

Turning Points in History

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Arsenal Middle School

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Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Use effective research and information management skills, including locating primary and secondary sources of information with traditional and emerging library technologies.
- Read and use a variety of methods to make sense of various kinds of complex texts.
- Demonstrate that they can work effectively with others.
- Demonstrate an understanding of major events, cultures, groups and individuals in the historical development of Pennsylvania, the United States and other nations, and describe themes and patterns of historical development.
- Analyze and make critical judgments about all forms of communication, separating fact from opinion, recognizing propaganda, stereotypes and statements of bias, recognizing inconsistencies and judging the validity of evidence.

Strategies

Throughout this curriculum unit, standards are addressed in communication, citizenship and math. This is accomplished with the help of a national history competition. Across the country, more than half a million students each year make history come alive by creating imaginative exhibits, original performances, documentaries and papers through a program called National History Day. National History Day is an exciting way for students to study and learn about historical issues, ideas, people and events. Through this annual competition, students develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills that will help them manage and use information now and in the future.

Students using this curriculum unit will be introduced to this competition at the start of the school year and will be encouraged to choose any topic in local, national or world history. They will investigate its historical significance and relationship to the

theme, which changes yearly, by conducting extensive primary and secondary research. After analyzing and interpreting their information, students will present their findings in the form of a paper, exhibits, performance or media presentation.

"Turning Points in History" was selected as the title of this curriculum unit because it is the History Day theme for the 1999-2000 school year. Students will be encouraged to investigate turning points in history by exploring events such as wars, which have worldwide impact, or events such as natural disasters or the migration of a family, which affect fewer people. They may also choose to look at individuals whose ideas or actions have made a difference to those around them.

Economic turning points can prove just as critical as political ones. Students may, for example, research the Homestead Steel Strike of 1892 as a turning point in labor relations. Another possibility would be for students to examine turning points in local or state history. Such notable events as the Johnstown Flood of 1889 can be researched as turning points in Pennsylvania history.

Teachers in grades 6 through 12 may use this unit. National History Day has two divisions: the junior division (grades 6-8) and the senior division (grades 9-12). Students can enter one of the following seven categories: individual historical paper; individual exhibit; group exhibit; individual performance; group performance; individual documentary or group documentary. Groups can consist of two to five students. Performances and documentaries are limited to a ten-minute time frame.

Teachers may request more information on the contest rules by contacting the National History Day office at the following:
National History Day, 0119 Cecil Hall, University of Maryland, College Park, MD 20742

www.thehistorynet.com/NationalHistoryDay/

or email: hstryday@aol.com A list of future National History Day themes, up to the year 2005, is supplied in this unit along with a variety of primary source handouts. The bibliography is divided up by lessons that can be used by both teachers and students alike.

Lesson 1: "The Meat Packing Scandal of 1906"

Objectives:

Students will be able to:

- Analyze the impact of the growth of industry on the American way of life.
- Demonstrate an understanding of working conditions in the factories.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the struggles of immigrants in the United States.

This curriculum unit will involve students learning how to use the primary sources available in newspapers. The unit will begin with students reading excerpts from their textbooks related to the immigrant working conditions in the early 1900s. Students will

also be introduced to Upton Sinclair's version of the working conditions through his realistic novel, The Jungle.

The Jungle's tragic story of hopeful, hard working immigrants working in the Chicago packing plant district describe the horrors of the meatpacking plant in nauseating detail. It was the unsanitary details that moved Sinclair's readers. Only a few months after its publication in America, editions appeared in Britain and in seventeen translations. It was as if The Jungle had punched the world in the stomach.

The Jungle caused a furor. The book's revelations became front-page news. Sinclair's shocking picture of packing plant conditions made a nation of meat-eaters groan with pain and anger. President Theodore Roosevelt sent a commission to Chicago to investigate Sinclair's charges and found most of them to be true.

As a result, the President put the power of his office behind two bills designed to reform the meat packing industry. The Pure Food and Drug Act barred the selling of dangerous or fake drugs and impure food. The Meat Inspection Act required federal officials to inspect meat slaughtered in one state and sold in another. Both became laws in June 1906, less than six months after The Jungle appeared in book form.

