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A FRENCH LADY'S WAGER.

A French lady, who married a German Baron some fifteen years ago, who now lives in Berlin in a state befitting her rank and wealth, had at dinner not long ago some fifteen or twenty Prussians round her table. Notwithstanding her marriage, she had remained French at heart. In the course of conversation, the Prussians began to bewail Paris, poor Paris! which was no longer Paris, and to predict that in ten years Berlin would be the capital of the world. She listened angrily, until, no longer able to restrain her indignation, she freed her mind to the effect that Paris was Paris yet, would always be Paris, the most brilliant—the most attractive—the most civilized and artistic city in the world. Moreover, she would lay a wager that her Prussian friends might select the most ugly and insignificant thing they could find, and Paris would make of it an object of beauty such as Berlin would not dare to attempt. The wager was accepted, and the next day the lady received a small box, which upon opening, she found to contain a single white hair. What could be made of one white hair? She did not know, but, concealing her embarrassment, she sent the hair to Paris, accompanied by a letter giving an account of the wager, the circumstance, &c. In due course of time she received the box back from Paris. And what think you Paris had made of the white hair? It had been beautifully enclosed in an open trench of gold which crossed a medallion surmounted with brilliant; at the top of the medallion the Prussian Eagle in black enamel, with wings extended, held the white hair in its claws; then suspended from the hair was a little crucifix on white enamel, bearing the inscription, "Alas! and Lorraine, you hold them only by a hair." It is not probable that the Prussians were eager for another bet.

SELECT TALE.

FARMER HILL'S HIRED MAN.

How Frank Threw Himself Away.

Just you walk in and make yourself to him while I call Ralph. He's my nephew, down here from college, rusticating round awhile for his nerves. I'll do him good to drive you over.

This was our first knowledge of the existence of such a person as Farmer Hill's nephew, and here it will be well, perhaps, to break the thread of my discourse and explain how we came to make the acquaintance of Farmer Hill himself. Some six months previous, father and mother had gone abroad for their health, leaving Grace and myself together with cousin Frank, to the care of Arabella, our dignified old sister. Arabella was a widow, still in her weeds, a little prim naturally, and with an outer crust of coquetry which grief and black robes had failed to soften, yet so true-hearted and conscientious that our parents felt entirely safe in intrusting us to her during their absence, but we could not talk of taking Grace with us, for we were alone, Grace and I; you would never guess it, though we are so unlike, Grace being short and plump, with a face like a ripe peach, and pink golden hair, and the purrings ways of a pet kitten, while I am just the opposite in looks and temperament, and far more of a trial, I fear to Arabella's patience. But Arabella's greatest trial in these days was our cousin Frank. Dear child, she would not for the world have been a trial to any one, but it was just as impossible for her to conform to Arabella's strict notion of propriety as it would be for humming bird to put on the state lines of the swan. She was nothing unless she could be herself, and Arabella was for ever trying to remodel her. Left an orphan before she was ten years old, she had been adopted by a loving aunt, who, after doing all in her power to spoil the girl—fortunately one not easily spoiled—lived and left her an heir to a neat little fortune. Since then she had been with us, and we all loved her in spite of the fact that, wherever she was, she was the centre of attraction.

We had been loading all winter with Arabella's mother-in-law, a stylish, matronly woman, who, having for Arabella's sake consented to take us into her family, felt it her duty to devote her to our entertainment. And a gay season had been the result—readings, receptions, and parties following each other in so quick succession that by spring we were heartily tired of fashionable life.

How pleasant it would be if we could only go into the country for a while, said Frank, half-laying her face in a bunch of Arbutus which, bought that morning of a little flower girl at the door, had been whispering to us all the day of the far-away woods where his home had been.

Why not take a lodge in the wilderness and try housekeeping? said I, with sudden inspiration.

Wouldn't it be splendid? cried Frank, catching at the idea with enthusiasm.

Splendid! echoed Grace, warily.

My dear girls, you do not know what you are talking about, said Arabella in alarm.

Indeed we do, said Frank. I, for one, am hungry for country air.

And I chimed Grace and myself.

But there are so many inconveniences attending country life, expostulated Arabella, seeing that Frank at least was in downright earnest.

Kerosine oil, for instance, said the mother-in-law aggravatingly.

And such swarms of mosquitoes, added Arabella.

I am sure we have mosquitoes enough in town, said Frank quickly; and as for kerosine oil, I'll see to keep the lamps in order.

Let's go! said I with a growing zeal.

Let's go! echoed Grace. And so overwhelming were the arguments we brought to bear on Arabella that by the time the discussion ended she had yielded her consent; and before a month went by, we found ourselves actually at house-keeping in a picturesque cottage not far from Dexter Station. As for the locality of Dexter, it will not be indicated on the maps yet awhile, there being not more than six houses in the place, all told; but we liked it none the less. Of course we were inconveniences, especially for the first two days, when owing to the non-arrival of our kitchen ware and china, we were somewhat puzzled to know how to furnish forth our board; but they only served to add zest to the enterprise.

