



The Lowell Mills

The Point of View of the North

Life in the north was a picture of busy factories and smoke stacks, coal mines, more people moving to the cities for jobs, new railroads, new canals, improved transportation, and a life that was becoming hustle and bustle. The factories were mass producing goods, making them more affordable. It was colder in the north and family farms struggled while factories grew. The oldest schools in the nation were founded in the region and new schools and colleges were continually opening. Northern economics were good and money flowed for the successful entrepreneurs and inventors. In the North, many of the new modes of transportation were introduced. Railroads and canals began to crisscross Northern states. The shipping industry took advantage of the many harbors and transformed small coastal towns into large cities.

Northern factories needed more cotton, tobacco and other raw materials from the Southern farms to give their factories plenty to produce. To ensure plenty of raw materials, Northern states proposed taxes, or tariffs, on any raw materials sold to foreign countries. The idea of tariffs made the Southern planters angry because from their point of view it was controlling where they could sell their crops.

From the point of view of the Northern factory and mine workers, life was still a struggle. More than half of the workers were women and children. They had to work long hours with no breaks. There was a lack of safety in work places, and workers were not paid good wages. Still, many people in the North were critical of the continuing practice of slavery in the South. Many Northerners were called **abolitionists**, which meant they were working to abolish slavery.

Image credit: Gleason's Pictorial Drawing-Room Companion. (Artist). (1852). View of the Boott Cotton Mills, at Lowell, Mass. [Web Photo]. Retrieved from <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/resource/cph.3a06274/>