

was carried up to the top floor with a box of cloth. When the car landed I found myself at the extreme end of a room 50 x 80 feet, in an enclosure of wire-fence, packing-boxes, and cutting-boards—beyond and between which I could see perhaps two hundred persons, mostly women, bent over machines, and working as only slaves ever work. The thundering noise made by the machinery deadened every other sound, even that made by the cutters as they ran their heavy shears through the satin and muslin trimmings. Sixteen persons passed me—men in undershirts, trousers and slippers, with work in their hands; men in business suits with work in their brains; girls of 13 in rags and death-like pallor, with work in their arms; older and paler girls and still older and paler women, some with white hair and spectacles, carrying work to be pressed, examined, altered or checked. Nobody noticing me, I asked a pretty little girl who was cutting a bolt of satin into cuff-lining to direct me to the forewoman and was told to go and sit down till she came. I had hardly arranged myself on an empty box when a playful young man capsized my throne and spilled me in a heap of unmade cloaks. My first impulse was for revenge, but remembering that I was a poor girl looking for work I contented myself by petting my damaged left knee and right elbow. While mentally photographing the miserable, little, bullet-headed sapling who caused my trouble, a young woman brought me a chair and placed it in a corner, which convenient spot happened to be off a narrow passage leading to the work-room proper. My nose was not long in seeing a row of closets that walled the south side of the passageway. Overhead was a pasteboard sign with "No admission to the work-room" printed in large, black letters. There was no place beyond where I could sit or stand without being in the way unless I went back into the freight elevator, so I resolved to stick it out.

For almost two hours I sat in the dark, filthy place with a

handkerchief over my mouth and nose waiting for the forewoman to come and admit me to the shop. I watched the poor girls pass and repass, their broken shoes slipping up and down with every step, and their ragged skirts often catching new gaps from the nails of the packing boxes. Just as I was beginning to get myself in a state of passivity, as prescribed by Mrs. Eddy, and was combatting the foul smell of the closets with the wholesome healthy atmosphere of South Park, something in my head seemed to give way, and the whole factory turned into a colossal whirligig. The big goose of the presser and the little irons of the press girls began to play tag, and machines, operators, finishers, wire-forms, cutters, examiners, messengers, models, forewomen, teachers and firm, all joined in the merry go round. To escape being knocked in the head by a two-story press-board I clutched a little stitcher who said:

"You an't sick, is you?"

I guessed I was. Bringing me a tin cup full of water, she departed saying: "She'd be docked if she didn't go."

An old man with grey hair and glasses showed me to the freight elevator and I was let down to the second story. When I reached the staircase I sat down on the top step to recover. A portly man with a straw hat, full beard, broad shoulders, and a suit of mixed goods, mistaking me for a tramp, came out from the stock and informed me that "no peddlers are allowed on the premises. Move off."

I moved off determined to return another day.

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#### STARVATION WAGES.

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"Boy, don't take her down! Don't go down!! do you hear? I'll discharge you if you let her escape."

There I was in S's freight elevator with my day's work in my arms and the wire screen separating me from the furies of