

INTRODUCTION

I cannot imagine just what the general reader's attitude toward this work will be. I myself, reading it in the light of the knowledge I possess of the life of the author, look upon it not only as an intensely interesting human document, but as a suggestive sociological study. It is an illuminative picture of what may befall a working-girl who, at the age of seventeen, gaily ventures forth to conquer life with ten dollars in her pocket. You may object that many of her difficulties were brought about through her own initiative; that she ran to meet them open armed. This is, no doubt, true, but you must consider her ignorance and her temperament. It was her naïveté and generosity and kindly impulses that left her unarmed. She was unique in many respects—in her peculiar heredity, her extreme ability, and her total unacquaintedness with the world.

I have known the author for a number of years, and I know that the main outline of everything she says is true, though the names of people and places have necessarily been changed in order to hide their identity. The author has written a number of books that have had a wide circulation. The aspirations of the little girl of seventeen have been realized!

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