A NOBLE AIM

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A noble aim by Annie Thomas

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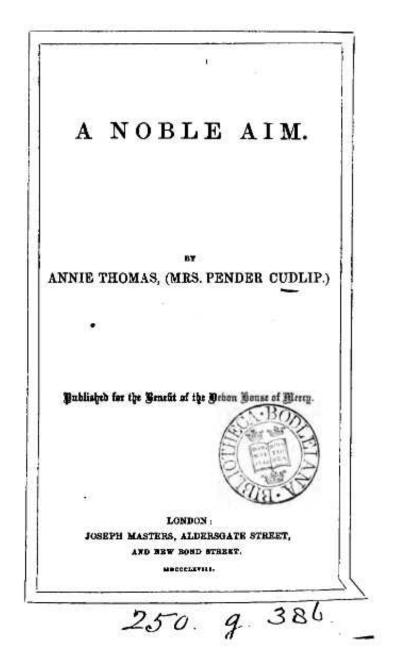
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PREFACE.

IN writing this little tale, which is to be published for an avowed purpose, I have been fettered by the fear of too obviously appearing to force conclusions that are favourable to that purpose. The exigencies of the story as a work of art, often seemed to be incompatible with the exigencies of the story as a work of charity. In my fear of indiscreetly culogising a most admirable system, I nearly fell into the extreme error of mentioning it too lightly. I have not the presumption to think that I have entirely surmounted difficulties which have barred success from many more fluent and practised writers. But I have the cheering belief that I shall be accredited with having endeavoured to surmount them, and the further belief that the excellence of the cause in which I have plied my pen for the first time will make my readers lenient to what is less good than that cause deserves in the product of it.

ANNIE THOMAS.