

Cambridge University Press
978-1-108-02536-2 - A Farmer's Year
H. Rider Haggard
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

CAMBRIDGE LIBRARY COLLECTION

Books of enduring scholarly value

History

The books reissued in this series include accounts of historical events and movements by eye-witnesses and contemporaries, as well as landmark studies that assembled significant source materials or developed new historiographical methods. The series includes work in social, political and military history on a wide range of periods and regions, giving modern scholars ready access to influential publications of the past.

A Farmer's Year

H. Rider Haggard (1856-1925) is best known as the successful writer of adventure stories with exotic backgrounds such as *King Solomon's Mines* and *She*. However, he also served on a number of royal commissions, and in managing his wife's Norfolk estate became a recognised expert on agricultural matters. *A Farmer's Year* is his diary for 1898, recounting the work of the farm, month by month, together with observations on rural life and the state of agriculture in general, which was suffering due to the population drift to the towns and competition from cheaper imported food. His descriptions of country life are beautifully written, with many illustrations: he clearly loves the land and is concerned for its future, but does not ignore the hardship faced by many farmers and their workers. The book is a fascinating mixture of anecdote and natural history, as well as depicting late Victorian agricultural methods.

Cambridge University Press
978-1-108-02536-2 - A Farmer's Year
H. Rider Haggard
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

Cambridge University Press has long been a pioneer in the reissuing of out-of-print titles from its own backlist, producing digital reprints of books that are still sought after by scholars and students but could not be reprinted economically using traditional technology. The Cambridge Library Collection extends this activity to a wider range of books which are still of importance to researchers and professionals, either for the source material they contain, or as landmarks in the history of their academic discipline.

Drawing from the world-renowned collections in the Cambridge University Library, and guided by the advice of experts in each subject area, Cambridge University Press is using state-of-the-art scanning machines in its own Printing House to capture the content of each book selected for inclusion. The files are processed to give a consistently clear, crisp image, and the books finished to the high quality standard for which the Press is recognised around the world. The latest print-on-demand technology ensures that the books will remain available indefinitely, and that orders for single or multiple copies can quickly be supplied.

The Cambridge Library Collection will bring back to life books of enduring scholarly value (including out-of-copyright works originally issued by other publishers) across a wide range of disciplines in the humanities and social sciences and in science and technology.

Cambridge University Press
978-1-108-02536-2 - A Farmer's Year
H. Rider Haggard
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

A Farmer's Year

Being His Commonplace Book for 1898

H. RIDER HAGGARD



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge University Press
978-1-108-02536-2 - A Farmer's Year
H. Rider Haggard
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town, Singapore,
São Paulo, Delhi, Dubai, Tokyo, Mexico City

Published in the United States of America by Cambridge University Press, New York

www.cambridge.org

Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781108025362

© in this compilation Cambridge University Press 2010

This edition first published 1899
This digitally printed version 2010

ISBN 978-1-108-02536-2 Paperback

This book reproduces the text of the original edition. The content and language reflect the beliefs, practices and terminology of their time, and have not been updated.

Cambridge University Press wishes to make clear that the book, unless originally published by Cambridge, is not being republished by, in association or collaboration with, or with the endorsement or approval of, the original publisher or its successors in title.

Cambridge University Press
978-1-108-02536-2 - A Farmer's Year
H. Rider Haggard
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

A FARMER'S YEAR

Cambridge University Press
978-1-108-02536-2 - A Farmer's Year
H. Rider Haggard
Frontmatter
[More information](#)



BUNGAY COMMON FROM THE VINEYARD HILLS.

Cambridge University Press
978-1-108-02536-2 - A Farmer's Year
H. Rider Haggard
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

A FARMER'S YEAR

BEING

HIS COMMONPLACE BOOK FOR 1898

BY

H. RIDER HAGGARD

“Who minds to quote
Upon this note
May easily find enough:
What charge and pain,
To little gain,
Doth follow toiling plough.