Jolly, isn't it? said I, presiding as gracefully as possible at a battered peach can impiece of a tea set.

It is just fun, said Grace, using her fingers for a fork, as she helped herself to sorbites.

I wish you could find some more lady-like maid my dear, directed Arabella, calmly sipping her tea from a terra cotta vase, and managing to maintain her native dignity in spite of the fact of being seated on an inverted wash tub.

Jolly doesn't half express it, said Frank, taking lingering looks at the landscape as she buttered her bread with a penknife; it is bliss—bliss itself; and when things were fairly put to rights, even Arabella was forced to agree with her.

One day it was found necessary for some of us to go to town to order household supplies, and as Grace had a headache and Frank was still too much in love with the country to care for a sight of the city, Arabella and I decided to take the morning express and make the needed purchases. We had fully expected to be at home before evening, but in one way and another we were detained until there was barely time to catch the 6 o'clock train. It was only an hour's ride however, and with a delicious sense of rest, we shook off the dust of the city and gave ourselves up thoroughly to the pleasant anticipation of soon being home that we scarcely heard the stations called.

We must be near Dexter, said Arabella at last, rousing from a state of semi-unconsciousness, and picking up her hand bag.

Bej pardon, ma'am, said a voice behind us, but we have just left Dexter.

It can't be possible! cried I, rubbing frantically to the rear of the car, and mentally wondering why in the world we had not taken the opposite side; we might have seen the name even if we had failed to hear it called; but regrets were useless, for surely enough there was Dexter receding in the dim distance like a dream of the past.

Why, we shan't get home tonight! We must stop the train? We must do something! I ejaculated, turning to Arabella, who, after properly thanking our informant, had followed me at her usual dignified pace; but her undisturbed air exasperated me, and without waiting for an answer, I hurried to the other end of the car in search of the conductor.

There's no help for it miss, said that polite official. I'll put you off at the next station, that's only three miles on, and you can easily find some one to bring you back.

Small consolation it was, but as the last up train had already passed us there was no alternative; and presently we were standing forlorn and desolate on the platform of the Bel-dor station, three miles from home, and the shades of night gathering about us with unrelenting rapidity. Two unkempt boys with their hands in their pockets, stood staring stupidly at us. "Don't know mum," said one of them in answer to our anxious inquiries, "there ain't nobody round here as keeps horses, 'cept farmer Hill;" and having pointed out farmer Hill's house, swaggered away, and left us to our own devices. A tiresome tramp across a ploughed field brought us at last to the farmer's door, and here it was that we were told to walk in and make ourselves "to hum" till "Ralph" could come to our rescue. Five minutes the old man reappeared, fanning himself vigorously with his broad-brimmed hat.

Here's Ralph Strong; he'll take you over—And this our introduction, for, as he spoke, a spring wagon drew up at the gate, and the bronze faced driver, with a gallant bow, informed us that he was at our service. Evidently farmer Hill's nephew, whatever might be state of his "nerves," was a man of intelligence and refinement—

made that discovery before we were a mile on the way—and so entertaining did he prove that, tired and hungry as we were, we were half sorry, when the ride came to an end, Frank and Grace, alarmed at our long absence, were watching for us at the gate, and Arabella with gracious cordiality, introduced the stranger, explaining in an aside who he was. Of course, we invited him in, and the politely declined, he promised to do himself the pleasure of calling in a few days.

He is very gentlemanly and agreeable said Arabella, with emphasis, as seated at the table we narrated the events of the day, and it must be confessed that we were all rather elated at the prospect of having our solitude invaded now and by this same gentlemanly and agreeable person.

Beyond the simple fact that he was a farmer Hill's nephew from college, we knew nothing whatever about him, but his face and voice were of themselves sufficient to inspire confidence, and before many weeks went by we had come to regard him as our right hand man. Arabella consulted him on all matters of business, and Grace and I were constantly asking his advice about gardening, while Frank who had set heart on raising a brood of chickens, held animated conferences with him as to the best ways of promoting the health and happiness of his feathered pets; at least when the two sat for half an hour at a time on the back porch in the twilight watching the little creatures nestling under the mother's wing; it was naturally to be supposed that they found the chief subject of discussion.

It is hardly polite to trouble Mr Strong as much about those chickens, Frances," Arabella would say. "A college man like him is not supposed to be very familiar with the raising of poultry."

Then it is high time he turned his attention to it, said Frank, with mischievous lurking in her eyes.

