









## I

Two old labourers came out of the lane leading to Great End Farm. Both carried bags slung on sticks over their shoulders. One, the eldest and tallest, was a handsome fellow, with regular features and a delicately humorous mouth. His stoop and his slouching gait, the gray locks also, which straggled from under his broad hat, showed him an old man—probably very near his old-age pension. But he carried still with him a look of youth, and he had been a splendid creature in his time. The other was short of stature and of neck, bent besides by field work. A broadly-built, clumsy man, with something gnome-like about him, and the cheerful look of one whose country nerves had never known the touch of worry or long sickness. The name of the taller man was Peter Halsey, and Joseph Batts was his companion.

It was a fine July evening, with a cold north wind blowing from the plain which lay stretched to their right. Under the unclouded sun, which by its own "sun-time" had only reached half-past four in the afternoon, though the clock in the village church had already struck half-past five, the air was dry and parching, and the fields all round, the road itself, and the dusty hedges showed signs of long drought.

"It du want rain," said Peter Halsey, looking at a crop of oats through an open gate, "it du want rain—*bad*."

"Aye!" said the other, "that it du. Muster Shenstone had better 'a read the prayer for rain lasst Sunday, I'm thinkin', than all them long ones as ee *did* read."

Halsey was silent a moment, his half-smiling eyes glancing from side to side. At last he said slowly,—

"We du be prayin' a lot about ower sins, and Muster Shenstone is allus preachin' about 'em. But it's the sins o' the *Garmins* I be thinkin' of. If it hadn't a bin for the sins o' the *Garmins* my Tom wouldn't ha' lost 'is right hand."

"An' ower Jim wouldn't be goin' into them trenches next November as ever is," put in Batts. "It's the sins o' the *Garmins* as ha' done *that*, an' nothin' as you or I ha' done, Peter."

Halsey shook his head assentingly.

"Noa—for all that pratin', pacifist chap was sayin' lasst week. I didn't believe a word ee said. 'Yis,' I says, 'if you want this war to stop, I'm o' your mind,' I says, 'but when you tells me as *England* done it—you'm—'"

The short man burst into a cackling laugh.

"'You'm a liar!' Did you say that, Peter?"

Peter fenced a little.

"There be more ways nor one o' speakin' your mind," he said at last.

"But

I stood up to un. Did you hear, Batts, as Great End Farm is let?"

The old man turned an animated look on his companion.

"Well, for sure!" said Batts, astonished. "An' who's the man?"

"It's not a man. It's a woman."

"A woman!" repeated Batts, wondering. "Well, these be funny times to live in, when the women go ridin' astride an' hay-balin', an' steam-ploughin', an' the Lord knows what. And now they must be takin' the farms, and turnin' out the men. Well, for sure."

A mild and puzzled laughter crossed the speaker's face.

Halsey nodded.

"An' now they've got the vote. That's the top on't! My old missis, she talks poltikis now to me of a night. I don't mind her, now the childer be all gone. But I'd ha' bid her mind her own business when they was young an' wanted seein' to."

"Now, what can a woman knoa about poltikis?" said Batts, still in the same tone of pleasant rumination. "It isn't in natur. *We* warn't given the producin' o' the babies— we'd ha' cried out if we 'ad been!"

A chuckle passed from one old man to the other.

"Well, onyways the women is all in a flutter about the votin'," said Halsey, lighting his pipe with old hands that shook. "An' there's chaps already coomin' round lookin' out for it."

"You bet there is!" was Batts's amused reply. "But they'll take their toime, will the women. 'Don't you try to hustle-bustle me like you're doin',' say my missus sharp-like to a Labour chap as coom round lasst week, 'cos yo' won't get nothin' by it.' And she worn't no more forthcomin' to the Conservative man when ee called."

"Will she do what *you* tell her, Batts?" asked Halsey, with an evident interest in the question.

"Oh, Lord, no!" said Batts placidly, "shan't try. But now about this yoong woman an' Great End?—"

"Well, I ain't heared much about her—not yet awhile. But they say as she's nice-lookin', an' Muster Shentsone ee said as she'd been to college somewhere, where they'd larn't her farmin'."

Batts made a sound of contempt.

"College!" he said, with a twitching of the broad nostrils which seemed to spread over half his face. "*They* can't larn yer farmin'!"

