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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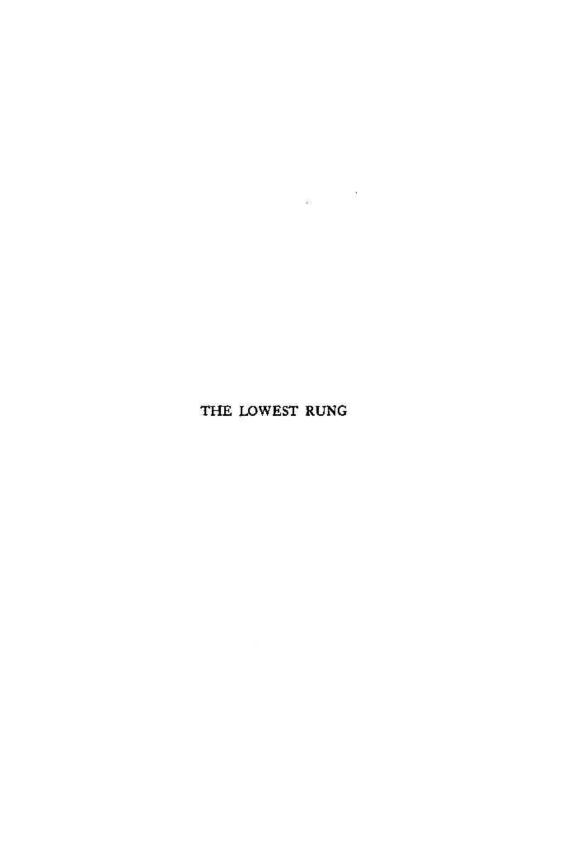
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MARY CHOLMONDELEY

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THE LOWEST RUNG

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

BY MARY CHOLMONDELEY AUTHOR OF "RED POTTAGE"

LONDON

JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET, W.

1908

TO HOWARD STURGIS



CONTENTS

						PAGE
THE LOWEST RUNG	100	×	86	(*	(*)	33
THE HAND ON THE	LATCH		*	٠	*	82
ST. LUKE'S SUMMER	₹. *	9	28	82	35	107
THE UNDERSTUDY.						156



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

2