

Investigation of Labor Conditions, 1845
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INVESTIGATION OF LABOR CONDITIONS, 1845

Massachusetts House Document, no. 50, March, 1845. Reprinted in John Commons, ed., *A Documentary History of American Industrial Society* (1910).

The Special Committee to which was referred sundry petitions relating to the hours of labor, have considered the same and submit the following Report:

The first petition which was referred to your committee, came from the city of Lowell, and was signed by Mr. John Quincy Adams Thayer, and eight hundred and fifty others, "peaceable, industrious, hard working men and women of Lowell." The petitioners declare that they are confined "from thirteen to fourteen hours per day in unhealthy apartments," and are thereby "hastening through pain, disease and privation, down to a premature grave." They therefore ask the Legislature "to pass a law providing that ten hours shall constitute a day's work," and that no corporation or private citizen "shall be allowed) except in cases of emergency, to employ one set of hands more than ten hours per day."

The second petition came from the town of Fall River, and is signed by John Gregory and four hundred and eighty-eight others. These petitioners ask for the passage of a law to constitute "ten hours a day's work in all corporations created by the Legislature."

The third petition signed by Samuel W. Clark and five hundred others, citizens of Andover, is in precisely the same words as the one from Fall River.

The fourth petition is from Lowell, and is signed by James Carle and three hundred others. The petitioners ask for the enactment of a law making ten hours a day's work, where no specific agreement is entered into between the parties.

The whole number of names on the several petitions is 2,139, of which 1,151 are from Lowell. A very large proportion of the Lowell petitioners are females. Nearly one half of the Andover petitioners are females. The petition from Fall River is signed exclusively by males.

In view of the number and respectability of the petitioners who had brought their grievances before the Legislature, the Committee asked for and obtained leave of the House to send for "persons and papers," in order that they might enter into an examination of the matter, and report the result of their examination to the Legislature as a basis for legislative action, should any be deemed necessary.

On the 13th of February, the Committee held a session to hear the petitioners from the city of Lowell. Six of the female and three of the male petitioners were present, and gave in their testimony.

The first petitioner who testified was **Eliza R. Hemmingway**. She had worked 2 years

and 9 months in the Lowell Factories; 2 years in the Middlesex, and 9 months in the Hamilton Corporations. Her employment is weaving-works by the piece. The Hamilton Mill manufactures cotton fabrics. The Middlesex, woolen fabrics. She is now at work in the Middlesex Mills, and attends one loom. Her wages average from \$16 to \$23 a month exclusive of board. She complained of the hours for labor being too many, and the time for meals too limited. In the summer season, the work is commenced at 5 o'clock, a.m., and continued till 7 o'clock, p.m., with half an hour for breakfast and three quarters of an hour for dinner. During eight months of the year, but half an hour is allowed for dinner. The air in the room she considered not to be wholesome. There were 293 small lamps and 61 large lamps lighted in the room in which she worked, when evening work is required. These lamps are also lighted sometimes in the morning. About 130 females, 11 men, and 12 children (between the ages of 11 and 14) work in the room with her. She thought the children enjoyed about as good health as children generally do. The children work but 9 months out of 12. The other 3 months they must attend school. Thinks that there is no day when there are less than six of the females out of the mill from sickness. Has known as many as thirty. She, herself, is out quite often, on account of sickness. There was more sickness in the Summer than in the Winter months; though in the Summer, lamps are not lighted. She thought there was a general desire among the females to work but ten hours, regardless of pay. Most of the girls are from the country, who work in the Lowell Mills. The average time which they remain there is about three years. She knew one girl who had worked there 14 years. Her health was poor when she left. Miss Hemmingway said her health was better where she now worked, than it was when she worked on the Hamilton Corporation. She knew of one girl who last winter went into the mill at half past 4 o'clock, a.m., and worked till half past 7 o'clock, p.m. She did so to make more money. She earned from \$25 to \$30 per month. There is always a large number of girls at the gate wishing to get in before the bell rings. On the Middlesex Corporation one fourth part of the females go into the mill before they are obliged to. They do this to make more wages. A large number come to Lowell to make money to aid their parents who are poor. She knew of many cases where married women came to Lowell and worked in the mills to assist their husbands to pay for their farms. The moral character of the operatives is good. There was only one American female in the room with her who could not write her name.