“Yet farmer may
Thank God and say,
For yearly such good hap,
Well fare the plough
That sends enough
To stop so many a gap’”

THOMAS TUSSER, 1558

*WITH 2 MAPS AND 36 ILLUSTRATIONS
BY G. LEON LITTLE*

LONGMANS, GREEN, AND CO.

39 PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON

NEW YORK AND BOMBAY

1899

All rights reserved

Cambridge University Press
978-1-108-02536-2 - A Farmer's Year
H. Rider Haggard
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

DEDICATION

MY DEAR HARTCUP,

Had your mother—who found interest in these pages and who to the end was fond of quiet reading about country things—lived to see them finished, I should have asked, as some small token of their author's affection and respect, to be allowed to set her name upon a book that tells of the home where she was born and the fields in which she spent her distant youth.

But it cannot be ; so to you, as a friend and fellow inhabitant of Arcady, to you who also have had experience of the frowning face of adverse agricultural balance sheets, I venture to offer them.

Believe me

Ever sincerely yours,

H. RIDER HAGGARD.

DITCHINGHAM : 1899.

HERBERT HARTCUP, ESQ.

Cambridge University Press
978-1-108-02536-2 - A Farmer's Year
H. Rider Haggard
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

AUTHOR'S NOTE

AMONGST a great deal of very kindly criticism that has reached him during their publication in serial form (for which hereby he tenders his best thanks) the author of these pages has read one or two notices complaining that they are not sufficiently technical. He wishes to explain, therefore, that he never intended them to be a manual of farming, but rather what their title implies—the record of one year of the daily experiences and reflections of an individual farmer. With the many existing and admirable works upon the subject he has neither the desire to enter into competition nor, in truth, the scientific and detailed knowledge necessary to such a task.

Outside of descriptions of rustic scenes and events, which to some quiet minds are often pleasing, any interest that this book may possess, indeed, for the present or for future time, must be due in the main to the facts that it is a picture, or perhaps a photograph, of one facet of our many-sided modern life, and that it mirrors faithfully, if incidentally, the decrepit and even dangerous state of the farming and attendant industries in eastern England during the great agricultural crisis of the last decade of the nineteenth century. That is to say, its pages describe those industries with their surroundings

Cambridge University Press
978-1-108-02536-2 - A Farmer's Year
H. Rider Haggard
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

viii

A FARMER'S YEAR

as they presented themselves in the year 1898 to the eye and mind of a landowner and farmer of the smaller and therefore more representative sort ; a man who chanced to have had the advantage of visiting other countries, and to the best of his ability to have observed the conditions, social, agricultural and political, which prevail in them.

How that crisis will end it is not possible for the wisest among us to guess to-day. Thus, in obedience to some little understood and subtle law of averages and economic retaliation, Agriculture the starved and neglected, may yet avenge itself upon the towns full-fed with cheap and foreign produce, by swamping them with the competition of the inhabitants of the hamlets who troop thence to find a higher wage than 'the land that dies' can pay them. This movement, indeed, perhaps one of the most significant if the most silent and unnoticed of our time, is already in rapid progress, and when—should no unforeseen event, accident or political change, such as the revival of some modified form of Protection, not expected now, but still possible as an expedient of despair, occur to stay it—the exodus is completed, and the rural districts are desolate, then it may be asked : Must not the numbers, health, and courage of our race in their turn pay a portion of the price of the ruin of its wholesome nurseries ?

When the 'highways were unoccupied' and the 'inhabitants of the village ceased' Deborah the Prophetess and a wise Mother in Israel did not think the omen good.

Perhaps it is a superstition and no more ; yet it seems hard to credit that a country will remain prosperous for very long after it has ceased to be even moderately remunerative to till any but its choicest fields for food, and when for the lack of a

Cambridge University Press
978-1-108-02536-2 - A Farmer's Year
H. Rider Haggard
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

AUTHOR'S NOTE

ix

reasonable reward, the tillers themselves, abandoning the free air their fathers breathed for centuries, have swarmed to inhabit the grim and sweltering courts of cities. Under like circumstances at least Rome did not remain prosperous.

Heretofore John Bull has been depicted as a countryman and nothing else, a comparison with meaning. If henceforth he is to forsake the soil that bred him, how will he be pictured by our children, drawing from a changed and shrunken model?

