

### **The Slavery of Freedom**

In the textbook, in chapter 25, there are 27 pages. In those 27 pages, there are 2 paragraphs, 18 sentences and 239 words that briefly describe 300 years of suffering, pain, death, wage slavery and rough living conditions. They talk about the widespread idea of overworking and underpay during the industrial revolution, as well as general descriptions of housing. Textbooks tend to tell a general story that only focuses on one side of the story. If this resource is the only way we learn history, we will be unaware of so many stories and points of view. Although the industrial revolution brought a general better way of life, the brutal wage slavery and poor living conditions were inhumane and horrific.

The general class of working people didn't have sufficient wages that could support the most basic of lifestyles. In the article "Proclamation of the Striking Textile Workers of Lawrence (1912)," the author(s) acknowledge the idea that, "We, the 20,000 textile workers of Lawrence, are out on strike for the right to live free from slavery and starvation; free from overwork and underpay; free from a state of affairs that had become so unbearable and beyond our control, that we were compelled to march out of the slave pens of Lawrence in united resistance against the wrongs and injustice of years and years of wage slavery." Corresponding with what this quote says, so many people during the industrial revolution were caught in wage slavery. They worked extremely long and dangerous hours that put not only their safety in jeopardy, but also their freedom. With the little amount of money they did receive, they had to turn right around and hand it off to other people. Their constant life needs like food and house rent took the money that had just worked for and led them to keep returning as slaves to the workforce. Because of these peoples sacrifices during this everlasting time period, we can take on easier lifestyles that are most often viewed as a given. This day and age, we don't need to work 14 hour days, 6 days a week just so we can live a life that is barely considered a life. We look at our homes as a safe place where we can take care

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of ourselves, but sometimes we forget that people suffered immensely and even risked their quality and quantity of life without a say. Additionally to the wage slavery people suffered from, they agonized in their atrocious living conditions.

A large percentage of our population, including women, endured the constraints of their living conditions and suffered greatly because of it. In the article "Massachusetts Bureau of Statistics of Labor, from the Working Girls of Boston (1884)," it claims, "In numerous cases... girls were found living for the sake of economy in very limited quarters, which could not be conducive to good sanitary conditions." These women were forced to work jobs that didn't provide them with enough money to afford basic life needs. They were found living inside attics, side rooms or in a single building with 18 other families. They didn't have the necessary furniture, never mind clean clothes, heat during the winter season, a sanitary space, or good health. At the time of the industrial revolution, homes were no longer homes for many. One of the girls in the article mentioned that whenever possible, she would try and leave to travel to her sister's house in another part of the city. She along with other girls worked hours on end to afford a living space, just to not want to be there. They didn't have a clean safe place at work or at 'home'. During the industrial revolution, both men and women made critical and extensive sacrifices just to be enslaved by their wages and horrific living conditions, so that we could live the life we do today as privileged and free people.