

THE KEYS OF THE CITY

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The Keys of the City by Oscar Graeve

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OSCAR GRAEVE

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OF THE CITY**

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BY
OSCAR GRAEVE



L.C.

NEW YORK
THE CENTURY CO.

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To
M. E. G.

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THE KEYS OF THE CITY

PART I

THE KEYS OF THE CITY

CHAPTER I

UNTIL David Wells was twelve years he had scarcely a playfellow. A gentle and imaginative boy, he did not possess those qualities which command the friendship of the youth of his own generation, no matter how keenly he longed for it. But aside from this his isolation was no phenomenon. It is easily explained.

Along the Shore Road of that suburb of Brooklyn well named Bay Ridge, perched high on the cliff overlooking New York harbor, were many large and beautiful homes, old houses for the greater part, with wide lawns and verandas with fine Colonial pillars but, beneath the cliff, for many a mile, there was only the little red house where David lived with his father and mother. And his father made his living by fishing and renting out boats, which was more than ample reason why the mothers of the Shore Road residences should forbid their offspring to play with the fisherman's boy. Occasionally the lure of the rowboats and the gray old wharf drew these children down de-