Students will be given a collection of old news articles dealing with the meat packing scandal of 1906. Students will be asked to interpret the oral history narratives in order to understand the problems incurred by immigrants and compromises they had to make in order to survive. Students will also be asked to compare and contrast this event with those happening today.

Following this lesson, the class will divide into three sections (workers, company owners, and government). Each group will be expected to gather evidence to support one point of view and then debate the issue. Students will be supplied with copies of old news articles, but are also expected to do some research of their own.

To provoke discussion and develop historical and analytical thinking questions such as the following may be used:

What kinds of safety issues did the factory workers in the North face?

What role did workers' activism play in bringing about changes?

How, when and why did laws governing worker safety come into being?

Students will also be asked to consider industry in their own community. Did their town attract new immigrants to work in the mills or mines? What kinds of adjustments did they need to make to work in the town's industry? Did they have new concerns about safety at work?

Students will view a student-produced documentary on the meat packing scandal of 1906. After viewing the 10-minute film, they will review the sources used by the student filmmakers. Considering the fact that this documentary was produced more than 12 years ago, what new technologies are available to make their research easier? Student

groups will be encouraged to display their sources of information while identifying them as either primary or secondary sources.

Lesson 2: "The Case of the Somerset Miners of 1922"

Objectives:

Students will be able to:

- Interpret and draw conclusions from letters, newspaper articles and advertisements.
- Respond to letters and advertisements by taking on the role of a miner or United Mine Workers President John Brophy.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the complexities of labor and management.

Out of the mountains of Central and Southwestern Pennsylvania a terrific struggle was going on in 1922. Women and children were in tent colonies. For the first time in the history of District No. Two of the United Mine Workers, the strike leaders had to appeal for help from the outside.

The coal strike was not over for the 75,000 miners in Pennsylvania because they were not included in the National Mine settlement. These miners stayed on strike because non-union normal conditions were too bad for them to go back to work. There was little question about the coal miners working conditions. Consolidated Coal Company admitted that they cut wages when they please, that they shut down some mines for all of 1921, and that they ran others half time.

Twenty thousand of these strikers, chiefly in Somerset County and in parts of Indiana and Cambria counties, organized themselves under District No. 2 of the United Mine Workers president John Brophy. In Somerset County, 1200 miners were evicted from their company-owned homes. Nearly 500 families had to live in tents and huts.

The union miners who settled were not making money. Most of the miners worked only one or two days a week. In 1921 the old union miners in District No. 2 averaged only \$14.60 a week. The miners were all in debt as a result of the long strike. Many union miners had only 75 or 90 cents left in cash on their paychecks after deducting their supplies, company store debt, and union dues.

Students will be given six letters written by miners involved in the Somerset Coal Miners' Strike and two advertisements for scab labor found in Hungarian newspapers. Students will be asked to interpret the oral history narratives in order to understand the problems faced by the immigrant labor force. Students will then be asked to respond, in letterform, to the coal miners.

Role-Play: Student will take the roles of John Brophy, President of the United Mine Workers #2, the coal miners, and the Somerset Coal Company in a debate over the Somerset miners' strike. Students will be evaluated using a rubric.

It is hoped that through this lesson students will see the advantage of oral history narratives when studying history. Students will be encouraged to use oral history narratives when researching their history day topics.

Lesson 3: "The Lowell Mill Girls"

Objectives:

Students will be able to:

- Use interpretation of oral history narratives to understand technology's impact on women during the Industrial Revolution.
- Develop interpretive connections between one person's experience with technology and their role in society.

Early in the 19th century a successful New England merchant, Francis Cabot Lowell, became very interested in the English textile industry. The potential profits the new technology offered were great, but Lowell knew that Americans already feared the Old World evils that seemed to accompany the factory system.

Lowell and his brother-in-law built a power loom, patented it, formed a company and built a textile factory in Massachusetts. Realizing that their best source of available labor would be young women from the surrounding New England rural areas; farm families would have to be persuaded to let their daughters work far from home in the new factories. The company managers developed became known as the Lowell system.