Indeed to the millions who follow it, and therefore to the nation at large, although few seem to understand that this is so, the practice of Agriculture—that primæval occupation and the cleanest of them all—means more than the growing of grass and grain. It means, among other things, the engendering and achievement of patient, even minds in sound enduring bodies, gifts of which, after the first generation, the great towns rob those who dwell and labour in them. And when those gifts are gone, or greatly lessened, what does history teach us of the fate of the peoples who have lost them?

When, too, the countryman has put on a black coat, or, for that matter, kept to his corduroys, what welcome has the city he craves for him? What kind of places are these cities to live in, for the poor? What mercy do they show to those who fall sick or fail? Ask the labouring man who seeks work after the cheap hair-dye ceases to conceal that he is turned of fifty. Ask the clerk, competent, blameless (and married, with a family), but on the wrong side of forty-five. Ask the widow derelict and tossing upon that bitter sea. They will reply with a paraphrase of the famous saying of the Emperor Charles V., or would if they knew it, 'Cities are women, who reserve their favours for the young.'

Cambridge University Press
978-1-108-02536-2 - A Farmer's Year
H. Rider Haggard
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

There the hideous grinding competition of the age leaves little room for those from whom the last possible ounce of brain or body work can be no longer pressed. They go to the wall, they sink to the slum, and the Dock gate, and the House, and the hospital ward. I say that from these great towns with their aggregated masses of mankind, there rises one eternal wail of misery—the hopeless misery that with all its drawbacks the country does not know, of those who, having fallen, are being trampled by those who stand.

Such are the things of the cities, with their prizes for the few, their blanks, their despairs for the many. And all the while—that is why I speak of them and their pomps and poverties—outside these human hives lie the wide, neglected lands of England, peopled often enough but by a few struggling farmers, and in the course of desertion by a dwindling handful of labouring folk. And yet here should be—not palaces with deer parks only, though sometimes these have their uses—but tens and twenties of thousands of quiet homes, where, given easier conditions as regards carriage, taxation and markets, families might live, not in riches indeed, but in ample comfort; in health of body and of mind, with pure air, pure thoughts, pure sights. Oh! who will so handle matters as to make this enthusiast's dream a possibility, who will turn the people to the land again and thus lessen the load of a nation's sorrows? And from the empty waste of half-tilled acres floats back the echo 'Who?'

Most of us pass such problems with a shrug; they do not concern us we think.

It is an unnatural war between the cities and the land which bore and nurtured them, if that can be called a war where the

Cambridge University Press
 978-1-108-02536-2 - A Farmer's Year
 H. Rider Haggard
 Frontmatter
[More information](#)

AUTHOR'S NOTE

xi

mother lies prostrate for the daughters to tread out her life. When the towns are full what do they care to-day if the fields be empty? 'Bear our burdens, feed, educate, give us the best of your blood and brain—your hungry Realty can meet the bill. Then you may go starve,' say they; 'what is that to us who have enough? Send us your stalwart men and women :—we will pay you back in sparrows !'

Indeed, the masses of the population, and therefore the governments who seek their suffrages, whatever they may pretend, at heart interest themselves little in the welfare of rural England. It is troublesome with its complaints, half bankrupt, divided by class prejudice, and therefore politically impotent—let it take its chance—that is their attitude—secret if not declared. Countries in China, Central Africa, anywhere, must be seized or hypothecated to provide 'new markets'—even 'at the cost of war'—for this is fashionable and imperialistic, and, it is hoped, will bring profit to the people with the most votes and influence, the traders and dwellers in the towns. For these, money, men, everything they ask; but for the home earth and its offspring, small help, no, scarce the most naked justice. 'Gentlemen, the Cities would never stand it,' runs the accustomed formula of repulse.

'Open doors abroad' is the cry—what does it matter if the old-fashioned door at home is shut, that door which in bygone ages has so often stood between the wolf and the Englishman? It matters nothing at all, is the answer of our masters (short-sighted as some of us think), for British-grown products are no longer of great importance to the community except, perhaps, to an enterprising section of it, those of the meat-salesmen and traders who use the title as a veil for fraud.

