

**PRISONERS OF POVERTY.  
WOMEN  
WAGE-WORKERS, THEIR  
TRADES AND THEIR LIVES**

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Prisoners of poverty. Women wage-workers, their trades and their lives by Helen Campbell

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**HELEN CAMPBELL**

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WOMEN  
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PRISONERS OF POVERTY.

*"Make no more giants, God,  
But elevate the race at once. We ask  
To put forth just our strength, our human strength.  
All starting fairly, all equipped alike,  
Gifted alike, all eagle-eyed, true-hearted,—  
See if we cannot beat Thy angels yet."*

*"Light, light, and light! to break and melt in sunder  
All clouds and chains that in one bondage bind  
Eyes, hands, and spirits, forged by fear and wonder  
And sleek fierce fraud with hidden knife behind;  
There goes no fire from heaven before their thunder,  
Nor are the links not malleable that wind  
Round the snared limbs and souls that ache thereunder;  
The hands are mighty were the head not blind,  
    Priest is the staff of king,  
And chains and clouds one thing,  
And fettered flesh with devastated mind.  
    Open thy soul to see,  
    Slave, and thy feet are free.  
Thy bonds and thy beliefs are one in kind,  
And of thy fears thine irons wrought,  
Hang weights upon thee fashioned out of thine own  
    thought."*

# PRISONERS OF POVERTY.

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WOMEN WAGE-WORKERS,  
*THEIR TRADES AND THEIR LIVES.*

BY

HELEN CAMPBELL,

AUTHOR OF "MRS. HURNDON'S INCOME," "MISS MELINDA'S  
OPPORTUNITY," ETC.



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ROBERTS BROTHERS.

1887.

H. F.  
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## P R E F A C E.

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THE chapters making up the present volume were prepared originally as a series of papers for the Sunday edition of "The New York Tribune," and were based upon minutest personal research into the conditions described. Sketchy as the record may seem at points, it is a photograph from life; and the various characters, whether employers or employed, were all registered in case corroboration were needed. While research was limited to New York, the facts given are much the same for any large city, and thus have a value beyond their immediate application. No attempt at an understanding of the labor question as it faces us to-day can be successful till knowledge of its underlying conditions is assured.

It is such knowledge that the writer has aimed to present; and it takes more permanent form, not only for the many readers whose steady interest has been an added demand for faithful work,

but, it is hoped, for a circle yet unreached, who, whether agreeing or disagreeing with the conclusions, still know that to learn the struggle and sorrow of the workers is the first step toward any genuine help.

ORANGE, NEW JERSEY, *March*, 1887.

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