Another case of annoyance to our elder sister was the simplicity of Frank's toilet, as I do wish, my dear, Frances, that you would make yourself look a little more stylish. These young collegians are not accustomed to seeing ladies dressed like kitchen girls.

But Frank declared that half the pleasure of living in the country was the privilege of dispensing with style, and persisted in wearing calico dresses and white aprons.

I don't think Arabella, had the least inclination to try match making, or anything of the sort, she was simply anxious to have her three girls make a good impression; but her anxiety was oppressive, and as well as Frank, occasionally rebelled. Mr. Strong, I was sure, was too sensible to like us any better in silk dresses and primmers than in plain calico. So I followed Frank's example, and certainly the sight of the calico did not seem to disturb him in the least. I don't know what we should have done without him at times as summer. It was lovely to have a neighbor as we were, for our few neighbors were so scattered that we saw but little of them and even our city friends seldom came for more than a day's stay, so the young man's visits were doubly welcome. In addition to being an entertaining talker he was a fine singer, and was always ready to join in a song; he brought the newest books and revived our love of botany by constant contributions of wild flowers, and regularly on Sunday evening he escorted us all to church.

So the summer waned and autumn came, and we began to fear that our present friends would soon be leaving us for college. Once or twice we had broached the subject, but he seemed inclined to be a little reserved about it, and we let it drop.

I don't see why he has to go at all, said Grace, he knows enough now.

He is certainly very intelligent for a man of his age, said Arabella, but of course he wants to finish his studies. I wonder what he intends to be. It is strange that he does not tell us more in regard to himself and his plans.

May be Frank can tell us, said Grace archly.

A curious little smile was playing about Frank's mouth.

He left college a year ago and is expecting soon to take a partner and begin business, I believe, she said, demurely.

Arabella looked up in surprise.

Why, I thought his uncle spoke as if he were still a student.

There was some mistake about that, I think, said Frank. The farmer was speaking of his nephew, Ralph, I think, not of Ralph Strong. And who is Ralph Strong then? asked Arabella in amazement.

Ralph Strong is farmer Hill's hired man, said Frank, just as if the fact were something to be proud of.

What? cried Arabella, sharply.

He is farmer Hill's hired man, repeated Frank.

The impudently puppy? exclaimed Arabella, completely thrown off her dignity by this rather startling announcement.

Wouldn't it be impossible, he is more appropriate to suggest, said Frank, tormentingly,

He certainly cannot expect us to receive him any longer as a guest, Arabella went on ignoring the amendment.

We might possibly receive him as one of the family, though said Frank, turning to the window to hide her blushes.

A dim perception of the truth began to dawn on Arabella.

It is not possible that he has had the assurance to ask you to marry him! she said, freezing.

Why not? He loves me and I love him, said Frank bravely.

There was a little too much. No words could so quickly express our consternation, and we all threw out a word or two at her in silence.

It is just too bad! sighed Grace, at last, with tears in her eyes. It's going to spoil all our nice times.

It is a very unpleasant mistake from beginning to end, said Arabella, with an effort to compose herself; but it proves conclusively that Ralph Strong, whatever else he may be, is no gentleman.

You are wrong, he said, said Frank, with blushing eyes; and then, like the true woman she is, she bravely took up the subject once more.

It seems that the nephew, Ralph Hill, whom the farmer went to call on that memorable evening, was absent at the time. No Ralph Strong was sent in his place. Accepting his cordial invitation to visit us, without the least suspicion that we were taking him for other than he was, he had come and gone week after week, in blissful ignorance, until one evening while confiding to Frank some bits of personal history, he chanced to discover the mistake we were making, and was eager at once to explain; but Frank, partly from a love of mischief and partly from the explanation would put an end to his coming, begged him to keep quiet for a while. So the fault is all mine, she said, and now you may call him what you like, farmer Hill's nephew or farmer Hill's hired man—to me he is a d d been from the first, simply Ralph Strong, the trustiest and truest man I have ever known.

And all Arabella's arguments failed to convince her that plunging and romping for farmer Hill had in any way lessened his manhood, or that in marrying a farmer she would be doing him a wrong of any kind. So there was nothing more to be said. She was a wife and had a perfect right to do as she pleased; but it seemed so odd that Frank, who had refused more offers than she could well remember, was, after all, going to marry farmer Hill's hired man.

It came to light a little later that he was himself the owner of a handsome farm, and had hired himself to farmer Hill chiefly for the purpose of learning how to manage it, having decided to go on leaving college, that he knew far more of astronomy than of agriculture but even this mollifying fact could not restore Arabella's opinions.

Father and mother came home in the fall, and we all went back to town—and at Christmas there was a wedding. Arabella declared that it was a disgrace to the family; but, rather, as he is quick at reading men, said Ralph Strong, was worthy of my lady's man, and that Frank had shown her good sense.