"She's been on a farm too somewhere near Brighton, Muster Shenstone says, since she was at college; and ee told me she do seem to be terr'ble full o' new notions."

"She'd better be full o' money," said the other, cuttingly. "Notions is no good without money to 'em."

"Aye, they're wunnerfull costly things is notions. Yo'd better by a long way go by the folk as know. But they do say she'll be payin' good wages."

"I dessay she will! She'll be obleeged. It's Hobson's choice, as you might say!" said Batts, chuckling again.

Halsey was silent, and the two old men trudged on with cheerful countenances. Through the minds of both there ran pleasant thoughts of the contrast between the days before the war and the days now prevailing. Both of them could remember a wage of fifteen and sixteen shillings a week. Then just before the war, it had risen to eighteen shillings and a pound. And now — why the Wages Board for Brookshire had fixed thirty-three shillings as a weekly minimum, and a nine-hours' day! Prices were high, but they would go down some day; and wages would not go down. The old men could not have told exactly why this confidence lay so deep in them; but there it was, and it seemed to give a strange new stability and even dignity to life. Their sons were fighting; and they had the normal human affection for their sons. They wished the war to end. But, after all, there was something to be said for the war. They — old Peter Halsey and old Joe Batts — were more considered and more comfortable than they would have been before the war. And it was the consideration more even than the comfort that warmed their hearts.

The evening grew hotter, and the way to the village seemed long. The old men were now too tired to talk; till just as they came in sight of the first houses, they perceived the village wagonette coming towards them.

"There she be! I did hear as Webb wor to meet her at the station. He's took her over once before," said old Halsey, raising his eyes for a moment and then dropping them again. Batts did the same. The glance was momentary. But both men had the same impression of a pleasant-faced young woman sitting erect behind Jonathan Webb, the decrepit driver of the wagonette, and looking straight at them as they passed her. There was a general effect of youth and bright colour; of pale brown hair, too, over very dark eyes.

"Aye, she be quite nice-lookin'," said Batts, with unction, "rayther uncommon. She minds me summat o' my missis when she wor a young 'un." Halsey's mouth twitched a little, but though his thoughts were ironical, he said nothing. It was generally admitted by the older people that Mrs. Batts had been through many years the village beauty, but her fall from that high place was now of such

ancient date that it seemed foolish of Batts to be so fond of referring to it.

The wagonette passed on. The woman sitting in it carefully took note of the scene around her, in a mood of mingled hope and curiosity. She was to live in this valley without a stream, under these high chalk downs with their hanging woods, and within a mile or so of the straggling village she had just driven through. At last, after much wandering, she was to find a home—a real home of her own. The word "home" had not meant much—or much at least that was agreeable—to her, till now. Her large but handsome mouth took a bitter fold as she thought over various past events.

Now they had left the village behind, and were passing through fields that were soon to be her fields. Her keen eyes appraised the crops standing in them. She had paid the family of her predecessor a good price for them, but they were worth it. And just ahead, on her left, was a wide stretch of newly-ploughed land rising towards a bluff of grassy down-land on the horizon. The ploughed land itself had been down up to a few months before this date; thin pasture for a few sheep, through many generations. She thought with eagerness of the crops she was going to make it bear, in the coming year. Wheat, or course. The wheat crops all round the village were really magnificent. This was going to be the resurrection year for English farming, after fifty years of "death and damnation"—comparatively. And there would be many good years to come after.

Yes, Mr. Thomas Wellin, whose death had thrown the farm which she had now taken on the market, had done well for the land. And it was not his fault but the landlord's that the farmhouse and buildings had been allowed to fall into such a state. Mr. Wellin had not wanted the house, since he was only working the land temporarily in addition to his own farm half a mile away. But the owner, Colonel Shepherd, ought to have looked after the farmhouse and buildings better. Still, they were making her a fair allowance for repairs.

She was longing to know how the workmen from Millsboro had been getting on. Hastings, the Wellins' former bailiff, now temporarily hers, had promised to stay behind that evening to meet her at the farm. She only meant to insist on what was absolutely neces-

sary. Even if she had wished for anything more, the lack of labour would have prevented it.

The old horse jogged on, and presently from a row of limes beside the road, a wave of fragrance, evanescent and delicious, passed over the carriage. Miss Henderson sniffed it with delight. "But one has never *enough* of it!" she thought discontentedly. And then she remembered how as a child—in far-away Sussex—she used to press her face into the lime-blossom in her uncle's garden—passionately, greedily, trying to get from it a greater pleasure than it would ever yield. For the more she tried to compel it, by a kind of violence, the more it escaped her. She used to envy the bees lying drunk among the blooms. They at least were surfeited and satisfied.

