percent of the total. In both regions, mill children as young as six or seven were engaged in “doffing,” spinning, and other forms of casual labor. To compensate for their shorter height, child doffers would stand on top of electric looms to reach the top shelf, where spindles were located (fig. 3.1). The first contact children usually had with mill labor was while accompanying older siblings or parents as they worked. Typically, very young children would begin an informal training whereby they would “help” their relatives, but this regular assistance would soon


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**Figure 3.1.** *Helpers in a Georgia Cotton Mill.* Photograph by Lewis W. Hine, January 19, 1909. The National Child Labor Committee Collection, Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, DC. LC-DIG-nclc-01581.