Miss Sarah G. Bagley said she had worked in the Lowell Mills eight years and a half, six years and a half on the Hamilton Corporation, and two years on the Middlesex. She is a weaver, and works by the piece. She worked in the mills three years before her health began to fail. She is a native of New

Hampshire, and went home six weeks during the summer. Last year she was out of the mill a third of the time. She thinks the health of the operatives is not so good as the health of females who do house-work or millinery business. The chief evil, so far as health is concerned, is the shortness of time allowed for meals. The next evil is the length of time employed-not giving them time to cultivate their minds. She spoke of the high moral and intellectual character of the girls. That many were engaged as teachers in the Sunday schools. That many attended the lectures of the Lowell Institute; and she thought, if more time was allowed, that more lectures would be given and more girls attend. She thought that the girls generally were favorable to the ten hour system. She had presented a petition, same as the one before the Committee, to 132

girls, most of whom said that they would prefer to work but ten hours. In a pecuniary point of view, it would be better, as their health would be improved. They would have more time for sewing. Their intellectual, moral and religious habits would also be benefited by the change. Miss Bagley said, in addition to her labor in the mills, she had kept evening school during the winter months, for four years, and thought that this extra labor must have injured her health.*

Miss Judith Payne testified that she came to Lowell 16 years ago, and worked a year and a half in the Merrimack Cotton Mills, left there on account of ill health, and remained out over seven years. She was sick most of the time she was out. Seven years ago she went to work in the Boott Mills, and has remained there ever since; works by the piece. She has lost, during the last seven years, about one year from ill health. She is a weaver, and attends three looms. Last pay-day she drew \$14.66 for five weeks work; this was exclusive of board. She was absent during the five weeks but half a day. She says there is a very general feeling in favor of the ten hour system among the operatives. She attributes her ill health to the long hours of labor, the shortness of time for meals, and the bad air of the mills. She had never spoken to Mr. French, the agent, or to the overseer of her room, in relation to these matters. She could not say that more operatives died in Lowell than other people.

Miss Olive J. Clark is employed on the Lawrence Corporation; has been there five years; makes about \$1.62 1/2 per week, exclusive of board. She has been home to New Hampshire to school. Her health never was good. The work is not laborious; can sit down about a quarter of the time. About fifty girls work in the spinning room with her, three of whom signed the petition. She is in favor of the ten hour system, and thinks that the long hours had an effect upon her health. She is kindly treated by her employers. There is hardly a week in which there is not some one out on account of sickness. Thinks the air is bad, on account of the small particles of cotton which fly about. She has never spoken with the agent or overseer about working only ten hours.

Miss Cecilia Phillips has worked four years in Lowell. Her testimony was similar to that given by Miss Clark.

Miss Elizabeth Rowe has worked in Lowell 16 months, all the time on the Lawrence Corporation, came from Maine, she is a weaver, works by the piece, runs four looms. "My health," she says, "has been very good indeed since I worked there, averaged three dollars a week since I have been there besides my board; have heard very little about the hours of labor being too long." She consented to have her name put on the petition because Miss Phillips asked her to. She would prefer to work only ten hours. Between 50 and 60 work in the room with her. Her room is better ventilated and more healthy than most others. Girls who wish to attend lectures can go out before the bell rings; my overseer lets them go, also Saturdays they go out before the bell rings. It was her wish to attend four looms. She has a sister who has worked in the mill seven years. Her health is very good. Don't know that she has ever been out on account of sickness. The general health of the operatives is good. Have never spoken to my employers about the work being too hard, or the hours too long. Don't know any one who has been hastened to a

premature grave by factory labor. I never attended any of the lectures in Lowell on the ten hour system. Nearly all the female operatives in Lowell work by the piece; and of the petitioners who appeared before the Committee, Miss Hemmingway, Miss Bagley, Miss Payne and Miss Rowe work by the piece, and Miss Clark and Miss Phillips by the week.

Mr. Gilman Gale, a member of the city council, and who keeps a provision store, testified that the short time allowed for meals he thought the greatest evil. He spoke highly of the character of the operatives and of the agents; also of the boarding houses and the public schools. He had two children in the mills who enjoyed good health. The mills are kept as clean and as well ventilated as it is possible for them to be.

Mr. Herman Abbott had worked in the Lawrence Corporation 13 years. Never heard much complaint among the girls about the long hours, never heard the subject spoken of in the mills. Does not think it would be satisfactory to the girls to work only ten hours, if their wages were to be reduced in proportion. Forty-two girls work in the room with him. The girls often get back to the gate before the bell rings.