Cambridge University Press
978-1-108-02536-2 - A Farmer's Year
H. Rider Haggard
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

xii

A FARMER'S YEAR

In short, British agriculture on its appropriate journey to Jericho resembles that Biblical traveller who fell among acquisitive and self-seeking characters. At least the parallel holds to a certain extent. The Pharisee, the Scribe, the Priest and the Levite—townsfolk all of them—pass by with a jest and a curse—sometimes they add a kick—but the good Samaritan has yet to appear. When he comes, if ever, and proves successful in his work of healing ; when he has emptied the anæmic, enervated cities back on to the land and caused the vanished yeoman class to re-arise, he will be the greatest man of his age, and as a reward will earn the gratitude of healthy country-nursed posterities, who, without him, would not have been.

Where is he—this son of consolation ?

But with reference to the above opinions and sundry others expressed from time to time throughout this book, some of them unconventional perhaps, its student is asked to remember, in conclusion, that they are only the unimportant though sincerely held views of a private observer of events ; intended, it is true, to convert as many as possible to their author's way of thinking, but, should they fail in this, at least to give offence to no one ; to be taken, indeed, at such value as the reader pleases, much, or little, or none at all.

DITCHINGHAM : 1899.

Cambridge University Press
 978-1-108-02536-2 - A Farmer's Year
 H. Rider Haggard
 Frontmatter
[More information](#)

CONTENTS

BEDINGHAM, DITCHINGHAM AND THE FARMS

	PAGE
The Education of Nature—The small Scale—My Acreage—The Moat Farm—Derivation of Bedingham—The Procession of the Past—The Lords of Bedingham—Bruce's buried Heart—Margery's Love Letter—The Priory—The Charm of Age—Heavy Land—The Fall in Farm Values—Websdill Wood—Map of Moat Farm—The New Pastures—Tenants and 'Laying Down'—Ditchingham—Shells in the Sand—Outney Common—Views—The Vine in England—The Essay of Apothecary King—The Bath Spring—Bungay—Sir Hugh Bigod—The Deed of Roger de Huntingfeld—Copper-bottoming and the Black Dog of Bungay—A Wild Bird Preserve—Ditchingham Lodge—Mr. Ives and the Duke—Miss Ives and the Viscount—The Sons and the Tutor—Floods and High Tides—Lack of the Co-operative Spirit—Farms and Stock at Ditchingham—Condition of Land in 1889—Land-sucking and the Land-sucker—Valuations—All Hallows—The Glebe—Baker's—Tindale Wood—Map and Details—Capital and Profit and Loss Accounts—Governments and the Farming Interests—Borrowed Capital—Advice to Investors—The Silver Lining	1

JANUARY

A Mad Hare—Christmas Weather—Ploughshares—Bungay Compost—First Calves of Heifers—Dyke-cleaning—An Early Lane—Bankrupt Families—A Rent Audit—An Ancient Bridle—Storage of Beet—First Lambs—Southdowns and Suffolks—Strange Behaviour of Cows—Red Poll Cattle—Ditching Fences—Young Pastures—A Poor Crop—Ploughing of Barley Lands—The Bedingham Steer—Showing Cattle—Bush Draining—The Lot of the Agricultural Labourer—Old Age Pensions—Migration of the Labourer—Going for a Soldier	45
---	----

FEBRUARY

The Wind in the Pines—Candlemas Day—Sheep and Heat—The Influence of Frost—First Snow—Thrashing, Old and New—Rooks	
---	--

Cambridge University Press
 978-1-108-02536-2 - A Farmer's Year
 H. Rider Haggard
 Frontmatter
[More information](#)

xiv

A FARMER'S YEAR

PAGE

and Mawkins—Sale of the Sick Ox—The Art of Ploughing—Intelligence of Farm Horses—Autopsy of the Sick Ox—The Crying Evil of the Tied House Monopoly—The Power of the Brewers—Purchase of Bungay Castle by the Duke of Norfolk—Miss Peggotty's Misfortune—The Turkey and the Cock—The Terrier and the Hen—A Peaceful Scene—Rate of Wages—Sale of Bullocks—County Council Election—Parish Councils a Failure—Drilling Barley—Marking of Trees—Growth and Management of Timber 100

