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Documents on the regulation of child labor in the sphere of entertainment and amusement at the end of the XIX century. On archival materials of St. Petersburg

Abstract

Based on four documents stored in the Central State Historical Archive of St. Petersburg (TSGIA SPb), the article traces the procedure for issuing an order by the mayor of the capital related to the restriction of exploitation and health protection of working children. The relevance of the study is due to the lack of written sources reflecting such stories. It is also linked to their limitations and latency and, at the same time, to the need to address the historical lacuna, to create a holistic picture of underage labour, both in the legal field and in the socio-economic sphere. Therefore, the article aims to analyze previously unpublished letters reflecting the use of child labour in entertainment. The chronological framework is related to the 1890s., when these letters were written and a local legislative act was issued. The system method has been applied, which contributed to the disclosure of the procedure for resolving the issue of regulation of children's work in entertainment establishments initiated by representative of civil society. Documents used are rare in terms of content and represent completed correspondence to address the specific problem of employment in the area of recreation, minors are exploited and victimized, as well as harmed. The documents allow, using the example of a specific citizen's appeal, to trace the mechanism and timing of the response to it of the mayor's office. The article shows that the head of the city appealed for expert opinion and opinion to the capital's medical department on the issue of harm to the health of children with their participation in acrobatic and other stage performances. The correspondence reviewed in the article indicates that the order of the mayor on the regulation of child labor was adopted taking into account the inspector's conclusion about the harmful consequences for the life, health and proper physical development of adolescents under 16 years of age, which entail their participation in public acrobatic performances. In general, the documents of this archival case are representative. This made it possible to do conclusions on the procedure for regulating child labor and efficiency measures being taken.

Keywords

Children, juvenile labor, victimization and exploitation of children, stage children, medical management.

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