago and the Calumet region have established themselves in the basic industries of industrial America. This fifth study of a series of regional researches on Mexican laborers in the United States, continues the examination of the social and economic aspects of a major immigration against varying economic backgrounds—lettuce and cantaloupe production in Imperial Valley, California; sugar beet production in the South Platte Valley, Colorado; Bermuda onion production in Dimmit County, Texas; steel production in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania; railroad transportation, steel, and meat-packing industries furnish the chief background in Chicago and the Calumet region. More extended synthesis of the results of these researches is planned for a later date.

The entry of Mexicans—

In the period of industrial activity during and immediately following the war they entered the area in considerable numbers. Some came on their own initiative, but most of them were sought in the labor markets of the Southwest and transported north by railroads, principally those with southwestern lines, and by a steel plant; others had been brought by beet sugar companies to the middle western beet fields, but preferred to winter in the North rather than return to the Southwest; a very few were imported by a malleable iron company and a tannery. By the summer of 1920 approximately 900 Mexicans were employed for maintenance of way by the railroads within the Chicago-Gary area and immediate vicinity.

No sooner had the Mexicans reached their destination, however, than they began to leave for other and diverse employments in the vicinity—other railroads and steel plants than those which imported them, meat-packing houses, and a variety of industries. The strikes of 1919 and 1921 in steel plants and the stockyards, respectively, served also to redistribute the Mexicans, some leaving, but more entering the plants of these industries during or after the strikes. In 1920 at least 1,800 Mexicans were employed in industries of various kinds, principally steel and meat-packing.

Business depression brought heavy unemployment to the Mexicans. In 1921 the number of Mexicans employed for track labor by the group of railroads from which data were obtained, had fallen to

less than 250, and by the industrial plants to about 650. Business revival, however, raised the numbers of Mexicans employed between 1922 and 1928 to new peaks. Steel plants and a cement plant transported some thousands of Mexican laborers to the region in 1922 and 1923, and railroads continued to bring in Mexicans each year. In 1928, the last year for which figures were obtained, this group of railroads employed approximately 4,000 Mexicans, or 43 per cent of their track labor forces in the region. The group of industries employed 7,000 Mexicans, or 10.7 per cent of their total forces in the same year. In 1929 the numbers of Mexicans in industry were probably greater than in 1928. In 1930 and 1931, unemployment undoubtedly reduced their numbers well below the peak, and perhaps their proportion of total forces as well. But mobile as were its members, the Mexican colony had rooted itself in the region by 1930-31 much more solidly than it had been rooted in 1920-21. Since field work for this study ended in mid-1929, however, analysis of subsequent events is best left for later studies.

Labor mobility—

High mobility characterized the rôle in the labor market of a large proportion of the Mexicans; they shifted from plant to plant or from industry to industry as opportunities for employment permitted or the lack of opportunity compelled. Preferences of Mexicans usually rated steel, meat-packing, and railroad labor in the order named, although individuals sometimes had reasons for other scales of preferences. But the current of Mexicans in the labor market was markedly from track labor to the steel plants, and from track labor to the stockyards, with a good deal of interplant movement in each industry, but comparatively little between the stockyards and the steel plants. Of 554 Mexicans employed in the spring of 1928 in a South Chicago steel plant, 204, or 36.8 per cent, gave a railroad as their last previous employment in the United States; 253, or 45.7 per cent, reported another steel plant—in four-fifths of the cases another steel plant of the Calumet region; and only 28, or 5.1 per cent, reported last previous employment at a meat-packing plant. Of 533 Mexicans employed in two meat-packing plants, 34 per cent, or very nearly the same proportion as at the steel plant, reported a railroad as last previous employer. From other plants of the same industry—four-fifths from plants in the same locality—came 163 or 38.5 per cent, of these Mexicans. Only 16, or 3 per cent, reported last previous employment at a steel plant.

Stabilization of the Mexican colonies—

A large proportion of the Mexican laborers were *solos*, young men, either single, or with families left elsewhere. But increasingly between 1923 and at least 1928 they were bringing Mexican womenfolk to the area and maintaining homes.

