

Such a Joke.

By Hattie H. Esterly.

As the summer afternoon waned, a mother and daughter sat on the eastern porch of a cozy little New Hampshire farm-house...

could endure it no longer and retreated to the side rail, when they innocently inquired if the jarring motion of the boat affected her.

The one mail of the day had just been delivered, and the ladies were dallying over the superscriptions on the envelopes...

'How odd!' exclaimed Alice, at last. 'Here is a letter from Mollie Lawrence, postmarked "Ribbona City, Wis., and I was not aware that she had left Philadelphia."

'And I have one from my old friend, Mrs. Ransom, bearing the same postmark.'

'I had never occurred to Sister Jane or myself that we looked "green." Of course we knew that we were pale, elderly people, but in all our going or coming no one had ever taken advantage of our country airs and ways.'

'You know well how, after the doctor's death, my Sister Jane—the "old maid" of the family—came to live with me, a childless widow. We had each a small income, and by planning and economizing, managed to gratify our mutual desire to travel and see something of the world.'

'Then we saved for our trip to Europe. How we wished to have a fare but for nice Edith, with her knowledge of French and German, I do not know.'

'My dearest Alice—A year ago now we were domiciled side by side in those funny little cottages of that out-of-the-way resort—Edward's Cove. You always seek after quiet in the summer—

'I had planned it should feel in honor of the grange into which I had joined. I am off on a Western excursion now. I cousin Margaret persuaded me into this trip, and so I have no money upon her.

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