MARCH

Winter at Last—The Fall of Lambs—Brushing Pasture 124

APRIL

The Fruits of Free Trade—A Question—A Missed Balk—Soil for Carrots—The Back Lawn—The Effect of Weather on Temperament—A 'Cast' Mare—Pond Water for Drinking—The Water Question in Villages—A Suggested Solution—Rolling Heavy Land—Felling Trees—Rooting—A Stub-oak—Air-roots on Trees Refreshing a Pasture—Lamb Murder—An Easter Vestry Meeting—The Mare and the Horseman—The Bull and the Bailiff—Tail-cutting—Beet-drilling—The First Swallow—Undermanned Farms—The Sick Lambs—What happened before Root-culture—Nightingales on Hollow Hill—Total Loss of Lambs—Interviewing a Lunatic at Church—Missionary Bazaar—Superstition—Local Race Meetings—Horse-hoeing Beans—Shifting the Sheep—A Short Notice—Rise in the Price of Wheat—Service at Bedingham Church—The First Orchis—Estate Repairs—Increase of Birds on Bath Hills—A Kicking Cow—The Coming of the Leaf—Mice in Stacks—Election Excitements—The Labourer's Prejudices—Money a Defence—The Corruption of County Constituencies—The Worship of Mammon—The Reduction in the Tobacco Duty—The Grievances of the Clergy—Wheat at 48s. the Quarter—A Bounty on Wheat—The Reign of King Stork—Prices of Grain in 1800—Destruction of Young Trees by Boys—Hedgerow Timber—Sensibility to Pain of Men and Animals—The Humours of an Election Meeting—Fact *versus* Fiction 128

MAY

May-Day—Stones on Sandy Soil—Wheat at Forty-nine Shillings a Quarter—The Price of Corn and War—Snakes on the Bath Hills—The Hare and the Cobra—Rough Jimmy—An Egg-eating Turkey—The Margarine Deputation—The Gilling of Timber—The Pleasures of

Cambridge University Press
 978-1-108-02536-2 - A Farmer's Year
 H. Rider Haggard
 Frontmatter
[More information](#)

CONTENTS

xv

PAGE

Canvassing—Politics of the Labourer—Heat or Pheasants—Courtship among Turkeys—The Last of the Irish Cattle—A Bad Balance Sheet—The Low Price of Butter—The Foreign Article—A Margarine Factory—Home-grown Hams—An Election Tale—Snake Bite in Norfolk—Gathering Orchids at Bedingham—The Vitality of Seed—Political Meetings—School Board Cases—Sir J. Gorst on Education—Laying down Grass at Kessingland—The Result of the Election—Backwardness of the Season—The End of Newborn Pride—Benacre Broad—The Habits of Peewits—The Closing of the Broads—May sayings	178
---	-----

JUNE

Grass in Iceland—Njal's Hall at Bergsthorsknoill—Backwardness of the Season—Crops and Stock at Bedingham—A June Frost—Preparing to Steam-saw—Sheep-shearing—The Humour of Shearers—Weight of Fleeces—Lights and Colours—Bees in the Beans—The Ways of Swallows—Weeds and Carrots—The Decay of Bungay Market—Low Price of Wool—Striking a Bargain—Lucky Pigs—A Use for Oak Butts—Steam-sawing—Spoke Setting—Curlew on the Common—Farming with the Hoe—Flat Hoeing—Cracked Shoulder-blades—A Tale of the Zulu War—Fairy Rings—Adventure with the Porch Swallows—Egg-Stealing—Resale of the King's Head Hotel—Price of Lambs—The Uses of the Dock—About Hawks—The Work of the late Mrs. Scudamore—The Keeper and the Owl—Moorhens and their Young—The Cold and the Swallows—Sheep Dipping—Life on the Lawn—The Refusal of Christian Burial—Cutting the Layer—Hen and Ducklings—Swifts on the Bath Hills—Dragging Twitchgrass—Curiosities of the Bedingham Registers—Dan and Sheep Murder—A Solemn Sky—Naturalism—Wanted, a Kicking-strap—Allotment Crops—Price of Garden Stuff—Good Blood <i>versus</i> Bad—Docks on the Marshes—Hoeing under Difficulties—Drying Wet Hay—The Blooming of Wheat—The First Breath of Summer—Female Labour—Transplanting Mangold—Machine-mowing Laid Grass—Barleys at Bedingham—The Fly—Flowers and Birds in Websdill Wood	211
---	-----

