

A NEW CONSCIENCE,

AND AN ANCIENT EVIL

BY

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The Spirit of Youth and the City Streets

Twenty Years at Hull-House

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PREFACE

The following material, much of which has been published in *McClure's Magazine*, was written, not from the point of view of the expert, but because of my own need for a counter-knowledge to a bewildering mass of information which came to me through the Juvenile Protective Association of Chicago. The reports which its twenty field officers daily brought to its main office adjoining Hull House became to me a revelation of the dangers implicit in city conditions and of the allurements which are designedly placed around many young girls in order to draw them into an evil life.

As head of the Publication Committee, I read the original documents in a series of special investigations made by the Association on dance halls, theatres, amusement parks, lake excursion boats, petty gambling, the home surroundings of one hundred Juvenile Court children and the records of four thousand parents who clearly contributed to the delinquency of their own fami-[end page ix] lies. The Association also collected the personal histories of two hundred department-store girls, of two hundred factory girls, of two hundred immigrant girls, of two hundred office girls, and of girls employed in one hundred hotels and restaurants.

While this experience was most distressing, I was, on the other hand, much, impressed and at times fairly startled by the large and diversified number of people to whom the very existence of the white slave traffic had become unendurable and who promptly responded to any appeal made on behalf of its victims. City officials, policemen, judges, attorneys, employers, trades unionists, physicians, teachers, newly arrived immigrants, clergymen, railway officials, and newspaper

men, as under a profound sense of compunction, were unsparing of time and effort when given an opportunity to assist an individual girl, to promote legislation designed for her protection, or to establish institutions for her rescue.

I therefore venture to hope that in serving my own need I may also serve the need of a rapidly growing public when I set down for rational consideration the temptations surrounding multi-[end page x] tudes of young people and when I assemble, as best I may, the many indications of a new conscience, which in various directions is slowly gathering strength and which we may soberly hope will at last successfully array itself against this incredible social wrong, ancient though it may be.

HULL HOUSE,

Chicago.[end page xi]