

years ago I knew a shop where they paid two dollars per pair for pants. We have struck to support these people because the contractors are just grinding them down. We want as a union to control this labour, and to aid the girls in the pant and vest departments. The employers said we will pay \$1.59 and \$1.25 for vests and you not interfere, but if we did not interfere these girls would soon be doing the work for fifty cents. We will fight this thing. The only way to prevent it is to make employers of labour do away with back shops and employ without contract. This system of spreading the work all over the city and putting one human being against the other is wrong. During the present strike a tailor who wished to get an overcoat completed for which he would probably get thirty dollars, sent it up to one of the establishments to see if the men would do it. They (the strikers) went and got the coat and sent it back. They are trying to break our power to earn a livelihood. These men would not care if the women prostituted their bodies at night to make a living wage. You must make employers do away with back shops. These contractors are all sweaters. If they would unite and go to the warehouseman and say we will not work at the prices you offer us; they are too low; then they would be able to pay girls and men living wages. Instead of that each man tries to cut the price. I hope we will fight this thing to the end.

Mr. LOVE.—And I hope that the wholesale trade will give you all the assistance which they can, but I know for a fact that these same custom men are getting their coats made by wholesale men. This gentleman (referring to Mr. Strachan) says that we have ourselves to blame for making coats so cheaply. That is going a little beyond the truth. We have no more control over that than he has for the simple reason that when there is a surplus of men there will always be competition.

Mr. STRACHAN.—Is there a surplus of contractors?

Mr. LOVE.—Why, yes. It requires no experience. Anybody can get into it.

The COMMISSIONER.—I think we all agree with Mr. Strachan that if the men and contractors only united they could settle a great many grievances, but the great thing is to get them to unite.

Mr. LOVE.—Many men go into the business because there is a living in it, but knowing nothing about the requirements of a trade.

The COMMISSIONER.—I would like to get an answer to this question. At what age do workers drop out by reason of failing health or inefficiency?

Mr. STRACHAN.—So far as I am connected with the custom trade, I do not know of any tailors retiring before seventy. They are compelled to work as long as they can. That would not be the case if they had shorter hours and better wages.

The COMMISSIONER.—I ask that question because it leads to the next, that is—are there any diseases peculiar to the trade?

Mr. DAVIS.—I can answer that. Now we have the latest improvements, but it used to be before we had steam or electric power that we worked the machines with our feet. In those times, a machine operator could not exist longer than eight or nine years. Since we have the improvements, power to run the machines and so on, and have brought the establishments under the Factory Act, I do not think that we have any diseases peculiar to the trade.

The COMMISSIONER.—What about handling goods from which the fumes of the dye stuffs arise?

Mr. DAVIS.—As long as the shops are well ventilated it does not do much harm.

The COMMISSIONER.—Is your experience of the shops that they are well ventilated?

Mr. DAVIS.—We are trying our best to keep the regulations of the Factory Act. Those who do not do so are made to keep the shops in proper shape and as long as the place is right there is not much danger.

Mr. SNIDERMAN.—I am a machine operator myself. I want to say that while the foot power affected the feet and legs, electric power harms the whole body.

Mr. DAVIS.—How long did you work by foot power?

Mr. SNIDERMAN.—Until I could work no longer.

Mr. GUROFSKY.—Only a few establishments in the city have the latest machinery and even with improved machines in ten or eleven years, a good able-bodied man will be like a broken down street car horse. It does not take so long to break the girls