

**THE CONFESSIONS OF A
CURRENCY GIRL. IN
THREE VOLUMES, VOL. I**

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The confessions of a currency girl. In three volumes, Vol. I by W. Carlton Dawe

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W. CARLTON DAWE

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CURRENCY GIRL. IN
THREE VOLUMES, VOL. I**

THE CONFESSIONS OF A CURRENCY GIRL

BY

W. CARLTON DAWE

AUTHOR OF "THE EMU'S HEAD," "MOUNT DESOLATION,"
"THE GOLDEN LAKE," ETC.

IN THREE VOLUMES

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TO
MY SISTER
G W E N
THIS BOOK
IS
LOVINGLY DEDICATED.

THE CONFESSIONS OF A CURRENCY GIRL.

CHAPTER I.

I AM not aware that I ever had any of that unnatural precocity which is supposed to distinguish the clever child, but I believe I must have been a very small thing indeed when my mind took its first impressions of this terrestrial sphere. What my age was at that particular time I have never been able to ascertain, though I have a most vivid recollection of my father's grand, sad face, seared with pain, as it were, and bronzed by the fierceness of the sun; of my mother, with her gentle ways and winning smiles; and of Will, dear old

2 *The Confessions of a Currency Girl.*

Will, with his sturdy boyish figure, his fearless blue eyes, and his thick golden curls. And then came Harold, poor little Harold. He was younger than I, and was our pet, our baby. How proud we all were of him. What a grand head we thought he had; and when we saw him take to books as naturally as other children do to toys and sweetstuffs, we all prophesied for him a great future. Then came that dreadful accident to his spine, and we knew that he was crippled for life. Poor Harold! We watched his beautiful face grow thinner, paler, and, oh, so spiritual-looking, so dreamy, so utterly unlike anything of the earth, that often I was afraid to look into his great eyes; and I have seen mother sit with him in her lap staring at him in a blank, wondering sort of way, till, overcome by her emotions, she would clasp him suddenly to her breast and sob convulsively.

But they were peaceful, blessed times, and though I had no knowledge of father's

yearly income, I knew that we never had any debts we could not meet, that the larder was always full, and that the clothes we wore were of the finest. Indeed, I was always under the impression that we were very rich, for, with the exception of Mr. Langton—the wealthy squatter from whom we rented our land—there was no one in the neighbourhood who had a better house or finer horses than ours. Father, being a thrifty man, and proud of his wife and family, had saved and schemed to better our condition, and I have often heard him declare that he would let them see if there was anything in the country too good for his children. I didn't think there was, myself—I didn't see how there could be—but I not infrequently wondered who the mysterious "they" were, why he was so fond of repeating the expression, and why he always looked so combative when he said it. Usually his nature was as placid as mother's, and if not quite so sweet—which no man's could be—it was