It struck her that there was a kind of parable in it of her whole life—so far.

But now there was a new world opening. The past was behind her. She drew herself stiffly erect, conscious through every limb of youth and strength, and filled with a multitude of vague hopes. Conscious, too, of the three thousand pounds that Uncle Robert had so opportunely left her. She had never realized that money could make so much difference; and she thought gratefully of the elderly bachelor, her mother's brother, who had unexpectedly remembered her. It had enabled her to get her year's training, and to take this farm with a proper margin of capital. She wished she had been able to tell Uncle Robert before he died what it meant to her.

They passed one or two pairs of labourers going home, then a group of girls in overalls, then a spring cart containing four workmen behind a ragged pony, no doubt the builder's men who had been at work on the Great End repairs. They all looked at her curiously, and Rachel Henderson looked back at them—steadily, without shyness. They were evidently aware of who she was and where she was going. Some of them perhaps would soon be in her employ. She would be settling all that in a week or two.

Ah, there was the house. She leant forward and saw it lying under the hill, the woods on the slope coming down to the back of it. Yes, it was certainly a lonely situation. That was why the house, the farm lands, too, had been so long unlet, till old Wellin, the farm's nearest neighbour, having made a good deal of money, had rented

the land from Colonel Shepherd, to add to his own. The farm buildings, too, he had made some use of, keeping carts and machines, and certain stores there. But the house he had refused to have any concern with. It had remained empty and locked up for a good many years.

The wagonette turned into the rough road leading through the middle of a fine field of oats to the house. The field was gaily splashed with poppies, which ran, too, along the edges of the crop, swayed by the evening breeze, and flaming in the level sun. Though lonesome and neglected, the farm in July was a pleasant and picturesque object. It stood high and the air about it blew keen and fresh. The chalk hill curved picturesquely round it, and the friendly woods ran down behind to keep it company. Rachel Henderson, in pursuit of that campaign she was always now waging against a natural optimism, tried to make herself imagine it in winter—the leafless trees, the solitary road, the treeless pasture or arable fields, that stretched westward in front of the farm, covered perhaps with snow; and the distant stretches of the plain. There was not another house, not even a cottage, anywhere in sight. The village had disappeared. She herself, in the old wagonette, seemed the only living thing.

No, there was a man emerging from the farm-gate, and coming to meet her—the bailiff, George Hastings. She had only seen him once before, on her first hurried visit, when, after getting a rough estimate from him of the repairs necessary to the house and buildings, she had made up her mind to take the farm, if the landlord would agree to do them.

"Yon's Muster Hastings," said Jonathan Webb, turning on her a benevolent and wrinkled countenance, with two bright red spots in the midst of each weather-beaten cheek. Miss Henderson again noticed the observant curiosity in the old man's eyes. Everybody, indeed, seemed to look at her with the same expression. As a woman farmer she was no doubt just a freak, a sport, in the eyes of the village. Well, she prophesied they would take her seriously before long.

"I'm afraid I haven't as much to show you, miss, as I'd like," said Hastings, as he helped her to alight. "It's cruel work nowadays try-

ing to do anything of this kind. Two of the men that began work last week have been called up, and there's another been just 'ticed away from me this week. The wages that some people about will give are just mad!" He threw up his hands. "Colonel Shepherd says he can't compete."

Miss Henderson replied civilly but decidedly that somehow or other the work would have to be done. If Colonel Shepherd couldn't find the wages, she must pay the difference. Get in some time, during August, she must.

The bailiff looked at her with a little sluggish surprise. He was not used to being hustled, still less to persons who were ready to pay rather than be kept waiting. He murmured that he dared say it would be all right, and she must come and look.

They turned to the right up a stony pitch, through a dilapidated gate, and so into the quadrangle of the farm. To the left was a long row of open cow-sheds, then cow-houses and barns, the stables, a large shed in which stood an old and broken farm cart, and finally the house, fronting the barns.

The house was little more than a large cottage built in the shabbiest way forty years ago, and of far less dignity than the fine old barn on which it looked. It abutted at one end on the cart-shed, and between it and the line of cow-sheds was the gate into the farmyard.

