

**BUT MEN  
MUST WORK**

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But men must work by Rosa Nouchette Carey

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**ROSA NOUCHETTE CAREY**

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BY

ROSA NOUCHETTE CAREY

AUTHOR OF "NOT LIKE OTHER GIRLS," "QUEENIE'S WHIM," "MARY  
ST. JOHN," "ESTHER," ETC.



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# “BUT MEN MUST WORK.”

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## CHAPTER I.

MISS HILLYARD.

IN looking back over one's past life from the safe though somewhat monotonous level of middle age, one is conscious of added clearness of vision, of a more thorough comprehension of the verities and unmasked realities of existence, that start up like whitened mile-stones along an unending road. In the hurry of youth we overlook these prominent points that intersect the different stages of our being; the light is too strong in our eyes; one must descend into the well to view the concealed starlight. We draw our own visionary horizon. To be young is to live. Beyond youth lies blankness, absolute negation: to grow old—pshaw! as well threaten the young with a palsy, with the death-in-life of paralysis! it is

the dreadful hereafter, which no healthy imagination will depict for a moment. And yet, if they only knew it, age offers delicate compensations. In a flat country one can walk more securely, and a greater breadth of landscape adds to the pleasure of the pedestrian; the imagination may shirk somewhat, but the memory enfolds treasures of past comforts and experiences: in the baldest and most prosaic life the affections must have watered many an oasis.

But philosophy, however well defined, may grow irksome. I have been tempted to generalise, before gathering up a few stray threads from a life that by most folk would be termed meagre and uninteresting, but which, lived moment by moment in fearless simplicity, was to me, its owner, certainly not devoid of pleasurable sensations. Written down in black and white, the amount of pleasure may have seemed at first sight somewhat limited.

A middle-aged worker in the human hive, a daily governess without living kith and kin, certainly presents a modest margin to expectation. Life's interest must wax feeble at such a low level; there could be no high tides of strong recurrent excitement. Chut! let these