JULY

The Season Up to Date—The Shed at Baker's—Woodton Hall and Church—The Infamous Dowsing—Forgotten Brides—Epitaphs—Wealth of the Georgian Era—The Hay on Nos. 5 and 11—Effect of Sheeping Pastures—Treading of Land by Sheep—Weaning Lambs—Haysel at Bedingham—Kohl-rabi and Pigeons—A Wicked Pony—A
--

Cambridge University Press
 978-1-108-02536-2 - A Farmer's Year
 H. Rider Haggard
 Frontmatter
[More information](#)

xvi

A FARMER'S YEAR

PAGE

Stormy Sunset—Hay Heating on the Stack—Committee on Old Age Pensions—The Benefices Bill—Ulsters in July—Scene on the Back Lawn—Feeding Cattle in 1557—Two Views of a Crop—St. Swithun's Day—American Reapers—The Cattle and the Young Willows—The Docks on the Marsh—Sparrows in the Wheat—Cutting out Swedes—Magistrates and Conscientious Objectors—An Object Lesson—The Divorced Game-cock—The Advantages of Baby Beef—The Process of Thatching—Splitting of Soil by Beet Bulbs—Destruction of Beet by the Horse Hoe—Buying a Reaper—Proposed Agreements for Harvest—Boarding out of London Children—A Rise of Swallows—Galvanised Roofs for Stacks—The Bedingham Hay Crop—Underbred Cattle—Rain at Last—Drilling Maize and Mustard—The Swallows and their Egg—An Ancient Farm—An Old-fashioned Couple . . . 255

AUGUST

A Primrose League Fête—Sale of Red Poll Heifers—Red-weed and Rabbits—Hare and Rabbits Bill—Price of Fat Stock at Harleston—The Harvest Bargain—Martha, Jane, and Babette—Fight Between Threshers and a Whale—The Natural Law—Some Examples—A Wet Day—The Dead Foal—An African Snow Scene—The Work of Messrs. Garton—Agricultural Distress as a Subject for Jest—Cause of Death of Foal—Fool's Parsley—The New Ewes—The Beginning of Harvest—The Reaper at Work—Offers for Bedingham—Layer in Barley—Lady Farmers of the Old Sort—Cost of Repairs—A Tree Tragedy—Summer Fallowing and 'Maffies'—Barley Mowing—A Confusion of Terms—A Hawking Owl—A Rabbit Hunt—Result of Over-manuring Wheat—Mysterious Successes in Agriculture—Carting Pease—Horse-bees at Work—Charges for Chemical Analysis—The Humming of Gnats—A Summer Frost—A Large Farm—The Thunder-blasted Tree—Effects of Pressure on a Mast—Experiences of Lightning at Home and Abroad—Chicory and Thistle Down—Stacking Damp Oats and Wheat—An Ancient Brick—The Past and the People—The Instinct of Perpetuation—Old Methods of Cottage Building—Matted Corn—The Rising of the Harvest Moon 292

SEPTEMBER

Bungay Brewster Sessions—Decrease of Crime—Great Bulk of the Crops—First Day's Shooting—The Heaven-sent Bicycle—Forbidding Aspect of Ripe Beans—Messrs. Horton and Sime—The Mettingham Skeleton—Seventeenth Century Joke—The Abundance of Straw—The Great Heat—Failure of the Reaper in Barley—The Jeremiad of

