
INTRODUCTION

vii

because it is her painful duty to try and make both ends meet—a feat which she is eternally unable to accomplish. From one place they drift to another, and Anna's few friends of childhood are left behind, or if she sees them again they look at her askance, because her father has been in prison. And there is a brother, too, who would be a severe affliction even in the most favourable circumstances.

Meanwhile Anna pursues her own way, very humble, very insignificant, but always trying to do her best. She is a governess, and endures the usual fate of governesses, being either bullied or made love to—bullied by the mistress, and on one occasion compromisingly made love to by the master. One solace she has—the writing of poems. A characteristic German trait this! And so she sits and dreams, for she is the most sentimental little person you