

children served. At last she had eaten her own morsel, and set the remains of the supper in the corner for the morrow. At last she might go to bed and rest her aching bones. "Her *bed!*" "Where were the elastic springs, the yielding mattress, the little pillow that just fitted her head? Where the smooth, cool sheets that would have soothed her weariness." Echo answered "Where?" She drew a rough old grass-mat (it was ravelled and tattered at the end) and a bundle of rags from the corner, and stretched herself for rest. "I've heard of sleeping on the soft side of a pine plank, but I should be glad even of a pine plank to keep me from the dampness," said Mrs. Workwell to herself, as she turned wearily from side to side, seeking ease and finding none. The sour fumes of smoke still lingered in the hot unventilated room. Towards morning, when she could have slept, baby's cries prevented. Tired and impatient, she quieted it with a sharp stroke or two, for Mrs. Workwell was not an angel. But she seemed scarcely to have closed her eyes again when she was rudely shaken by her husband and told to "go to work."

Hastily swallowing her scant breakfast of cold porridge, she went again with the dirty, chattering crowd to her work. Cheerful as she had always been, Mrs. Workwell's heart sank when she realized that these women constituted the society with which she was henceforth to mingle, and even greater was her anxiety at thought of her children growing up in such scenes and with only the naked, dirty children for companions. "They will be degraded in spite of me," she said. "They will be *used to it*, and that is worst of all. Oh, for some way out of this misery!"

That first day and night were a type of many that followed. She was crushed by a burden of toil too hard for her. Hope died out and a dreary dulness took its place. Book or paper she never saw. She went nowhere except to the well, and the