

**CHICAGO AND ITS  
CESS-POOLS  
OF INFAMY**

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Chicago and its cess-pools of infamy by Samuel Paynter Wilson

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# CHICAGO AND ITS CESS- POOLS OF INFAMY

BY

SAMUEL PAYNTER WILSON

*Author of "Chicago by Gas Light", "Wilson's Edition  
of Historical and Chronological Facts" and  
"Wilson's Concise History."*

**DEDICATED**

TO THE GOOD

**MEN AND WOMEN OF THE WORLD**

WITH THE HOPE THAT THE

**VICIOUS MAY BECOME BETTER**

**MEN AND WOMEN**

**MR. SAMUEL PAYNTER WILSON.**

Chicago, Ill.

**MY DEAR FRIEND:—**

I have read your book with great interest. It tells the truth, though no book can tell all the truth. You have been a great help to our community by the practical and useful service you have rendered in the investigation of vice and the bringing of those responsible for it to justice. Our city is the better for your work.

I hope your book will do much good. If parents but knew the dangers that confront their boys and girls in our great cities, they would at least take some ordinary precautions before turning children adrift amid these perils.

Very sincerely yours,

**MORTON CULVER HARTZELL,**

**President of the Douglas Neighborhood Club.**

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## PREFACE

Chicago is to the West what New York is to the East. It is not only the Great Metropolis of the western states, but is the chief attraction upon this continent, the great center to which our people resort for business, and pleasure, and as such, is a source of never-failing interest.

This being the case, it is natural that every American should desire to visit Chicago, to see the city for himself, behold its beauties, its wonderful sights, and participate in the pleasures which are to be enjoyed only in the metropolis. Thousands avail themselves of this privilege every year; but the great mass of our people know our chief city only by the description of friends and the brief accounts of its sights and scenes which occur from time to time in the newspapers of the day. Even those who visit the city bring away but a superficial knowledge of it, as to know Chicago requires months of constant study and investigation. Strangers see only the surface;

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they cannot penetrate into its inner life, and examine the countless influences at work every day in shaping the destiny of the beautiful city. Few even of the residents of the metropolis, have either the time or means for such investigation. Few have a correct idea of the terrible romance and hard reality of the daily lives of a vast portion of the dwellers in Chicago, or of the splendors and luxury of the wealthier classes.

One of the chief characteristics of Chicago is the rapidity with which changes occur in it. Those who were familiar with the city in the past will find it new to them now. The march of progress and improvement presses on with giant strides, and the city of today is widely separated from that of a few years ago. Only one who has devoted himself to watching its onward career, in prosperity, and magnificence or in misery and crime, can form any idea of the magnitude and character of the wonderful changes of the past twenty-five years.

The volume now offered to the reader aims to be a faithful and graphic pen picture of Chicago and its countless sights, its romance, its mysteries, its nobler and better efforts in the cause of

## PREFACE

humanity, its dark crimes, and terrible tragedies. In short, the work endeavors to hold up to the reader a faithful mirror in which shall pass all the varied scenes that transpire in Chicago by sunlight and by gaslight. To those who have seen the great city, the work is offered as a means of recalling some of the pleasantest experiences of their lives; while to the still larger class who have never enjoyed this pleasure, it is hoped that it will be the medium of acquiring an intimate acquaintance with Chicago in the quiet of their homes.

This volume is not a work of fiction, but a narrative of well authenticated, though often startling facts. The darker sides of Chicago life are shown in their true colors, and without any effort to tone them down. Foul blots are to be found upon the life of the great city. Sin, vice, crime and shame are terrible realities there, and they have been presented here as they actually exist.

Throughout the work, the aim of the author has been to warn those who wish to see for themselves the darker side of city life, of the danger attending such undertaking. A man who seeks the haunts of vice and crime in Chicago takes his