In industry, too, they were stabilizing their position during this period. Important nuclei had obtained steady employment, and employment and plant executives with large numbers of Mexicans under them frequently spoke very favorably of the qualities of Mexican laborers. While the great majority of Mexicans were unskilled, nevertheless it is of significance that one-sixth of the 5,000 employed in 1928 by seven large industrial plants were semi-skilled, and 1.5 per cent were skilled.

In the two largest steel plants of the Calumet region in 1928 exactly the same proportion of Mexicans as of Negroes, viz., 79 per cent, were classed as unskilled. A larger proportion of the Negroes were skilled—4.7 per cent, as compared with 1.8 per cent of the Mexicans; but a larger proportion of the Mexicans were semi-skilled—19.1 per cent, as compared with 16.2 per cent of the Negroes.

As in the agricultural regions where Mexicans were employed, numbers of small Mexican businesses catering almost entirely to Mexican trade had sprung up. Pool halls alone comprised one-third of the Mexican businesses; together with restaurants, barber shops, and groceries, in numerical order, they comprised more than three-fourths of the 228 businesses which are enumerated.

Race relations—

Colonies of Mexicans are sprinkled over the Chicago-Gary region, the principal ones grouping themselves about Hull House, the stockyards, and Crane Company, in Chicago; near South Works and Wisconsin Steel Works in South Chicago; near the steel mills of Indiana Harbor, and in Gary. In taking up residence in numbers the Mexicans frequently have met resistance from other groups already in the community, breaking out at times even in physical conflict—the smashing of windows and gang attacks on persons. But the sharp domiciliary isolation common in agricultural regions which makes each town two towns—Mexican and American—is not found in this urban area. Even in Los Angeles the separation of residence is very much sharper; in Chicago and the Calumet region the Mexicans are probably not the majority in any city block, though frequently they are a plurality. Indeed, so marked is the difference that more than once when I

inquired of Mexicans concerning the *colonias* of the region the reply was made that there were no *colonias* here. In education, too, segregation is not practiced.

Recognition of racial difference and the attitudes which so commonly attach to color of skin, hamper free assimilation of the Mexicans, but this barrier, too, is less effective than in the rural West and Southwest. It is less effective than the color barrier against the Negro, but it is a factor, distinctly additional to those which characteristically have stirred hostility against new groups of European immigrants to the same area.

Cultural adjustments—

In Chicago and the Calumet region Mexicans are brought more effectively into contact with American culture, albeit with a strong immigrant flavor, than in the rural West and Southwest. They work beside other nationalities in highly mechanized industries. They live among them. The highly unbalanced sex ratio and weaker social ostracism are conducive to intermarriage, which takes place more often than in the other regions studied. American social workers make numerous and effective contacts with them, particularly the families. As a result of these conditions, Mexicans of the first generation are subjected to greater stresses of adjustment. From shock of migration and new environment, inherited attitudes toward the institutions of family and religion weaken. Patriotism, on the other hand, is enhanced among the first generation, for the Mexicans regard themselves as temporary expatriates, rather than as emigrants casting their lot wholly and permanently in a new and promised land.

Here in an urban-industrial environment in the heart of America Mexicans have won a recognized place. The present study was made when the majority of Mexicans had not been in the area more than five years and the earliest small groups had appeared but a dozen years before. How they maintain their colonies under stress of depression or in the light of possible developments in their own country, and how they accommodate and assimilate in comparison not only with European and Negro immigrants, but also with their fellow-Mexicans of similar race, class, and cultural backgrounds in rural environments will continue to provide interesting and important questions for study in the future.

INDEX

MEXICAN LABOR IN THE UNITED STATES, VOLUME II.