Miss Henderson stepped up to the house and looked at it.

"It is a poor place!" she said discontentedly; "and those men don't seem to have done much to it yet."

Hastings admitted it. But they had done a little, he said, shamefacedly, and he unlocked the door. Miss Henderson lingered outside a moment.

"I never noticed," she said, "that the living room goes right through. What draughts there'll be in the winter!"

For as she stood looking into the curtainless window that fronted the farm-yard, she saw through it a further window at the back of the room, and beyond that a tree. Both windows were large and seemed to take up most of the wall on either side of the small room.

The effect was peculiarly comfortless, as though no one living in the room could possibly enjoy any shred of privacy. There were no cosy corners in it anywhere, and Miss Henderson's fancy imagined rows of faces looking in.

Inside a little papering and whitewashing had been done, but certainly the place looked remarkably uninviting. A narrow passage ran from front to back, on one side of which was the living room with the two windows, while on the other were the kitchen and scullery. Upstairs there were two good-sized bedrooms with a small third room in a lean-to at the back, the lower part of which was occupied by a wash-house. Through the windows could be seen a neglected bit of garden, and an untidy orchard.

But when she had wandered about the rooms a little, Rachel Henderson's naturally buoyant temperament reasserted itself. She had brought some bright patterns of distemper with her which she gave to Hastings with precise instructions. She had visions of case-ment curtains to hide the nakedness of the big windows with warm serge curtains to draw over them in the winter. The floors must be stained. There should be a deep Indian-red druggel in the sitting-room, with pigeon-blue walls, and she thought complacently of the bits of old furniture she had been collecting, which were stored in a friend's flat in town. An old dresser, a grandfather's clock, some bits of brass, two arm-chairs, an old oak table—it would all look very nice when it was done, and would cost little. Then the bedrooms. She had brought with her some rolls of flowery paper. She ran to fetch them from the wagonette, and pinned some pieces against the wall. The larger room with the south aspect should be Janet's. She would take the north room for herself. She saw them both in her mind's eye already comfortably furnished; above all fresh and bright. There should be no dirt or dinginess in the house, if she could help it. In the country whitewash and distemper are cheap.

Then Hastings followed her about through the farm buildings, where her quick eye, trained in modern ways, perceived a number of small improvements to be made that he would never have noticed. She was always ready, he saw, to spend money on things that would save labour or lessen dirt. But she was not extravagant, and looking through the list of her directions and commissions, as he

hastily jotted them down, he admitted to himself that she seemed to know what she was about. And being an honest man himself, and good-tempered, though rather shy and dull, he presently recognized the same qualities of honesty and good temper in her; and took to her. Insensibly their tone to each other grew friendly. Though he was temporarily in the landlord's employ, he had been for some years in the service of the Wellin family. Half-consciously he contrasted Miss Henderson's manner to him with theirs. In his own view he had been worse treated than an ordinary farm labourer throughout his farming life, though he had more education, and was expected naturally to have more brains and foresight than the labourer. He was a little better paid; but his work and that of his wife was never done. He had got little credit for success and all the blame for failure. And the Wellin women-folk had looked down on his wife and himself. A little patronage sometimes, and worthless gifts, that burnt in the taking; but no common feeling, no real respect. But Miss Henderson was different. His rather downtrodden personality felt a stimulus. He began to hope that when she came into possession she would take him on. A woman could not possibly make anything of Great End without a bailiff!

Her "nice" looks, no doubt, counted for something. Her face was, perhaps, a little too full for beauty—the delicately coloured cheeks and the large smiling mouth. But her brown eyes were very fine, with very dark pupils, and marked eyebrows; and her nose and chin, with their soft, blunted lines, seemed to promise laughter and easy ways. She was very lightly and roundly made; and everything about her, her step, her sunburn, her freckles, her evident muscular strength, spoke of open-air life and physical exercise. Yet, for all this general aspect of a comely country-woman, there was much that was sharply sensitive and individual in the face. Even a stranger might well feel that its tragic, as well as its humorous or tender possibilities, would have to be reckoned with.

"All right!" said Miss Henderson at last, closing her little notebook with a snap, "now I think we've been through everything. I'll take over one cart, and Mrs. Wellin must remove the other. I'll buy the chaff-cutter and the dairy things, but not the reaping machine—"

"I'm afraid that'll put Mrs. Wellin out considerably!" threw in Hastings.

