

her voice was choked.

"I lived in Indiana, in a small town, and I ran away from home because I thought it was stupid in a little village. There are no theaters, just church suppers and farmers, and you can't go out at night unless some of your family goes with you, and I thought I hated it.

"Then a girl at home married a Chicago man and came here and when she came back to see her mother she told me of all the things a girl can do here, and she laughed at the way we dress at home, and she told me I was a fool to stay in that village. I should come to Chicago, get work and live with her.

"I ran away. Oh, I wish I had never come here." There was a pause again as she started to cry afresh.

Finally, "the girl was good to me when I first came, but I couldn't get any kind of work for a long while and then I started at \_\_\_\_\_'s at \$3.

"My friend let me pay \$2.50 a week and live with her. I know now that was a lot to do for me, but then I thought she ought to let me keep my money to get clothes.

"And then—oh, I don't know how to tell you this, I seem so weak, but I am paying for it now."

"We are all weak in some way," I comforted. "If we weren't, this would be a very different world."

"The foreman took notice of me. I didn't know he was married—honest I didn't, Miss Whitaker. He was young and he doesn't look married.

"And I let him call on me because I was lonesome here, but my friend didn't like him. She said he didn't have good intentions.

"I told him what she said and he told me to move away from her house so we could see each other without trouble. He wanted me to go to some nice place, but I thought I could live on \$3.50 if I had a \$1.50 room, so he had my wages raised the extra 50 cents.

"But I couldn't do it. I didn't tell him I wasn't getting enough to eat until Saturday, and then he took me to a restaurant and got me a big meal.

"And he said I must take \$2 a week from him as a loan because we would be married some day and it would be all right. And he made it sound true and I took the money. I took it for five weeks up to last Saturday when I wrote to you. I owe him \$10.

"He took me to a cafe downtown last Saturday. I was ashamed of my clothes because everybody was dressed up, but he said if he didn't mind I shouldn't. And then he wanted me to drink a cocktail, so I would have some strength, and I was afraid. I never tasted liquor and I didn't know what it would do to me.

"When I wouldn't drink it he called me a little fool and told me he was married and—and—never—intended to—marry me.

"Oh, I have been such a fool and I don't know what to do. He says I got to pay that \$10 in money or some other way, and he knows I can't pay it."

"Is it only the \$10 that worries you? It isn't losing the man?"

"Oh, no, I wish I never saw him, but don't you see, I have got to pay and I haven't the money."

I smiled with relief. I had steeled myself to hear a terrible tale, and it had ended almost like a comedy.

"Why, my dear child," I said to her, "laugh at the man and pay no attention to him. A man who gives a girl \$10 and then demands that she return it or herself is so far beneath contempt that he isn't worth hating."

"But he will turn me into the streets."

"The streets—yes. That isn't a nice place to be thrown, but suppose instead you were turned back to the country where men don't bid \$10 to trap a girl, and where you don't have to accept dinners from such a creature in order to live? Wouldn't you like to go back to your mother?"