

is sorter breakin' it to her gently—kinder beckonin' with a barn-door, as the sayin' is.

"But Mr. Ronald ain't the faintest notion but you've gone back to your folks in Grand Rapids, an' so all these favors is for *me*, of course. Well, I certainly take to luckshurry like a duck takes to water. I never knew it was so easy to feel comfortable. I guess I been a little hard on the wealthy in the past. Now, if *you* should marry a rich man, I don't believe——"

Claire sighed wearily. "I'll never marry anybody, Martha. And besides, a rich man wouldn't be likely to go to a cheap boarding-house for a wife, and next winter I—— O, isn't it warm? Don't you *wish* the train would start?"

At last the train did start, and they were whirled out of the steaming city, over the hills and far away, through endless stretches of sunlit country, and the long, long hours of the hot summer day, until, at night, they reached their destination, and found Sam Slawson waiting there in the cool twilight to welcome them.

Followed days of rarest bliss for Martha, when she could marshal out her small forces, setting each his particular task, and seeing it was done with thoroughness and despatch, so that in an inconceivably short time her new home shone with all the spotless cleanliness of the old, and added comeliness beside.