- Abbott, Edith, acknowledgment to, iii.
 Accommodation. *See* Assimilation.
 Acknowledgments, ii-iv, 25, 26, 178.
 Age distribution of Mexican laborers, 8-10, 50, 51; relation to property ownership, 166.
 Allen, Mrs. Ethel Richardson, acknowledgment to, iii.
 Americanization. *See* Assimilation and Patriotism.
 American Statistical Association, Journal, acknowledgment to, 32, 39.
 Anthony, Donald, acknowledgment to, 2.
 Anti-imperialism, 216.
 Assimilation, 19, v-vii, 175-177, 181, 255, 256, 272, 273. *See also* Patriotism.
 Birth control, 193, 204-209.
 Blum, Solomon, acknowledgment to, iii.
 Boarding houses, 12, 182-184, 194, 195.
 Bolton, Herbert E., acknowledgment to, iii.
 Business men, Mexican, 19, 167-171, 263-266, 279.
 Calumet region, defined, 25.
 Cambon, Ruth S., cited, 203, 204.
 Charity, 4, 124 ff.
 Churches, 124, 125, 132, 213. *See also* Religion.
 Clerks, Mexican, 166-167, 171.
 Climate, effect on Mexicans, 23, 187, 195, 270.
 Color prejudice, 16, 17, 20, 109, 110, 227, 235-237. *See also* Race prejudice.
 Commons, John R., acknowledgment to, iii.
 Contraception. *See* Birth control.
 Corridos, *El Enganchado*, v-vii; *Pensilvania*, vii-ix.
 Crime. *See* Law violation.
 Cultural adjustments by Mexicans, vii, 19, 192 ff., 270-273, 280. *See also* Assimilation and Patriotism.
 Deed restrictions against Mexicans, 225, 226.
 Dimmit County, Texas, ii, 49.
 Discrimination against Mexican patrons. *See* Color prejudice, Race prejudice, and Social Isolation.
 Displacement of labor. *See* Race shifts among employees.
 Diversity of nationalities, policy of maintaining, 15, 93, 94.
 Divorce, 123, 197. *See* Family life of Mexicans.
 Domiciliary isolation, 220 ff.
 Edie, W. H., acknowledgment to, iv.
 Education of Mexicans, 20, 171 ff.; compared with Italians, 178, 179.
El Enganchado, corrido, v-vii.
 Emigrant labor agency law, Texas, 2.
 Employers, opinion of Mexican labor, meat-packing, 87, 88; miscellaneous, 80-82; railroad, 82-87; steel, 13, 14, 23, 24, 88.
 Employment of Mexicans, industrial, 12 ff., 34 ff., 260, 261, 267, 268; meat-packing, 37, 38; miscellaneous, 12, 38, 68-70, 259; railroad, *see* Railroad labor; steel and metal, 12 ff., 34 ff. *See also* Employers, opinion of Mexican Labor.
 Europeans and Mexicans, 111, 167, 169, 184, 245, 246; compared, 80, 124, 144, 165, 272; hostility, 149 ff., 180, 181, 220 ff.
 Exploitation of Mexican labor, 16, 101-105, 164. *See also* Mexican labor, attitude toward employers.
 Family life of Mexicans, 192 ff.
 Flinn, J. W., acknowledgment to, iv.
 Flügel, Felix, acknowledgment to, iv.
 Freedom of women, v, vii, 174, 195-200.
 Gandydancers. *See* Hobo labor.
 Greeks. *See* Europeans and Mexicans.
 Health of Mexicans, 187-189, 206, 207.