Activities:

To prepare, students will read background information in their texts on the Industrial Revolution and the American textile factories of Massachusetts. Students will also be given copies of letters and diaries by New England mill women in 1840s. Students will look at what happened when people's ideas about women's 'proper place' conflicted with the labor needs of the new factory system.

Source 1:

Brownson, Orestes A. Boston Quarterly Review 3 (July 1840): 368-370.

Orestes Brownson, a well-known New England editor and reformer wrote an early major criticism of the effects of factory work on young women.

The following questions may be used to provoke discussion and develop analytical thinking:

Why did Brownson believe that slaves were better off than free laborers?

What did he allude to about women who worked?

Source 2:

"Voice of Industry", January 2, 1846, in H.R. Warfel et al., eds., The American Mind (New York: American Book Company, 1937), p.392.

(The Voice of Industry was published by a militant group of women factory workers.)

In what ways did the author of the article believe factory girls were being taken advantage of?

Source 3:

Lowell Offering, Series II, Vol.II (1842), p. 192

(The Lowell Offering is a collection of writings by factory girls during the years 1840 to 1843.)

Factory girls who were rather angry wrote the next three letters.

Sources 4-6:

Lowell Offering, Series I (1840), pp. 17-19, 61, 44-46.

How did "a factory girl" try to disprove Brownson's view?

What fears and anxieties does this letter and the one from Dorothea divulge?

What were these two girls trying to prove?

The third letter writer preserved her sense of humor, but was also upset. In this case, she referred to an offensive remark by the respected Sarah Josepha Hale, which appeared, in Godey's Lady's Book.

Source 7:

Larcom, Lucy, New England Girlhood (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1889).

After her husband's death, Lucy Larcom's mother moved to Lowell to run a boardinghouse. Because her mother could not earn enough to support the family, Lucy, age eleven, and her older sister went to work in the mills.

How did Lucy feel about the work in the mills when she was so young?

What contrast did she draw between young boys' and young girls' training in the early nineteenth century?

Did she and the other girls always obey the factory rules?

What advantages and disadvantages did she discover in her factory experience?

Activity:

The central question involves a conflict between the cult of true womanhood and the reality of the factory system. All the evidence supplied here unintentionally implies that there is only one way for women to behave.

Role-Play: Have students imagine that they are either young women who have come to work in the Lowell factory, or one of the critics of the factory system. Debate the issues of a woman's proper place in society or write letters home to their families explaining the reasons for their actions.

The year 2000 may be a 'turning point in history' for newspapers due to advancement in technology. Through the use of newspapers as primary sources of

information, I will guide my students in examining reporters, time periods, and on-line news sources. The culminating activity will be imaginative exhibits, original performances, documentaries and historical papers possibly entered in the National History Day competition.

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Papp, Frank letter to John Brophy. 18 October 1922. Special Collections 52, IUP.

**National History Day
Themes**

2000: Turning Points in History: People, Ideas, Events

2001: Frontiers in History: People, Places, Ideas

2002: Revolution, Reaction, Reform in History

2003: The Individual in History

2004: Rights and Responsibilities in History

2005: Communication in History

SINCLAIR WANTS ONLY TRUTH.

Gave Evidence on Packers, Good and Bad, to Investigators.

Upton Sinclair, who brought about the President's investigation of conditions in Packingtown, issued a statement yesterday afternoon explaining in detail his attitude toward the Meat Trust inquiry.

"What I tried to do, as I told President Roosevelt," he said, "was to picture what the workmen in Packingtown believe about the place. How much of what they believe is true was something to be determined by investigators. President Roosevelt agreed with that view, and he sent the investigators.

"I worked with them in every way in my power to help them to get the truth; I turned over to them every shred of evidence, good or bad, which I possessed, and left it to them to make up their minds about it. I have not the least doubt that they rejected a great deal of it; it troubled some of my friends in Chicago that they rejected so much, but it did not trouble me in the least, because Mr. Neill had explained to me in advance that he played the part of the devil's advocate—that he believed nothing that he was not compelled to believe by absolutely overwhelming evidence.

