

She craved for rest. Or even if the wage  
Were better, labour could be lessened  
And give more of rest.

## ON STRIKE

One day some workmen  
Struck for better pay. And David wondered  
What it meant to strike. "What is it, mother?—  
Do they hit the men that give them work?"  
The mother smiled. "No, no, my child, they merely  
Rest or cease from work to force their masters  
Into giving better pay to get them  
Back to work." A happy thought now seized him—  
"Oh, mother, strike, and then the people sure  
Will give you better pay." The mother smiled,  
But sighed and said, "My darling boy, if I  
Should strike, a score of women poor are ready,  
Even glad, to take my place, perchance for less."  
The boy was disappointed, and his heart  
Was sad.

But "strike," that odd word strike, as meaning  
Rest from work, or stopping work, clung fast  
To David's mind. Apart from better pay  
He thought that something good remained, and so  
At night, the last thing done before he slept,  
The boy would often take his board, a blackboard  
Big, and chalk in letters large and white—  
"On strike till 7," "On strike till 6," "On strike  
Till 5," according as his mother's work  
Required, or strength could stand. The metal clock,  
A loud alarm, was also wound and set.  
At this the mother always smiled, but when  
Her treasure's eyes were closed in sleep she wept.