

new;" at intervals a giant elm, bending its graceful boughs to the morning breeze; fields ripe unto harvest, or from which the bounteous stores had been gathered—the winding road and zig-zag lines of fence breaking the monotony of the level lands. A little east of the farm, Winifred caught a glimpse of sparkling waters, of tall trees reflected in the shining mirror, encircled by gently rising hills, and in the Thorndale mill-pond thought she had discovered a tiny lake.

But her meditations were interrupted by a light tap at the door, and her "come in" was answered by Faith's entrance. No doubt as to her identity, for the mother's expression was repeated in the girl's fair sweet face, and the dark eyes were a counterpart of Egbert's.

"We heard you stirring, Miss Roy, but mother thinks you should not rise so early. The men are going to work in the north field to-day, so we had breakfast an hour before the usual time."

As Faith conveyed the message, she glanced with half-shy interest at the stranger, of whom her mother had spoken so kindly.

"You are very kind," said Winifred, "but indeed I am quite rested. How exceedingly beautiful the country is, Miss Thornton. I think one could scarcely help being perfectly happy where everything must be so lovely all the time."

"We will show you a great many prettier places than Thorndale, I hope," replied Faith, smilingly. "The country around us is considered too flat to be very beautiful, and we are so far from the water that there is not much to tempt tourists. But, Miss Roy, if you are ready, and will put these rubbers on, we can go out and see mother's flowers, while the dew is on them."

Passionately fond of flowers, Winifred's admiration knew no bounds, as they stood before the "centre bed," the special object of Mrs. Thornton's attention; for, as if conscious, and in recognition of her loving care, the plants bloomed with surpassing luxuriance. A few late roses drooped heavy with perfume over the glad, bright faces of velvety pansies; rich, dark carnations, misty hidden maidens, and masses of white candytuft mingled their delicate beauty with the almost tropical splendour of brilliant scarlet poppies—holding the sunlight with magic spell—flashing spears of gladioli and crimson fox-gloves, while mignonette, sweet-peas and English wall-flowers, vied in fragrance with many other blossoms new to Winifred, who had spent her life chiefly in a city.

"See," cried Faith, "are they not lovely?" and as she spoke she culled a bouquet, glistening with starry gems, and placed it in Winifred's hand. "Flowers seem to last longer, if they are gathered while the dew-drops are on them."

"Ah," said Mrs. Thornton, giving her hand in pleasant greeting to Winifred, as the girls re-entered the house, "I am glad to see roses instead of lilies this morning; you were very pale last night. But Miss Roy, you should have slept later. I'm afraid you will find this day long."

But the hours flew swiftly by in the peaceful farmhouse, and watching the busy, yet quiet, routine of the home life, reading fresh thoughts from nature's pages through the open windows, and appreciating the undertone of harmony in all her surroundings, Winifred was greatly charmed with her first experience of farm life.

"Faith," said Mrs. Thornton, as she noticed the thoughtful face, over which a shade of sadness stole, as Winifred's own straightened home-life rose in contrast with the plenteousness about her, "I wish you would go over to Mrs. Burleigh and ask if she can come to-morrow for a few hours, and help Prissie—and perhaps Miss Roy would like to see the mill?"

So the two girls, shading their faces with enormous straw hats, went through the fruit-laden orchard, across the bark-strewn mill-yard—stopping a moment to listen to the musical "drp" of the leakage from the flume, on the moss-covered stones beneath—then into the busy, whirring mill. The big doors, open at either end, showing a vista of low-lying hills on the one side—on the other a fringe of woods, beyond which lay the mill-pond—piles of timber, in various stages, lying within and without.

Winifred looked on in speechless fascination, as they watched one man guaging, and another guiding the huge logs. "Oh," she exclaimed, as an immense knot appeared in the hard oak, "can it cut through that?" But with a defiant shriek, the remorseless saw fulfilled its mission, cleaving the quivering timber with seemingly little effort, leaving Winifred almost dismayed by its power.

"Miss Thornton," said Winifred, as they seated themselves within speaking distance of the noisy machinery, "is it not pleasant to think of all the work those saws accomplish, and no one worn out or tired by it? The men seem to have so little trouble, and yet see how much is being done? If we were only conscious of some power in ourselves that would enable us to do what we wish without fainting by the way," she continued, musingly, "how much easier life would be."

"Do you not think we *may* have, Miss Roy? You know the water keeps the wheels in motion, and we only need the well spring of hope and faith to make us brave and strong for every task!"

"Yes, but the hot sun dries the spring, or the winter's cold freezes it, and then our will grows weak to perform, and the wheels stop," said Winifred, with a wistful gaze into the clear, truthful eyes, that had