They have been married three years now, and Grace and I go every summer to visit them. Their house is a little Eden, and Frank is as happy as a queen. To be sure, she has some care, as every wife and mother must have; but I can't see that she is one bit more of a drudge than any city woman; and, as for her husband, he grows tatter and better every day, as every true man must who has a true wife to help him.

Arabella has not yet been to see them, but I don't think her proud dignity can hold out much longer; for Frank with the sweet forgiveness of her nature, has named her only for her, and a dainty baby Bill was never seen. They are going to bring her to town soon, and Grace and I feel sure that she will prove a little peace-maker.

Speaking of Arabella reminds me that last summer we met farmer Hill's nephew himself—the other Ralph. They say he is rich; but, poor fellow, he is greatly to be pitied, for he not only has weak nerves, but a weak head as well; and even Arabella—warily minded as she is—could see he would be quite willing to acknowledge that Frank had made a happy mistake in taking the hired man instead.

DEATH OF LORD DE ROS—Lord de Ros has died in his 77th year. He was the premier baron of England. The first baron took an active part against Henry III, in the contest between that king and his barons. The second baron was an unsuccessful competitor for the crown of Scotland in 1222. The Lord de Ros was educated at Westminster school, entered the army in 1819, and was appointed quartermaster-general on special service in Turkey in 1854, but was incapacitated by illness. He was appointed deputy-lieutenant of the Tower in February, 1852, and was appointed equerry to the late Prince Consort in 1853. In 1865 he was

appointed to the colonelcy of the 4th Hussars. He is succeeded by his son, the Hon. Dudley Charles now equerry to the Queen.

The Catholic Church in the United States.

The biographer of Archbishop Spalding gives some facts and figures showing the past condition and present status of the Roman Catholic Church in the United States. He says "that in 1783, at the close of the year of independence, there were not more than twenty eight priests in the United States; in 1800 there were supposed to be 140; there were as many as 232 in the year 1830, and some of these had been gained by thecession of Louisiana to the United States; in 1848 there were 890; the number had grown 3,817 in 1861, and in 1872 to 4,800." The increase in the number of churches has kept pace with that of the priesthood. In 1808 there was not a single Catholic church in the United States; to-day there are 65 dioceses and vicariates apostolic within its limits. In 1800 there were but two convents; to-day there are over 350 female religious institutions, and without including Catholic colleges and academies, about 130 for women. In 1785 the Catholic population of the United States was reckoned at 25,000. In 1820 Bishop Borgia found the number increased to 100,000 which had increased to 500,000 in the year 1832, and in the year 1835 to 1,200,000. Of the present Roman Catholic population in this country he further says: "From the date which we have, we are probably not unwarranted in the statement that there are at present in the United States not less than 7,000,000 of Catholics." These statistics are given with a certain degree of authority, and may be accepted as an estimate by the Roman church itself.

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Government House, Ottawa.

Monday, 3rd day of November, 1873.

PRESENT:

HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR GENERAL.

IN COUNCIL.

ON the recommendation of the Honorable the Minister of Customs and under the provision of the 123rd section of the Act 31 Vic. Chap. 6, entitled: "An Act respecting the Customs" His Excellency has been pleased to order, and it is hereby ordered, that the Town of Sorel, in the County of Micheline, and Province of Quebec, be and the same is hereby erected into and constituted a Port of Entry and a Warehousing Port for all the purposes of the said Act.

Witness my hand and the Seal of the Privy Council.

W. A. HUMSWORTH,
Clerk, Privy Council.

WELLAND CANAL ENLARGEMENT.

NOTICE TO CONTRACTORS.

SEALED TENDERS, addressed to the undersigned, and endorsed "Tender for Welland Canal" will be received at this office, until 11 o'clock on Wednesday, the Twenty-First January next, (1874), for the construction of Fourteen Locks, and Fourteen Regulating Weirs, a number of Bridge Abutments, and Piers, the intervening Reaches, Raceways, &c., on the new portion of the Welland Canal, between Chumby and Port Huron.

The work will be let in sections, five of which, numbered respectively 2, 3, 5, 6, and 7, are situated between Port Huron and St. Catharines; and three, numbered 12, 13, and 14, extend from the northern side of the Great Western Railway to near Brown's Cement Kiln.

Maps of the several localities, together with Plans and Specifications of the works, can be seen at this office, or at the Resident Engineer's Office, Thorold, on and after Monday, the 5th day of January next, (1874) where printed forms of Tenders, to be filled up and sent to the undersigned, may be had.

With these views I have no hesitation in saying that if I am elected I will give the present Government a fair and generous support.

Thanking you for the handsome vote you gave me on the last occasion, and trusting that you may largely increase it this time, I remain, Yours Respectfully,

A. H. GILLMOR JR.

St. George, 13th January, 1874.