Mr. John Quincy Adams Thayer has lived in Lowell four years, "works at physical labor in the summer season, and mental labor in the winter." Has worked in the big machine shop 24 months, off and on; never worked in a cotton or woollen mill; thinks that the mechanics in the machine shop are not so healthy as in other shops; nor so intelligent as the other classes in Lowell. He drafted the petition. Has heard many complain of the long hours.

Mr. Shubael Pratt Adams, a member of the [Massachusetts House of Representatives] from Lowell, said he worked in the machine shop, and the men were as intelligent as any other class, and enjoyed as good health as any persons who work in-doors. The air in the shop is as good as in any shop. About 350 hands work there, about half a dozen of whom are what is

called ten hour men; they all would be ten hour men if they could get as good pay.

The only witnesses whom the Committee examined, whose names were not on the petition, were Mr. Adams and **Mr. Isaac Cooper**, a member of the House from Lowell, and also has worked as an overseer in the Lawrence cotton mills for nine years. His evidence was very full. He gave it as his opinion that the girls in the mills enjoy the best health, for the reason that they rise early, go to bed early, and have three meals regular. In his room there are 60 girls, and since 1837, has known of only one girl who went home from Lowell and died. He does not find that those who stay the longest in the mill grow sickly and weak. The rooms are heated by steampipes, and the temperature of the rooms is regulated by a thermometer. It is so he believes in all the mills. The heat of the room varies from 62 to 68 degrees.

The above testimony embraces all the important facts which were elicited from the persons who appeared before the Committee.

On Saturday the 1st of March, a portion of the Committee went to Lowell to examine the

mills, and to observe the general appearance of the operatives therein employed. They arrived at Lowell after an hour's ride upon the railroad. They first proceeded to the Merrimack Cotton Mills, in which are employed usually 1,200 females and 300 males. They were permitted to visit every part of the works and to make whatever inquiries they pleased of the persons employed. They found every apartment neat and clean, and the girls, so far as personal appearance went, healthy and robust, as girls are in our country towns.

The Committee also visited the Massachusetts and Boott Mills, both of which manufacture cotton goods. The same spirit of thrift and cleanliness, of personal comfort and contentment, prevailed there. The rooms are large and well lighted, the temperature comfortable, and in most of the window sills were numerous shrubs and plants, such as geraniums, roses, and numerous varieties of the cactus. These were the pets of the factory girls, and they were to the Committee convincing evidence of the elevated moral tone and refined taste of the operatives.

The Committee also visited the Lowell and the Middlesex mills; in the first of which carpets are manufactured, and in the second, broadcloths, cassimeres, &c. These being woolen mills, the Committee did not expect to find that perfect cleanliness which can be and has been attained in cotton mills. It would, however, be difficult to institute a comparison between the mills on this point, or to suggest an improvement. Not only is the interior of the mills kept in the best order, but great regard has been paid by many of the agents to the arrangement of the enclosed grounds. Grass plats have been laid out, trees have been planted, and fine varieties of flowers in their season, are cultivated within the factory grounds. In short, everything in

and about the mills, and the boarding houses appeared, to have for its end, health and comfort. The same remark would apply to the city generally. Your committee returned fully satisfied, that the order, decorum, and general appearance of things in and about the mills, could not be improved by any suggestion of theirs, or by any act of the Legislature.

During our short stay in Lowell, we gathered many facts, which we deem of sufficient importance to state in this report, and first, in relation to the Hours of Labor.

From **Mr. [John] Clark**, the agent of the Merrimack Corporation, we obtained the following table of the time which the mills run during the year.

Begin work. From 1st May to 31st August, at 5 o'clock. From 1st September to 30th April, as soon as they can see.

Breakfast. From 1st November to 28th February, before going to work. From 1st March to 31st of March, at 7 ½ o'clock. From 1st April to 19th September, at seven o'clock. From 20th September to 31st October, at 7 ½ o'clock. Return in half an hour.

Dinner. Through the year at 12 ½ o'clock. From 1st May to 31st August, return in 45 minutes. From 1st September to 30th April, return in 30 minutes.

Quit work. From 1st May to 31st August, at 7 o'clock. From 1st September to 19th September, at dark. From 20th September to 19th March, at 7 ½ o'clock. From 20th March to 30th April, at dark.