"That is the sort of report which the public wants, and the sort of report which I did my best to get for it. I did all this with the idea that I was getting something which would be of permanent service to the public—which would be forever afterward a barrier to the crimes and abominations which I knew existed.

"Any one may imagine what I felt when I learned in the papers that the Beveridge bill was to be accepted as a complete remedy and the report held up. I said to myself: If the conclusions of Neill and Reynolds could not be given to the public, then there was nothing for it but to have the public form its own conclusions; accordingly I intend to give out every shred of evidence which I gave to them, together with all that has come to my notice.

"Every time I offered evidence I did so with the understanding that I vouched only for the identity and qualifications of the witness, leaving the commission to judge for itself."

Mr. Sinclair gave out a letter he received Tuesday night in response to a telegram sent in a friendly Chicago on Saturday asking him to write out the experiences of a typical stock yards worker.

"This man was the first man in Packingtown with whom I talked at all intelligibly," said Mr. Sinclair. "He troubled me with a greater part of the ideas which I have used in the imaginary character of the hero of 'The Jungle.' He was a grizzled old Bohemian laborer."

STATEMENTS BY PACKERS.

Approve Beveridge Bill in Principle, but Want Changes.

CHICAGO, May 30.—Instead of opposing Government inspection and sanitary regulation of the meat-packing plants, as contemplated by the Beveridge bill, Chicago meat packers declare that they will welcome such legislation, although contending that the larger houses are now sanitary.

Official statements were made today by Armour & Co., Nelson Morris & Co., Swift & Co., and the National Packing Company, declaring that these concerns were in favor of any inspection or regulation that would improve the industry. The official statement of Armour & Co. follows:

"Although our packing houses have been open to the public for forty years, we heartily favor the regulation of this industry as provided for by the Beveridge bill. We yield first place to nobody in our readiness to bring about such inspection as will guarantee that every pound of meat sold shall be clean, wholesome, and absolutely free from contamination.

"All meats that pass through our packing houses are already subjected to Government inspection both before and after slaughter. The meats and products that are under no form of inspection or regulation whatever are those from the thousands of small plants and local slaughter houses throughout the country. This Government inspection we now have is the most stringent and efficient in the world. But we will gladly welcome improvement in this after-slaughter inspection, if improvement can be devised. We will also welcome an extension of this inspection to embrace the sanitary conditions of our plants as proposed in the Beveridge bill."

Edward Tilden, President of the National Packing Company, said:

"We are in favor of a reasonable inspection by the Government, and the Beveridge bill, with some modifications, will perhaps cover the situation. It does not seem fair, however, that we should be called upon to pay the salaries of Government inspectors employed in this work, in view of the heavy loss we now sustain on animals for which we pay full market price, which are condemned and destroyed; but this, with some other points in the bill, can doubtless be satisfactorily adjusted and an amended bill adopted that will reach sanitary conditions. Such a bill will meet with our hearty co-operation and support."

The statement of Swift & Co. was: "Although the inspection of slaughtered animals in our plants is already

NEILL'S AIDES TALK; HE MUST REPORT NOW

Roosevelt, Fearing Beef Trust Activity, Asks Report in 48 Hours.

HOW THE INQUIRY WAS MADE

Man and Wife Prepared the Way for the President's Commission—Workers' Spite on Public.

In view of the activity of the Chicago packers' agents in Washington to secure the emasulation of the Meat Inspection bill by amendment, the President yesterday ordered Messrs. Neill and Reynolds to write their report of the investigation in Chicago with all possible expedition, urging that it be put in his hands within forty-eight hours, to be used as an offensive weapon against the packers, or to be submitted to Congress in the event of the House making the request.

While the packers' agents were busy pushing their amendments to the bill, a man and a woman, who paved the way for President Roosevelt's Pickingtown investigation, told of evidence given to Messrs. Neill and Reynolds.

They were Mr. and Mrs. Richard Ebor, who, going to Chicago at the instance of Upton Sinclair, for a week collected facts for the President's agents and planned their investigation.