Cambridge University Press
 978-1-108-02536-2 - A Farmer's Year
 H. Rider Haggard
 Frontmatter
[More information](#)

CONTENTS

xvii

	PAGE
Sir William Crookes—Some Statistics of Wheat Areas—Leguminous Crops and Muck <i>versus</i> Niagara and the Zambesi—The Death of Lord Winchelsea—The Heat and the Sun-spot—Produce at Bedingham—A poor Day's Shooting—Drought—The Tricks of the Corn Market—The End of Harvest—Co-operation : is it Practicable?—Bad Stacking—Decay of the Labourers' Skill—A Visit to the Hebrides—Locomotion : Past, Present, and Future—Oban to Coll—Landing at Coll—The Swede in Coll—Johnsonian Wit—Farming in Coll—Sportsmen ; and a Story—Bird-life in Coll—Seals—The Untiring Lees—Shooting and Scruples—A Day's Sport in Coll—The Function of <i>Elymus Arenarius</i> —The Old Castle—The Tomb of the McLeans—The Sea Rovers' Grave—Plover in a Gale—Peat Drains—Success at the Agricultural Show—A Clever Collie—A Snipey Field—Church at Coll—Superiority of Scotch Preachers—Intelligence of their Congregations—The Lead Mine—The Benhogh Stone—Hangman's Hill—The Bradenham Chains—Crofters and Population—A Desolate Scene—'Coll for my Money'—Drought at Upp Hall—The Water Question in Hertfordshire—True Tale of a <i>Douser</i> —Large Fields and Steam Ploughs—Good Stacking—Advantages of the London Market—Hertfordshire Rents—Method of Well-Sinking—Manufacture of a Trout Stream—Memories	327

OCTOBER

Ditchingham and Drought—State of Crops and Stock—First Thrashings—A Misguided Pheasant—Ploughing in the Drought—The Tale of a Farmer—Earlham Hall and Elizabeth Fry—Tuberculosis and Tuberculin—Necessity of Dairy Inspection—Pigeons on the Lawn—The Lesson of Decay—Our Fear of the Dark—A Crazy Heifer—The Hatred of Hospitals—A Broken Link—Sale of two Red Polls—Messrs. Garton and Darwin—Autumn on the Norfolk Coast—A Well-managed Shooting—Tale of a 'Gallery'—Beet Lifting and Haling—Largesse—Fall of Wages—Grand Juries	364
---	-----

NOVEMBER

A Difference of Opinion—The Eternal Round of Nature—Critics on Galvanised Iron—Kohl-rabi <i>versus</i> Swedes—War and the Strength of the Empire—Valuation Day—The Woes of Six Stops—Sudden Fall of Elm Boughs—A Change of Farm Policy—The Results of Bungay Compost—Autumn Sunlight and Cloud—When the Strength Fails—The Beauty of Large Meadows—Another Way of Beet Lifting—The Clergy as Sportsmen—Loaders—Bean Roots—The Risks of Rabbit-pie—Sale of the Barley—The Battle of Lubwa—An Instance of	a
---	---

Cambridge University Press
 978-1-108-02536-2 - A Farmer's Year
 H. Rider Haggard
 Frontmatter
[More information](#)

xviii

A FARMER'S YEAR

	PAGE
Physical Endurance—The Triumph of Reason—The End of the Battle—African Rinderpest—Dividing the Spoils—Death of the South-down Ram—A Visit to the Agricultural Show—Rearing of Prize Cattle—Fat Pigs—An Etruscan Winner—Queensland and Emigration—Prize Chrysanthemums—The Poultry Show—If only!—A Prophetic Passage—A Surgical Feat—Wild Ostriches—The Beet on Baker's—Carrots and Carrot Lifting—The Last of the Green Maize—The Uses of Road-grit—Sale of the Lambs—The Criminal Evidence Act—Mustard and the Sheep—The Cunning of Dogs—The End of Dan—A Result of Bad Stacking—A Self-planted Covert—Purchase of Steers—The Ways of Moles—A Story	378