Lamps are never lighted on Saturday evenings. The above is the time which is kept in all the mills in Lowell, with a slight difference in the machine shop; and it makes the average daily time throughout the year, of running the mills, to be twelve hours and ten minutes.

There are four days in the year which are observed as holidays, and on which the mills are never put in motion. These are Fast Day, Fourth of July, Thanksgiving Day, and Christmas Day. These make one day more than is usually devoted to pastime in any other place in New England. The following table shows the average hours of work per day, throughout the year, in the Lowell Mills:

Month	Hours	Min.	Month	Hours	Min.
January	11	24	July	12	45
February	12		August	12	45
March [11]	11	52	September	12	23
April	13	31	October	12	10
May	12	45	November	11	56

June 12 45 December 11 24

In Great Britain, the hours of labor per week are limited by act of Parliament to 69, or 11 ½ hours per day, but the general regulation in all the factories is 9 hours on Saturday and 12 hours on each of the other five working days. It is also enacted that there shall be six holidays in the course of the year.

It is hardly possible to draw a comparison between the operations in Great Britain and those in Lowell. The one is a manufacturing population, in the strict sense of the word, the other is not. There, the whole family go into the mills as soon as they have sufficient bodily strength to earn a penny. They never come out until they die. Very little attention is paid to their moral or physical culture, and, as has been proved by facts ascertained by commissioners appointed by Parliament, few can read or write, and, unless they have attended Sabbath schools, few obtain any knowledge of the Bible or of the Christian religion.

In Lowell, but very few (in some mills none at all) enter into the factories under the age of fifteen. None under that age can be admitted, unless they bring a certificate from the school teacher, that he or she has attended school at least three months during the preceding twelve. Nine-tenths of the factory population in Lowell come from the country. They are farmers' daughters. Many of them come over a hundred miles to enter the mills. Their education has been attended to in the district schools, which are dotted like diamonds over every square mile of New England. Their moral and religious characters

have been formed by pious parents, under the paternal roof. Their bodies have been developed, and their constitutions made strong by pure air, wholesome food, and youthful exercise.

After an absence of a few years, having laid by a few hundred dollars, they depart for their homes, get married, settle down in life, and become the heads of families. Such, we believe, in truth, to be a correct statement of the Lowell operatives, and the hours of labor.

THE GENERAL HEALTH OF THE OPERATIVES.

In regard to the health of the operatives employed in the mills, your Committee believed it to be good. The testimony of the female petitioners does not controvert this position, in general, though it does in particular instances. The population of the city of Lowell is now rising 26,000, of which number, about 7,000 are females employed in the mills. It is the opinion of **Dr. [Gilman] Kimball**, an eminent physician of Lowell, with whom the Committee had an interview, that there is less sickness among the persons at work in the mills, than there is among those who do not work in the mills; and that there is less sickness now than there was several years

ago, when the number was much less than at present. This we understood to be also the opinion of the city physician, **Dr. Wells**, from whose published report for the present year, we learn that the whole number of deaths in Lowell, during the year 1844, was 362, of which number, 200 were children under ten years of age.

DISEASES	1840	1841	1842	1843	1844
Consumption	40	54	70	73	77
Inflammation of Lungs	17	20	38	16	24
Cholera Infantum	12	30	34	27	31
Scarlet Fever	7	43	32	6	3
Measles	0	4	12	0	10
Dysentery	47	18	17	11	2
Inflammation of Brain	7	11	6	8	4
Croup	7	10	12	6	11
Total mortality each year*	426	456	473	363	362

The preceding table shows the comparative mortality in Lowell during the past five years, enumerating some of the principal diseases.

The population of Lowell, in May 1840, was 7,341 males and 13,740 females; total, 20,981. The population in May 1844, was 9,432 males, 15,637 females; total, 25,163; increase of population in four years, 4,182. Notwithstanding this increase of population, the number of deaths has decreased. There being fewer the past year than in any of the four preceding years, and 64 less in 1844 than in 1840. Yet, during the past year, the mills have been in more active operation than during either of the four years preceding.

The decrease in the mortality of Lowell, Dr. Wells attributes, in part, to "the enlightened policy of the city government, in directing the construction of common sewers, and the enterprise of individuals, in multiplying comfortable habitations, the establishment of a hospital, supported by the liberality of the corporations, for the accommodation of the sick in their employ. The more general diffusion of knowledge of the laws of health, is also conducive to the same end."