"Can't help it. I can't have the place cluttered up with old iron like that. It's worth nothing. I'm sure *you* wouldn't advise me to buy it!"

She looked with bright decision at her companion, who smiled a little awkwardly, and said nothing. The old long habit of considering the Wellin interest first, before any other in the world, held him still, though he was no longer their servant.

Miss Henderson moved back towards the house.

"And you'll hurry these men up?—as much as you can? They *are* slow-coaches! I must get in the week after next. Miss Leighton and I intend to come, whatever happens."

Hastings understood that "Miss Leighton" was to be Miss Henderson's partner in the farm, specially to look after the dairy work. Miss Henderson seemed to think a lot of her.

"And you must please engage those two men you spoke of. Neither of them, you say, under sixty! Well, there's no picking and choosing now. If they were eighty I should have to take them! till the harvest's got in. There are two girls coming from the Land Army, and you've clinched that other girl from the village?"

Hastings nodded.

"Well, I dare say we shall get the harvest in somehow," she said, standing at the gate, and looking over the fields. "Miss Leighton and I mean to put our backs into it. But Miss Leighton isn't as strong as I am."

Her eyes wandered thoughtfully over the wheat-field, ablaze under the level gold of the sun. Then she suddenly smiled.

"I expect you think it a queer business, Mr. Hastings, women taking to farming?"

"Well, it's new, you see, Miss Henderson."

"I believe it's going to be very common. Why shouldn't the women do it!"

She frowned a little.

"Oh, no reason at all," said Hastings hurriedly, thinking he had offended her. "I've nothing against it myself. And there won't be men enough to go round, after the war."

She looked at him sharply.

"You've got a son in the war?"

"Two, and one's been killed."

"Last year?"

"No, last month."

Miss Henderson said nothing, but her look was full of softness. "He was to have been allowed home directly," Hastings went on, "for two or three months. He was head woodman before the war on Lord Radley's property." He pointed to the wooded slopes of the hill. "And they were to have given him leave to see to the cutting of these woods."

"These woods!" Miss Henderson turned a startled face upon him. "You don't mean to say they're coming down!"

"Half of them commandeered," said Hastings, with a shrug. "The Government valuers have been all over them these last weeks. They're splendid timber, you know. There's been a timber camp the other side of the hills a long while. They've got Canadians, and no doubt they'll move on here."

Miss Henderson made another quick movement. She said nothing, however. She was staring at the woods, which shone in the glow now steadily creeping up the hill, and Hastings thought she was protesting from the scenery point of view.

"Well, the Government must have the wood," he said, with resignation.

"We've got to win the war. But it does seem a pity."

"I don't know that I should have taken the farm," she said, under her breath—

"If you had known? I wish I'd thought to tell you. But it was really only settled a few days ago."

"I don't like having a lot of strange men about the farm," she said abruptly, "especially when I have girls to look after."

"Oh, the camp's a long way from the farm," he said consolingly. "And these woods will come last."

Still Miss Henderson's face did not quite recover its cheerfulness. She looked at her watch.

"Don't let me keep you, Mr. Hastings. I'll lock up the house, if you'll tell me where to leave the key."

He showed her where to put it, in a corner of the stable, for him to find on the morrow. Then, in her rapid way, Miss Henderson offered him the post of bailiff on the farm, from the date of her entry. He agreed at once; his salary was settled, and he departed with a more cheerful aspect than when he arrived. The hopefulness and spring of youth had long since left him, and he had dreaded the new experience of this first meeting with a woman-farmer, from whom he desired employment simply because he was very badly off, he was getting old, and Mr. Wellin's widow had treated him shabbily. He had lost his nerve for new ventures. But Miss Henderson had made things easy. She had struck him as considerate and sensible—a "good sort." He would do his best for her.

Rachel Henderson, left to herself, did not immediately re-enter the house. She went with a face on which the cloud still rested to look at the well which was to be found under the cart-shed, at the eastern end of the house.

It was covered with a wooden lid which she removed. Under the shed roof there was but little light left. A faint gleam showed the level of the water, which, owing to the long drought, was very low. Hastings had told her that the well was extremely deep—-150 feet at least, and inexhaustible. The water was chalky but good. It would have to be pumped up every morning for the supply of the house and stables.

