

THE
Factory Girl's Song.

Come all you weary Factory girls,
I'll have you understand,
I'm going to leave the Factory
And return to my native land.

No more I'll have these tolling bells,
To call me from my bed:
No more I'll hear those passing drums
As they roll o'er my head.

No more I'll put my bonnet on
And hasten to the mill,
While all the girls are working hard,
Here I'll be lying still.

No more I'll lay my bobbins up,
No more I'll take them down;
No more I'll clean my dirty work,
For I'm going out of town.

No more I'll take my piece of soap,
No more I'll go to wash;
No more my Overseer shall say,
"Your frames are stopped to doff."

No more my Overseer shall say,
"Your ends they are all down,
While you're in the middle of the room,
Acting out the clown!"

Come all you little doffers,
That work in the Spinning room;
Go wash your face and comb your hair,
Prepare to leave the room.

No more I'll oil my picker rods,
No more I'll brush my loom,
No more I'll scour my dirty floor
All in the Weaving-room.

No more I'll oil my picker rods,
No more I'll brush my reed,
No more I'll say to MARIA—
The Devil's in the speed!

No more I'll draw these threads
All through the harness eye;

No more I'll say to my Overseer,
Oh! dear me, I shall die.

No more I'll get my Overseer
To come and fix my loom,
No more I'll say to my Overseer,
Can't I stay out 'till noon?

Then since they've cut my wages down
To nine shillings per week,
If I cannot better wages make,
Some other place I'll seek.

No more he'll find me reading,
No more he'll see me sew,
No more he'll come to me and say:
"Such works I can't allow!"

I do not like my Overseer,
I do not mean to stay,
I mean to hire a Depot-boy
To carry me away.

The Dress-room girls, they need not think,
Because they're higher go,
That they are better than the girls
That work in the rooms below.

The Overseers they need not think,
Because they higher stand;
That they are better than the girls
That work at their command.

And as for we poor Factory Girls,
'Tis plain we all do know,
How much we suffer in the winter-time,
A wandering through the snow.

'Tis a wonder how the men,
Can such machinery make,
A thousand wheels together roll
Without the least mistake.

Now soon you'll see me married
To a handsome little man,
'Tis then I'll say to you Factory Girls,
Come and see me when you can.

[Broadside song sheet]: *The Factory Girl's Song*

[No place: no publisher no date - circa 1836-1839?]

\$3500

Broadside. Approximately 6" x 8½". 19 four-line stanzas printed in two columns with a decorative border. Chips resulting in irregular margins, a couple of old ink stains, small tears and old folds, professionally backed with Japanese paper, a good example. No printing information, but likely printed in New England in the mid- to late-1830s.

The song is narrated by a factory girl working in a textile mill who yearns to leave her job and return to home. The reference of a "Depot-boy" places the date of the broadside after 1835, when railroads first became widely established in the Northeast, but likely before 1840, when the ability of a young woman to leave a factory job was much easier (Greenway. *American Folksongs of Protest*).

The narrator describes the endless hours at the mill (using factory specific terms) and the condescension of both the male overseers and the women who work on the floor above the factory girls. Lines such as, "They cut my wages down / To nine shillings per week" and "I'm going to leave the Factory / And return to my native land," suggest the anonymous author was likely a recently arrived English or Irish immigrant.

Though other "factory girl" broadside song sheets exist from this era they are quite rare. *OCLC* locates two song sheets, both American and both attributed to the 1840s – *Song of the Factory Girl* (1849); and *The Factory Girl's New-Year Song* [circa 1840s], each with a different numbers of stanzas and opening lines. Other unlocated examples are found in the holdings of the American Antiquarian Society, Middle Tennessee State, and Brown University, which has several versions. Our research shows only one other copy of this broadside at The National Museum of American History in Washington, DC, but in slightly lesser condition. Rare. [BTC#426376]