

**THE LOWEST RUNG: TOGETHER  
WITH THE HAND ON THE  
LATCH, ST. LUKE'S SUMMER  
AND THE UNDERSTUDY**

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The Lowest Rung: Together with the Hand on the Latch, St. Luke's Summer and the Understudy  
by Mary Cholmondeley

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**MARY CHOLMONDELEY**

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**THE LOWEST RUNG**

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TOGETHER WITH THE HAND ON  
THE LATCH, ST. LUKE'S SUMMER  
AND THE UNDERSTUDY

BY MARY CHOLMONDELEY

AUTHOR OF "RED POTAGE"

LONDON

JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET, W.

1908

TO  
HOWARD STURGIS





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## PREFACE

I HAVE been writing books for five-and-twenty years, novels of which I believe myself to be the author, in spite of the fact that I have been assured over and over again that they are not my own work. When I have on several occasions ventured to claim them, I have seldom been believed, which seems the more odd as, when others have claimed them, they have been believed at once. Before I put my name to them they were invariably considered to be, and reviewed as, the work of a man; and for years after I had put my name to them various men have been mentioned to me as the real author.

I remember once, when I was very young and shy, how at one of my first London