DECEMBER

An Agricultural Debate—The Lack of Labourers—Mr. Bagenal's Report—Exodus from the Land a National Question—Cattle at Norwich Market—Brutality of Drovers—The Cost of Carriage—Its Gravity—Warmth of the Season—The Harleston Auction—A Controversy—Prices at Harleston—The Dead of Winter—Ruin—The Patience of the Afflicted—An 'Old Radical'—Nightfall—The Charm of Bedingham—The Lack of Bushes—A Critic Criticised—Raspberries in December—The Swede Crop—A Plethora of Bailiffs—Large Ideas—Begging Letters—Impostors—A Curious Case—Queen's Nurses—Fuel Doles—Heckingham Workhouse—Outdoor Relief <i>versus</i> the House—The Tale of Turk Taylor—A Master Rogue—A Fortified Workhouse—Parish Homes and Unions—An Aërial Fire—A Discreet Defendant—At the End of the Fell—The Woodcock's Note—Ware 'Cock—Shooting as a Sport—The Shortest Day—The First Frost—An Enthusiast—The Pheasant and the Cat—The last of Royal Duke—The Labourer and the Land—Chilled Mutton—Balance Sheets—A Profit—How to Succeed—Jeremiah considered by a Minor Prophet—The Lowest on Record—Roses in December—Kessingland and the Ocean—The Great March Gale—A Nelson Relic—Lady Hamilton and her Critic—The Nelson Club—Pewits and Sunlight—The Smell of the Soil—Kohl-rabi and Swedes—A Desolate Scene—The Dignity and Doom of Labour—The Last Sunrise—Tithe and the Parsons—The Conclusion of the Matter	407
--	-----

APPENDIX

I. THE RURAL EXODUS	459
II. EFFECT OF FOREIGN COMPETITION ON THE BRITISH PRODUCER	470
INDEX	473

Cambridge University Press
 978-1-108-02536-2 - A Farmer's Year
 H. Rider Haggard
 Frontmatter
[More information](#)

ILLUSTRATIONS

BUNGAY COMMON FROM THE VINEYARD HILLS	<i>Frontispiece</i>
PRIORY FARM AND BEDINGHAM CHURCH	<i>to face p. 4</i>
THE MOAT FARM, BEDINGHAM	10
THE VINEYARD HILLS AND BATH HOUSE, DITCHINGHAM, IN 1738	21
ALL HALLOWS FARM	35
LAMBS IN THE HOME FARM ORCHARD	56
YARD CLEARING	64
BUSH DRAINING AT BEDINGHAM	79
THRASHING	104
PLOUGHING IN THE APE FIELD	110
SHEEP IN THE SNOW	124
SHEEP AND LAMBS ON THE BACK LAWN	133
TREE FELLING ON THE VINEYARD HILLS	140
THE SICK LAMB	150
THE HOME YARD	178
'WHEN ALL THE WORLD IS YOUNG'	195
STEAM SAWING	221
SHEEP DIPPING	234
THE MOWER AT WORK	238
THE HAY FIELD ON BAKER'S	249
CATTLE AND SHEEP IN WEBSDILL WOOD	263

Cambridge University Press
 978-1-108-02536-2 - A Farmer's Year
 H. Rider Haggard
 Frontmatter
[More information](#)

xx

A FARMER'S YEAR

RED-POLL COWS ON THE LODGE MEADOWS	<i>to face p.</i> 277
THE DEAD FOAL	302
THE REAPER	307
'EFFORT STRENUOUS AND COMBINED	312
THE HARVEST MOON	325
THE LAST LOAD	337
HARROWING IN MUSTARD ON STUBBLE	365
LIFTING BEET	375
PHEASANT SHOOTING IN THE LAKE COVER	381
PARTRIDGE DRIVING—MARK OVER!	388
DRILLING	401
BY THE BANKS OF WAVENEY	411
BUSH CARTING AT BEDINGHAM	420
A BURST OF COCKS	433
THE DIGNITY AND DOOM OF LABOUR	453
ST. MARY'S CHURCH, DITCHINGHAM	458

Erratum

Page 392, line 9, *for* Major Thurston *read* Major Thruston.