The petitioners thought that the statements made by our city physician, as to the number of deaths, were delusive, inasmuch as many of the females when taken sick in Lowell do not stay there, but return to their homes in the country and die. Dr. Kimball thought that the number who return home when seized with sickness was small. Mr. Cooper, whose testimony we have given, and who is a gentleman of great experience, says that he has known but one girl who, during the last eight years, went home from Lowell and died. We have no doubt, however, that many of the operatives do leave

Lowell and return to their homes when their health is feeble, but the proportion is not large. Certainly it has created no alarm, for the sisters and acquaintances of those who have gone home return to Lowell to supply the vacancies which their absence had created.

In the year 1841, **Mr. [Benjamin] French**, the agent of the Boott Mills, adopted a mode of ascertaining from the females employed in that mill the effect which factory labor had upon their health. The questions which he put were: "What is your age?" "How long have you worked in a cotton mill?" "Is your health as good as before?"

These questions were addressed to every female in "No. 2, Boott Mill." The committee have the names of the females interrogated, and the answers which they returned, and the result is as follows:

LIST OF GIRLS IN BOOTT MILL, NO. 2 - May 1st 1841

WHERE EMPLOYED	WHOLE No. OF GIRLS	AVERAGE AGE*		AVERAGE TIME* IN MILL		EFFECT UPON HEALTH		
		y.	d.	y.	d.	Imp'd	As good	Not as good
Carding room	20	23	30	5	25	3	12	5
Spinning room	47	28	38	4	10	14	29	4
Dressing room	25	26	60	7	25	2	16	7
Weaving room	111	22	98	3	84	10	62	39
Whole No.	203	22	85	4	29	29	119	55

To these questions, several of the girls appended remarks. One girl, named **S. Middleton**, had worked in a mill nine years. She says, "health quite as good; has not been sick in the time." **Miss Proctor** says, "have worked fourteen years; health a great deal better; sick when out of the mill." A **Miss Lawrence** says, "have been five years in a mill; health quite as good; not a day's sickness in the time." A **Miss Clark** says, "have been seventeen years in the mill; health quite as good; hasn't hurt her a mite." The Boott Mill employs about nine hundred girls, not half a dozen of whom are under fifteen years of age.

In order to give the House a full statement of the facts connected with the factory system in Lowell, and in other towns in the Commonwealth, it would be necessary to answer interrogatories like these:

1st. The kind of work of the girls--is it proportioned to their age and intelligence?

2d. The amount of their wages, and how the girls dispose of them?

3d. Are the girls separated from the men?--what surveillance is exercised over them?--what police is used?

4th. What is their religious, moral or literary instruction?

5th. Where do they pass the time not occupied in work?

6th. What are their general habits and character? What is the common age of entering the mill, and how long does a girl remain there?

In addition to which we have been permitted to copy the following memoranda from a book kept by John Clark, Esq., agent of the Merrimack Mills:

May 6th 1841. I have ascertained, by inquiries this day, that 124 of the females now at work in the Merrimack Mills have heretofore taught school; and that in addition 25 or 30 have left within the last 30 days to engage their schools for the summer, making in all 150 or more. I also find, by inquiries at our boarding houses, that 290 of our girls attended school during the evenings of the last winter.

January 1st 1842. We have this day in our five mills 40 females including sweepers and other day hands, who cannot write their names; of this number, 30 are Irish. The average wages of 20 job hands of the above, as compared with the same number of the best writers in the same rooms, is over 18 per cent below them. All our weavers sign their names except four, in No. 4 upper room.

February 26, 1842. We have this day in our five mills, 50 foreigners, 37 are Irish, (including 15 sweepers) 10 English and 3 Scotch, and not one hand in all our works, under 15 years of age either male or female. Usual number of hands employed by the Merrimack Company in their five mills is about 1,200 females and 300 males.

There are many interesting facts connected with this inquiry which your Committee have not included in the foregoing remarks, and which we could not include without making our report of too voluminous a character.

We will state, however, in this connection, that the evidence which we obtained from gentlemen connected with the Lowell Mills all goes to prove that the more intelligent and moral the operatives are, the more valuable they are to the employers, and the greater will be the amount of their earnings.