The well had a brick margin. Rachel sat down upon it, her eyes upon that distant gleam below. The dusk was fast possessing itself of all the farm, and an evening wind was gustily blowing through the cart-shed, playing with some old guano sacks that had been left there, and whistling round the corners of the house. Outside, Rachel

could hear the horse fidgeting, and old Jonathan coughing—no doubt as a signal to her that she had kept him long enough.

Still, she sat bent together on the margin of the well. Then she drew off her glove, and felt for something in the leather bag she carried on her wrist. She took it out, and the small object sparkled a little as she held it poised for a moment—as though considering. Then with a rapid movement, she bent over the well, and dropped it into the water. There was a slight splash.

Rachel Henderson raised herself and stood up.

"That's done with!" she said to herself, with a straightening of all her young frame.

Yet all the way back to London she was tormented by thoughts of what she had declared was "done with"; of scenes and persons, that is, which she was determined to forget, and had just formally renounced for ever by her symbolic action at the well.

## II

"You do seem to have hit on a rather nice spot, Rachel, though lonesome," said Miss Henderson's friend and partner, Janet Leighton, as they stood on the front steps of Great End Farm, surveying the scene outside, on an August evening, about a week after she and Rachel had arrived with their furniture and personal belongings to take possession of the farm.

During that week they had both worked hard—from dawn till dark, both outside and in. The harvest was in full swing, and as the dusk was falling, Janet Leighton, who had just returned herself from the fields, could watch the scene going on in the wheat-field beyond the farm-yard, where, as the reaping machine steadily pared away the remaining square of wheat, two or three men and boys with guns lay in wait outside the square for the rabbits as they bolted from their fast lessening shelter. The gold and glow of harvest was on the fields and in the air. At last the sun had come back to a sodden land, after weeks of cold and drenching showers which, welcomed in June, had by the middle of August made all England tremble for the final fate of the gorgeous crops then filling the largest area ever tilled on British soil with their fat promise. Wheat, oats, and barley stood once more erect, roots were saved, and the young vicar of Ipscombe was reflecting as he walked towards Great End Farm that his harvest festival sermon might now after all be rather easier to write than had seemed probable during the foregoing anxious weeks of chill and storm.

Rachel Henderson, who had thrown herself—tired out—into a chair in the sitting-room window, which was wide open, nodded as she caught her friend's remark and smiled. But she did not want to talk. She was in that state of physical fatigue when mere rest is a positive delight. The sun, the warm air, the busy harvest scene, and all the long hours of hard but pleasant work seemed to be still somehow in her pulses, thrilling through her blood. It was long since she had known the acute physical pleasure of such a day; but

her sense of it had conjured up involuntarily recollections of many similar days in a distant scene—great golden spaces, blinding sun, and huge reaping machines, twice the size of that at work in the field yonder. The recollections were unwelcome. Thought was unwelcome. She wanted only food and sleep—deep sleep—renewing her tired muscles, till the delicious early morning came round again, and she was once more in the fields directing her team of workers.

"Why, there's the vicar!" said Janet Leighton, perceiving the tall and willowy figure of Mr. Shenstone, as its owner stopped to speak to one of the boys with the guns who were watching the game.

Rachel looked round with a look of annoyance.

"Oh, dear, what a bore," she said wearily. "I suppose I must go and tidy up. Nobody ought to be allowed to pay visits after five o'clock."

"You asked him something about a village woman to help, didn't you?"

"I did, worse luck!" sighed Rachel, gathering up her sunbonnet and disappearing from the window. Janet heard her go upstairs, and a hasty opening of cupboards overhead. She herself had come back an hour earlier from the fields than Rachel in order to get supper ready, and had slipped a skirt over the khaki tunic and knickerbockers which were her dress—and her partner's—when at work on the farm. She wondered mischievously what Rachel would put on. That her character included an average dose of vanity, the natural vanity of a handsome woman, Rachel's new friend was well aware. But Janet, Rachel's elder by five years, was only tenderly amused by it. All Rachel's foibles, as far as she knew them, were pleasant to her. They were in that early stage of a new friendship when all is glamour.

Yet Janet did sometimes reflect, "How little I really know about her. She is a darling—but a mystery!"

They had met at college, taken their farm training together, and fallen in love with each other. Janet had scarcely a relation in the world. Rachel possessed, it seemed, a brother in Canada, another in South Africa, and some cousins whom she scarcely knew, children of the uncle who had left her three thousand pounds. Each had been