Mr. and Mrs. Ebor live in Washington Crossing, Penn., a village about eight miles from Trenton, N. J. They went to Chicago just a week before the Commissioners, lined with packing house employes, obtained testimony, and remained

WORKED ON PRESIDENT'S SYMPATHIES—SINCLAIR

Declares Packers Used the Cattle Growers to Stop Publicity.

APPEAL TO THE DEMOCRATS

Author Makes Public a Telegram to John Sharp Williams and a Letter to the President.

"I do not believe that President Roosevelt has made any bargain to keep the Neill and Reynolds report from the public. But the packers and their representatives are trying to make him think he has made such a bargain."

This was what Upton Sinclair, the writer whose book brought about the President's investigation of the packing houses said yesterday afternoon. He wants Neill and Reynolds to put all their findings into the form of a report, and he wants the report to be given to the people immediately.

"The packers worked on the President's sympathy for the cattle raisers," said the writer, "in order to keep the true conditions from the public. They know that he has a fellow-feeling for the men on the ranches. So when they found out that there was danger of the public learning the truth they sent word to the attention to let themselves be heard against the report.

"Now the cattlemen are under the thumb of the trust absolutely, and whatever they are told to do they have to do so they sent telegrams by the thousand to Washington. These telegrams tell of the hardships that would result to them if the public should become prejudiced against the packers' products.

"But the facts cannot be kept back they will out. Today I sent a telegram to John Sharp Williams, the minority leader in the House, asking him to call for a report from the President. This is the telegram:

Requested to read interview in New York morning newspapers and introduce resolution requiring the President to give the public a full disclosure of stock yard conditions. A complete revelation in packing house methods desired, and can be secured in no other way. Moreover, the consumers of meat are dependent upon their own efforts to protect the food supply, and as present they are in utter ignorance. Federal inspection service has been declared unconstitutional.

Mr. Sinclair also made public the letter he sent to the President on Saturday.

The Case of the Somerset Miners of 1922

Handout 1

October 18, 1922Mr.

Frank PappBox 346Roebling, N.J.Dear Sir and Brother: The strike of coal miners in still on in Somerset County, Pa. The advertisement appearing in the Newspapers you mention is misleadingif it does not state there is a strike on at Bell, Jenners, Acosta and other operations of the Consolidation Coal Company in Somerset county. You can advise that men seeking work should stay away from Somerset County until the strike there has been settled, when they will be advised.

Yours fraternally,

John Brophy

President District #2
United Mine Workers of America

JB:A

BÁNYÁSZOK!

CSALADOS MAGYAR BÁNYÁSZOK KERESTETNEK

egyszinten egy pár magányos
Pennsylvania államban.

A szén tiszta. A bánya drift és slope, gáz nincs, nyitott
lámpával dolgozunk.

Fizetünk masina után 94 centet tonnánként,
Pick után \$1.28.

JÖJJENEK, MIELŐTT A KVOTA BETELIK!

JOSEPH VIRÁGH

TURNYANSZKY SZALONJABAN

100 Hancock Ave.

Trenton, N. J.

TRANSLATION:

MINERS!

WANTED HUNGARIAN MINERS WITH FAMILY
a few single miners, also in the state of Pennsylvania
coal is pure. The mine is drift and slope, no gas, working
with open lamp.

We pay 94 cents for a ton by machine or
\$1.28 for pick.

COME, BEFORE THE QUOTA IS FILLED!

JOSEPH VIRAGH

in the Salon of Turnyanszky

100 Hancock Ave.

Trenton, N.J.

*(Advertisement from the JERSERY HERALD, the largest weekly Hungarian paper
published in Trenton, N.J. - 1922)*

MAGYAR BANYÁSZOK FIGYELEM!

The Consolidation Coal Company, pennsylvaniai bányákba keres néhány gyakorlott machine és pick bányász, malachitot vagy nódulésert. Két shaft bányák és 7 drift bányák. Gas mines, nyitott lámpákkal dolgozunk. Legmagasabb fizetés, 3 1/2-4 1/2 író vasat és máta szén. Nagyterjed munkavédelvények, Templomok, iskolák, színház, játékterek, jó otthonos stóp kertekkel. Közvetlen és mindenfelé vezet. Nem union bányák, nem is voltak szövetség azok, jelenlegesen munkára készen, vagy írjon W. H. Kramer, general manager.

