

hour's house lay at a distance of three miles. The populous village of Ten Lakes was four miles distant, whilst the nearest railway station was twenty miles away. Well might it be called a country place, and was probably none the less valued by its owner for that reason.

Mr. Mordaunt had married, a few years after his arrival in the country,—in Western New York,—an American lady whom he had met in one of his numerous pleasure excursions. A case of love at first sight on both sides, he had been attracted by the winning disposition and delicate charms of the fair American; while she, on her part, had not been unwilling to share the fortunes of the handsome and courtly Englishman, although her future home was then sufficiently far removed from many of the advantages of an older district.

Three children—a daughter, their first-born; a son two years her junior, and a charming little girl, now three years of age—had added to their happiness.

In his habits Mr. Mordaunt presented the somewhat unusual anomaly of a strong love of literary pursuits, and an equally well-developed liking for field sports, with a love of country life. His books, with his gun, his rods, his horses and his great farm pretty equally and very pleasantly occupied his time.

About fifty years of age, he was still a young-looking, active and vigorous man, to whom life was a pleasure; and its duties, which, as far as his abilities went, were carried out to the letter, an enjoyment. In his manners he was polished, refined and courteous; simple as to his habits; of fixed and earnest views—especially as to religion, and utterly intolerant of all that was profane or irreverent. Fond of company and the society of his friends, when at his own house; he barely endured occasional visits into the great world for the sake of his family—to whom he was an affectionate husband and father, and by whom he was tenderly loved.

His wife—*née* Florence Horton—was some ten years her