- Hobo labor, 62 ff., 115.
 Hours of labor, 4, 106, 107.
 Housing of Mexicans, 260 ff. *See also* Standard of living.
 Illegal entry of Mexicans, 3, 108, 109.
 Immigrant histories, 257 ff.
 Immigrants' Protective League, 115, 126, 131; acknowledgment to, 49, 56, 178.
 Imperial Valley, i, 49, 120.
 Improvidence of Mexicans. *See* Savings.
 Industrial advance of Mexicans, 155 ff.
 Industrial Workers of the World, 120, 123.
 Infant mortality, Mexican, 206.
 Intermarriage. *See* Race mixture.
 I. W. W. *See* Industrial Workers of the World.
 Jones, Anita Edgar, acknowledgment to, 26, 56; cited, 181.
 Jones, Robert C., acknowledgment to, 26, 203; cited, 133, 167, 171, 211, 213.
 Kiekhofler, William H., acknowledgment to, iii.
 Labor relations, 11 ff., 80 ff.
 Labor shipment, 1-5, 7, 11, 23, 34 ff., 63-70, 75, 115, 116, 277.
 Labor turnover, 63, 90, 91, 100. *See also* Mobility of Mexicans.
 Latin-Americans, relations with Mexicans, 21, 22, 140, 246, 249.
 Law enforcement against Mexicans, 23, 149 ff. *See also* Law violation.
 Law violation, 7, 19, 143 ff. *See also* Law enforcement against Mexicans.
 Leighly, John B., acknowledgment to, iv.
 Leuschner, A. O., acknowledgment to, iii.
 Lipman, Charles B., acknowledgment to, iii.
 Lynd, Robert S., acknowledgment to, iii.
 Marital status of Mexican laborers, 8, 9, 51, 52.
 Mechanics, Mexican. *See* Mexican labor, skilled and semi-skilled.
 Merchants, Mexican trade and, 165-165.
 "Mexican," definition of, census of 1930, 52.
 Mexican colonies, Bethlehem, 12; Chicago-Gary region, 53-61, 278.
 Mexican labor in the United States, Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, 1-24; Chicago and the Calumet region, 25-284.
 Mexican labor, attitude toward employers, 15, 95 ff.; attitude toward Europeans and Americans, 15, 100 ff., 113-115, 239-244, 272, 273; attitude toward industrial work, 14-16, 95 ff.; compared with Negroes, 156-158; date of arrival in United States, 8, 51; skilled and semi-skilled, 155 ff. *See also* Labor relations and Patriotism.
 Mexican population, Bethlehem, 12; Chicago-Gary region, 27 ff.
 Mexican population, origins of, Bethlehem, 11; Chicago-Gary region, 48-50.
 Mexican school children, interviews with, 174.
 Middle class Mexicans, 159, 166 ff., 262-270.
 Migration, return to Mexico. *See* Return of immigrants to Mexico.
 Migration routes, 10, 11, 50, 72-77.
 Migration, seasonal labor, 10, 63, 98, 99, 172. *See also* Labor shipment and Mobility of Mexicans.
 Mitchell, Wesley C., acknowledgment to, iii.
 Mobility of Mexicans, 10, 11, 72, 73, 90, 91, 100, 278. *See also* Migration routes and Turnover of Mexican labor.
 Mowbray, Albert H., acknowledgment to, iv.
 Mutual aid among Mexicans, 17, 126-128, 134, 135.
 Mutual benefit societies. *See* Societies, Mexican.
 Nationalities employed in basic industries, 60.
 Nationality changes. *See* Race shifts among employees.
 Naturalization of Mexicans, 18, 119, 214-219, 272.