THE CONSOLIDATION COAL CO., Somerset, Pa.
 Vagy írja vállalat alsóbb irodákban: 312 Superior Ave. N. W. Cleveland, O., vagy 2512 Second Avenue, Pittsburgh, Pa.

TRANSLATION:

ATTENTION HUNGARIAN MINERS!

The Consolidation Coal Company is looking for a few experienced married or single miners to work in Pennsylvania as machine or pick miners. Two mine shafts and 7 drift mines. No gas, work with open lamps. Highest salary. Coal is pure, 3 1/2-4 1/2 feet. Excellent working conditions. Churches, schools, theatre, playgrounds, good houses with nice gardens. Paved roads in all directions. Non union mines, and there never were union mines. Apply ready to work, or write to W.H. Kramer, general manager.

THE CONSOLIDATION COAL CO., Somerset, Pa. or to the cooperation's offices: 312 Superior Ave. N.W. Cleveland, Ohio, or 2512 Second Avenue, Pittsburgh, Pa.

(Advertisement from the JERSEY HERALD, the largest weekly Hungarian paper published in Trenton, N.J. - 1922)

The Case of the Somerset Miners of 1922

Handout 4

Boswell, Pa November 18, 1922 Dear Sir: I have been thrown out of the company house, and I have no money to pay it. I give money in stores, and they keep telling me to pay or they will have me arrested. Now I want you to help me pay my rent. And they are about to throw me out. If you don't not help me I will go to work in a scab mine because I have to pay me debts. If you do not wish me to work then Please help me. I spoke to Hopgood and he said that I have to get a notice before the union will pay for the rent. I moved in a house and I can't pay a cent since I move in. This is about 3 months. And the man that own the house want \$8.00 a month.

Yours Truly,
Samuel Junior
Boswell, Pa
Box 180

The Case of the Somerset Miners of 1922

Handout 5

Windber, Pa. October 6, 1922

Mr. Brophy:

Dear Sir and Brother:

Just a few lines to let you know how we are standing here in Scalp Level and Windber. We are in very bad shape. The men here are getting all worked up because the organizers and some of the district officers have promised that we will get more money in here in help up fight this fight but it is not coming in. This week we got \$1200.00 but when we went to pay our grocery bill we were left \$800.00 in the hole, for there are more men coming in every day to the store for help and we must get more help in here if we want to win out. For you know, as well as the rest of the officers, that Windber is the key to Somerset County, and here is another thing. I wish you would send us some new speakers once in a while. These speakers are fine, but the men want some new ones. You might think I am trying to bust up Windber or something of that kind, but I am not, I am telling you the truth. Even all the local officers of Scalp Level local. If we don't soon get some more help we will have to give these meal tickets to our men so they won't have to starve. So please answer my letter as soon as you can.

Yours for the U.M.W. of America

Joe Buck 100- 8th. Street
Windber, Pa

The Case of the Somerset Miners of 1922

Handout 6

July 25, 1923 John

Brophy Dear Sir,

Would like to have a little information.

Some time ago I started to work carpenter helper around the company houses. The first day I worked my relief was cut off and two or three of the fellows said I was scabbing and that I had a quit or no relief. I had to have relief or could not work so I quit. I am a few hundred dollars in debt for striking for about 16 months and I thought I would try to get on my feet again most of the fellows were on my side. So I am starting to work today hoping to hear from you by wire or mail whether I am or not scabbing and entitled to relief for two weeks until receive a pay.

Yours Respectfully,

Frank Cook
Seavor
Somerset County

"In regard to labor, two systems obtain one that of slave labor the other that of free labor. Of the two, the first is, in our judgment, except so far as the feelings are concerned, decidedly the least oppressive. If the slave has never been a free man, we think, as a general rule, his sufferings are less than those of the free laborer at wages are. As to actual freedom, one has just about as much as the other. The laborer at wages has all the disadvantages of freedom and none of its blessings, while the slave, if denied the blessings, is freed from the disadvantages. We are no advocates of slavery. We are as heartily opposed to it as any modern abolitionist can be...

