Contents

Introduction

CHAPTER 1
Miss Polly 1

CHAPTER 2
Old Tom and Nancy 8

CHAPTER 3
The Coming of Pollyanna 14

CHAPTER 4
The Little Attic Room 23

CHAPTER 5
The Game 33

CHAPTER 6
A Question of Duty 40

CHAPTER 7
Pollyanna and Punishments 50

CHAPTER 8
Pollyanna Pays a Visit 57

CHAPTER 9
Which Tells of the Man 69
When *Pollyanna* was published in 1913 it created an amazing sensation among readers and rapidly sold more than a million copies. People were very attracted to the story’s cheery main character. They wished they had her outlook on life.

Since then, Pollyanna’s name has become a word in the English language that is used to mean someone who tries to find good in everybody and every situation, someone whose optimism is so blind that it seems a little silly.

Pollyanna’s story is not that of a pampered princess, but a lonely orphan. In her young life she has already faced too many sad facts to think that all of life is happy or easy. When she stops to play what she calls “the
glad game,” it is not out of fun. She hopes to find a silver lining in a stormy cloud overhead, a consolation for a hard blow. No one has harder blows to cope with than Pollyanna does, and being cheerful is not easy for her either.

Pollyanna believes that everyone naturally wants to be good, because it’s by being good that we are most likely to be happy. So she tries to help others to look for good, especially when things seem only wrong. Her message is familiar: when life is disappointing or even painful, stop and count your blessings. There are still things to be thankful for.

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