

their society. After a time he was old enough to go on the street and sell matches, and it was a relief to the women when he was gone, for then there was no restraint, and the little lonely waif was turned adrift. Little Ned seemed never quite alone, for he frequently talked alone, asked questions which seemed to have been answered—in fact lived in a world, peopled by his own childish fancy, and passed unharmed through danger and sin, where one, more conscious of evil, would have fallen. How unlike the world he was in, was the one he pictured to himself. At night he crawled into empty boxes, scarcely knowing what it was to go to sleep without feeling hungry, but the Goddess of dreams wove golden threads through the brain of little Ned, weaving her most brilliant colors, through the warp and woof of his childish dreams, as if in compensation for the sombre colors and gloom of his waking moments, and no child lying on his bed of down, placed there by the careful hands of nurse, and receiving the mother's good night kiss, ever had sweeter, purer dreams, than the friendless, homeless match-seller on his bed of straw. Mothers, do you ever think when you see your children safe in their warm beds, of the numberless little waifs in large cities, whose resting places are pallets of straw, whose good night kisses are the cold breath of poverty?

There was very little variety in the life of little Ned. Waking in the morning, he would start out with the matches, selling them if he could, if not, hunger, to which