The sufferings of a quiet, unassuming but useful class of females in our cities, in general seamstresses, too proud to beg ...are not easily told. They are industrious; they do all that they can find to do. But yet the little there is for them to do, and the miserable pittance they receive for it, is hardly sufficient to keep soul and body together...

The average life-working life, we mean-of the girls that come to Lowell, for instance, from Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont, we have been assured, is only about three years. What becomes of them then? Few of them ever marry; fewer still ever return to their native places with reputations unimpaired. 'She has worked in a factory' is almost enough to damn to infamy the most worthy and virtuous girl."

Source: Orestes A. Brownson, Boston Quarterly Review 3 (July 1840): 368-370.

"We were not aware, until within a few days, of the modus operandi of the factory powers in this village of forcing poor girls from their quiet homes to become their tools and, like the Southern slaves, to give up their life and liberty to the heartless tyrants and taskmasters.

Observing a singular-looking 'long, low, black' wagon passing along the street, we made inquiries respecting it, and were informed that it was what we term a 'slaver.' She makes regular trips to the north of the state [Massachusetts], cruising around in Vermont and New Hampshire, with a 'commander' whose heart must be as black as his craft, who is paid a dollar a head for all he brings to the market, and more in proportion to the distance-if they bring them from such a distance that they cannot easily get back.

This is done by 'hoisting false colors,' and representing to the girls that they can tend more machinery than is possible, and that the work is so very neat, and the wages such that they can dress in silks and spend half their time in reading. Now, is this true? Let those girls who have been thus deceived, answer.

Let us say a word in regard to the manner in which they are stowed in the wagon, which may find a similarity only in the manner in which slaves are fastened in the hold of a vessel. It is long, and the seats so close that it must be very inconvenient.

Is there any humanity in this? Philanthropists may talk of Negro slavery, but it would be well first to endeavor to emancipate the slaves at home. Let us not stretch our ears to catch the sound of the lash on the flesh of the oppressed black while the oppressed in our very midst are crying out in thunder tones, and calling upon us for assistance."

Source: "Voice of Industry", January 2, 1846, in H.R. Warfel et al., eds., The American Mind

"From whence originated the idea, that is was derogatory to a lady's dignity, or a blot upon the female character, to labor? And who was the first to say, sneeringly, "Oh, she works for a living"? Surely, such ideas and expressions ought not to grow on republican soil. The time has been when ladies of the first rank were accustomed to busy themselves in domestic employment.

Homer tells us of princesses who used to draw water from the springs, and wash with their own hands the finest of the linen of their respective families. The famous Lucretia used to spin in the midst of her attendants; and the wife of Ulysses, after the siege of Troy, employed herself in weaving, until her husband returned to Ithaca. And in later times, the wife of George the Third of England, has been represented as spending a whole evening in hemming pocket-handkerchiefs, while her daughter Mary sat in the corner, darning stockings.

Few American fortunes will support a woman who is above the calls of her family; and a man of sense, in choosing a companion to jog with him through all the up-hills and down-hills of life, would sooner choose one who had to work for a living, than one who thought it beneath her to soil her pretty hands with manual labor, although she possessed her thousands. To be able to earn one's own living by laboring with the hands, should be reckoned among female accomplishments; and I hope the time is not far distant when none of my countrywomen will be ashamed to have it known that they are better versed in useful, than they are in ornamental accomplishments."

C.B.

"She has worked in a factory, is sufficient to damn to infamy the most worthy and virtuous girl."

So says Mr. Orestes A. Brownson; and either this horrible assertion is true or Mr. Brownson is a slanderer. I assert that it is not true, and Mr. B. may consider himself called upon to prove his works, if he can.

