

**AN OLD WOMAN'S
OUTLOOK IN A
HAMPSHIRE VILLAGE**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649058556

An Old Woman's Outlook in a Hampshire Village by Charlotte M. Yonge

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HAMPSHIRE VILLAGE**

AN OLD WOMAN'S OUTLOOK



AN
OLD WOMAN'S OUTLOOK
IN
A HAMPSHIRE VILLAGE

BY
CHARLOTTE M. YONGE

London
MACMILLAN AND CO.
AND NEW YORK
1896

LOAN STACK

*First Edition 1899
Reprinted 1966*

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JANUARY

I MIGHT say, except for brevity's sake, an old woman's outlook through a keyhole, for all my life has been spent in one place, and one which can boast of nothing extraordinary; but then it has always been looked at with loving eyes; and though I have only a second-hand smattering of the knowledge needed to appreciate its interests, it seems to me that its very absence of peculiarities may make it serve to assist others to make the most of their surroundings, so as to find no country walk devoid of the homely delights that sustain and lift up the spirit—though it

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strikes me that my style is that of Mr. Bertram in *Guy Mannering*.

The New Year is coming in! Here, in South Hampshire, Christmas does not often come in conventional form, laden with snow. 'As the day lengthens, the cold strengthens,' is a very true proverb, but the lengthening is seldom perceptible till after Twelfth Day; and it is well for the poor that the severest weather should not often set in till there is a little less darkness. When I first remember, the families used to go to bed as soon as the father had come in, so as to save fire and candle; but better wages and paraffin have made a difference, and each cottage shows a cheerful light over its muslin blind, with the geraniums that flourish so wonderfully behind it. These years have done much every way for the labourers' families. The dark blue cotton, sprung from 'Nancy Peel's' parsley pattern, has given place to the serge, too