- Negroes, 40-48, 106-115, 119, 122, 179, 184, 222, 225, 226, 228-232, 280; attempts to pass as Mexicans, 112, 113; compared to Mexican laborers, 83, 87-94, 156-158; intermarriage with Mexicans, 252-255.
- Nelson, Raymond E., cited, 56, 59, 154, 178.
- Ogburn, William F., acknowledgment to, iii.
- Organized labor, 5, 116, 118-123.
- Origin of Mexican immigrants, 11, 27 ff. *See also* Mexican population, origins of.
- Parents and children, Mexican, 200-203.
- Patriotism of Mexicans, 22, 132, 133, 140, 141, 176, 214-219, 268, 269, 271-274.
- Patterson, Mrs. Elizabeth M., acknowledgment to, iii.
- Plehn, Carl C., acknowledgment to, iii.
- Poles and Mexicans. *See* Europeans and Mexicans, hostility.
- Politics, Mexican participation in, 20, 21.
- Previous employments of Mexican laborers, 10, 71, 76.
- Priestley, Herbert L., acknowledgment to, iii.
- Promotion of Mexicans. *See* Industrial advance.
- Property ownership by Mexicans, 19, 160 ff.
- Prostitution, 194.
- Race of Mexicans, laborers, 5, 52, 235, 243, 271; clerks, 166.
- Race mixture, 21, 238, 247-255.
- Race prejudice, 115, 153, 171, 180, 181, 217, 232-236, 279. *See also* Color prejudice and Race relations in industry.
- Race relations in industry, 12, 16, 109 ff., 120. *See also* Europeans and Mexicans and Mexican labor, attitude toward Europeans and Americans.
- Race shifts among employees, 40-48.
- Radicalism among Mexicans, 117, 120, 123.
- Railroad labor, 3, 27 ff., 62 ff., 125, 212, 259-261.
- Recruiting of labor. *See* Labor shipment.
- Redfield, Robert, acknowledgment to, 26; cited, 125, 167, 243.
- Religion, 135, 136, 139, 207-214, 257. *See also* Churches.
- Remittances to Mexico, 162, 163.
- Rents paid by Mexicans, 186.
- Residential segregation. *See* Domiciliary isolation.
- Return of immigrants to Mexico, 18, 22, 131, 165, 218, 219, 275, 276.
- Rodrigo, José María, acknowledgment to, 26.
- Ross, E. A., acknowledgment to, iii.
- Sauer, Carl O., acknowledgment to, iv.
- Savings of Mexicans, 19, 20, 160 ff.
- Seasonal labor migration. *See* Migration, seasonal labor.
- Semi-skilled and skilled laborers, Mexican, 13, 155-159.
- Separation of Mexicans in schools, 179, 180.
- Skilled laborers. *See* Semi-skilled and skilled laborers.
- Social isolation, 231 ff., 270, 271.
- Social Science Research Council, acknowledgment to, ii, 2, 25.
- Societies, Mexican, 19, 121, 128, 131 ff.; efforts to unify, 139 ff.; establishment of Mexican school by, 176.
- South Platte Valley, Colorado, ii, 75, 212. *See also* Sugar beet laborers.
- Southwick, Grace E., acknowledgment to, iii.
- Spanish-Americans, 76, 135, 166, 215, 246, 259, 272.
- Standard of living of Mexican laborers, 181 ff. *See also* Housing of Mexicans.
- Stewart, David W., acknowledgment to, iii.
- Strikes, 5, 34, 48, 111, 116-118, 120-122, 182, 268, 277.
- Sugar beet laborers, 2, 11, 35, 39, 70, 106, 125, 227.

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284 *University of California Publications in Economics* [Vol. 7

- Teggart, Frederick J., acknowledgment to, iii.
Texas-Mexicans, 76, 176, 202.
Texas, labor in, 2, 34, 259.
Thrift of Mexicans. *See* Savings of Mexicans.
Turnover of Mexican labor. *See* Labor turnover, Migration, and Mobility of Mexicans.
Unemployment, 2, 98, 104-107, 125, 126, 260, 261, 270, 271, 276, 277.
Wage-cutting, 78, 79, 229.
Wages, 4, 6, 77 ff., 111, 270, 271.
Wilkie, Mrs. Emily D., acknowledgment to, iv.
Willcox, Walter F., acknowledgment to, iii.
Wilson, Edwin B., acknowledgment to, iii.

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Mexican Labor in the United States, I (Univ. Calif. Publ. Econ. VI).

Map 1, following page 292, Key, line 6, for $R=r\sqrt{\frac{n}{N}}$ read $R=r\sqrt{\frac{N}{n}}$.

Map 4, following page 292, Key, line 12, for 100 read 1,000.

- Cost of Living Studies. IV. Spending Ways of a Semi-skilled Group. A Study of the Incomes and Expenditures of Ninety-eight Street-Car Men's Families in the San Francisco East Bay Region, compiled under the Heller Committee for Research in Social Economics, Pp. 295-366. February 1931 90
 Index, pp. 367-373.

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