This gentleman has read of an Israelite boy who, with nothing but a stone and sling, once entered into a contest with a Philistine giant, arrayed in brass, whose spear was like a weaver's beam; and he may now see what will probably appear to him quite as marvelous; and that is, that a factory girl is not afraid to oppose herself to the Editor of the Boston Quarterly Review. True, he has upon his side fame, learning, and great talent; but I have what is better than either of these, or all combined, and that is truth. Mr. Brownson has not said that this thing should be so; or that he is glad it is so; or that he deeply regrets such a state of affairs; but he has said it is so; and I affirm that it is not.

And whom has Mr. Brownson slandered? A class of girls who in this city alone are numbered by thousands, and who collect in many of our smaller towns by hundreds; girls who generally come from quiet country homes, where their minds and manners have been formed under the eyes of the worthy sons of the Pilgrims, and their virtuous partners, and who return again to become the wives of the free intelligent yeomanry of New England and the mothers of quite a portion of our future republicans. Think, for a moment, how many of the next generation are to spring from mothers doomed to infamy! "Ah," it may replied, "Mr. Brownson acknowledges that you may still be worthy and virtuous." Then we must be a set of worthy and virtuous idiots, for no virtuous girl of common sense would choose for an occupation one that would consign her to infamy...

Friends and Associates: With indescribable emotions of pleasure, mingled with feelings of deepest gratitude to him who is the author of every good and perfect gift, I have perused the second and third numbers of the Lowell Offering.

As a laborer among you, (tho' least of all) I rejoice that the time has arrived when a class of laboring females (who have long been made a reproach and byword, by those whom fortune or pride has placed above the avocation by which we have subjected ourselves to the sneers and scoffs of the idle, ignorant and envious part of community, are bursting asunder the captive chains of prejudice...

I know it has been affirmed, to the sorrow of many a would be lady, that factory girls and ladies could not be distinguished by their apparel. What a lamentable evil! And no doubt it would be a source of much gratitude to such, if the awful name of "factory girl!" were branded on the forehead of every female who is, or ever was, employed in the Mills. Appalling as the name may sound in the delicate ears of a sensitive lady, as she contrasts the music of her piano with the rumbling of the factory machinery, we would not shrink from such a token of our calling, could the treasures of the mind be there displayed, and merit, in her own unbiased form be stamped there also...

Ours, in the bonds of affection,

DOROTHEA

It is now nearly a year since an article appeared in the Ladies' Book, in the form of a tale...It was written by Mrs. Hale... Her object evidently was to correct the many erroneous impressions, which exist in society, with regard to the folly of extravagance in dress...I was much pleased with all of it, with the exception of a single sentence. Speaking of the impossibility of considering dress a mark of distinction, she observed, "How stands the difference now? Many of the factory girls wear gold watches, and an imitation, at least, of all the ornaments which grace the daughters of our most opulent citizens."

O the times! O the manners! Atlas! How very sadly the world has changed! The time was when the lady could be distinguished from the no-lady by her dress, as far as the eye could reach; but now, you might stand in the same room, and judging by their outward appearance, you could not tell "which was which." Even gold watches are now no sure indication-for they have been worn by the lowest, even by "many of the factory girls." No lady need carry one now, for any other than the simple purpose of easily ascertaining the time of day, or night, if she so please...

Those who do not labor for their living, have more time for the improvement of their minds, for the cultivation of conversational powers and graceful manners; but if, with these advantages, they still need richer dress to distinguish them from us, the fault must be their own, and they should at least lean to honor merit, and acknowledge talent wherever they see it...

And now I will address myself to my sister operatives in the Lowell factories... We all have many opportunities for the exercise of the kindly affections, and more than most females. We should look upon one another something, as a band of orphans should do. We are fatherless and motherless: we are alone, and surrounded by temptation. Let us caution each other; let us watch over and endeavor to improve each other; and both at our boardinghouses and in the Mill, let us strive to promote each other's comfort and happiness. Above all, let us endeavor to improve ourselves by making good use of the many advantages we here possess. I say let us at least strive to do this; and if we succeed, it will finally be acknowledged that Factory Girls shine forth in ornaments far more valuable than Gold Watches.

A FACTORY GIRL

Source: Lowell Offering, Series I (1840), pp. 44-46.