

is hanging over it, just as it was the day we stopped work on it, more than seven years ago."

Ared must have admitted a note of his old discouragement and disbelief into his expression, for she spoke with new conviction.

"It's there, Fleming wouldn't be so anxious to ruin you, and drive you out of the country if he didn't know that a wealth of oil was hidden under those rocks. We'll find a new place for a well, and go deeper, if we must, but we'll *get* it."

Solomon was not at the house when they arrived. Jane remained outside in the sun while he looked through the rooms.

"No, he's not here," he said, joining her in a little while. "But he's around somewhere; you'd better go in and sit by the fire while I look him up."

He went in with her to make her comfortable. The sun reached in through the open door and fell upon the hearth, where the morning fire had burned down to coals. Solomon's chair stood before it, as he had left it but a little while before. Ared moved it a little nearer the fire.

"Sit here, and I'll go out and find him," he said. "He can't be far away, for I left him here scarcely half an hour ago."

"He seems to have left a letter for you," she said, taking it up from the table, where it had lain among the litter of papers unnoticed.

"That's strange—and he intended to post it, too, it's sealed and stamped. That's very strange!"