Your Committee have not been able to give the petitions from the other towns in this State a hearing. We believed that the whole case was covered by the petition from Lowell, and to the consideration of that petition we have given our undivided attention, and we have come to the conclusion unanimously, that legislation is not necessary at the present time, and for the following reasons:

1st. That a law limiting the hours of labor, if enacted at all, should be of a general nature. That it should apply to individuals or copartnerships as well as to corporations. Because, if it is wrong to labor more than ten hours in a corporation, it is also wrong when applied to individual employers, and your Committee are not aware that more complaint can justly be made against incorporated companies in regard to the hours of labor, than can be against individuals or copartnerships. But it will be said in reply to this, that corporations are the creatures of the Legislature, and therefore the Legislature can control them in this, as in other matters. This to a certain extent is true, but your committee go farther than this, and say, that not only are corporations subject to the control of the Legislature but individuals are also, and if it should ever appear that the public morals, the physical

condition, or the social well-being of society were endangered, from this cause or from any cause, then it would be in the power and it would be the duty of the Legislature to interpose its prerogative to avert the evil.

2d. Your Committee believe that the factory system, as it is called, is not more injurious to health than other kinds of indoor labor. That a law which would compel all of the factories in Massachusetts to run their machinery but ten hours out of the 24, while those in Maine, New Hampshire, Rhode Island and other States in the Union, were not restricted at all, the effect would be to close the gate of every mill in the State. It would be the same as closing our mills one day in every week, and although Massachusetts capital, enterprise and industry are willing to compete on fair terms with the same of other States, and, if needs be, with European nations, yet it is easy to perceive that we could not compete with our sister States, much less with foreign countries, if a restriction of this nature was put upon our manufactories.

3d. It would be impossible to legislate to restrict the hours of labor, without affecting very materially the question of wages; and that is a matter which experience has taught us can be much better regulated by the parties themselves than by the Legislature. Labor in Massachusetts is a very different commodity from what it is in foreign countries. Here labor is on an equality with capital, and indeed controls it, and so it ever will be while free education and free constitutions exist. And although we may find fault, and say, that labor works too many hours, and labor is too severely tasked, yet if we attempt by legislation to enter within its orbit and interfere with its plans, we will be told to keep clear and to mind our own business. Labor is intelligent enough to make its own bargains, and look out for its own interests without any interference from us; and your Committee want no better proof to convince them that Massachusetts men and Massachusetts

women, are equal to this, and will take care of themselves better than we can take care of them, than we had from the intelligent and virtuous men and women who appeared in support of this petition, before the Committee.

4th. The Committee do not wish to be understood as conveying the impression, that there are no abuses in the present system of labor; we think there are abuses; we think that many improvements may be made, and we believe will be made, by which labor will not be so severely tasked as it now is. We think that it would be better if the hours for labor were less, if more time was allowed for meals, if more attention was paid to ventilation and pure air in our manufactories, and work-shops, and many other matters. We acknowledge all this, but we say, the remedy is not with us. We look for it in the progressive improvement in art and science, in a higher appreciation of man's destiny, in a less love for money, and a more ardent love for social happiness and intellectual superiority. Your Committee, therefore, while they agree with the petitioners in their desire to lessen the burthens imposed upon labor, differ only as to the means by which these burthens are sought to be removed.

WILLIAM SCHOULER, Chairman.

Note: Following this Report of 1845 Sarah G. Bagley issued a statement, published in

Voice of Industry 9 January 1846 as "What Was Omitted in the Report," that the committee misrepresented her testimony. A few salient excerpts:

"whatever [information] was given [to the committee] was so changed in its connection or removed from its original position that it *was* made to say what we never said. . . The Chairman of the Committee manifested a great desire to bring out everything that would look bright and beautiful upon the side of manufactories. . . .

The report says I was out of the mills last year a third of the time; but does not say why; but the testimony that I gave them, said being unable to work from ill health, the only thing worthy of mention in that part of the testimony. The report says that I had taught evening school four winters and it had injured my health. I said in reply to a question put by the Chairman, "would the operatives spend the time, if it should be given them, in the cultivation of their minds?" I stated that I believed most of them would. A reason was called for -- to which the reason assigned was -- that I had very often written letters for those who could not write, and had taken some few girls to my own *sleeping apartment* and instructed them in the simplest branches of education, and learn them very imperfectly how to write, without any compensation except that of improving that unfortunate class of which I was a member. This was termed teaching school *four years* -- and if that be a true definition, I have not yet had a vacation, nor do I *hope* for one, until I can do nothing to improve the condition of those with whom my lot is cast."

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